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Hawai'i State House of Representatives
Committee on Finance
DATE: Tuesday, April 2, 2013
TIME: 2:00 p.m.
PLACE: Conference Room 309, Hawaii State Capitol

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, Vice Chair Johanson and Members of the Finance
Committee,

Re: SB244 SD2 HD1 – Testimony in Support

Kama'aha Education Initiative is a nonprofit organizations assisting Ka 'Umeke Kā'eo with securing permanent facilities. Currently Ka 'Umeke is located at two different sites located in Keaukaha. One site is at Keaukaha Elementary School. This site has been home for an elementary Hawaiian language education program for the last 20 plus years. Within the last three years Ka 'Umeke has lost four classrooms to Keaukaha Elementary School. This has put a strain on our educational program, teachers, students and parents. At the same time our enrollment continues to grow. It is imperative that charter schools get comparable support as other public schools within the State of Hawai'i.

Facilities Support

Ka 'Umeke strongly supports the facilities support language that is included in this draft of the bill. We would also humbly request for facilities funding either in this bill or in the HB200.

Since we are a public schools and cannot charge tuition these funds can insure that our per pupil funding can be allocated directly to our educational program. Unlike schools that are provided facilities by the state, charter schools must seek out traditional capital campaign methods to fund facilities. In the last few months Kama'aha has been conducting a Philanthropic Market Assessment. This assessment measures the community's interest and financial ability to fund the construction of a permanent campus for Ka 'Umeke. One response we have been getting over and over again from business leaders, local and national foundations and individual donors is "How much money is the State of Hawai'i giving charter schools for facilities." It appears that their concern is that as tax payers that already fund the State of Hawai'i BOE, DOE and charter school and that those tax dollars should be used to fund in part the permanent facilities of charter schools.

Even the "Charter Schools Funding Task Force Report" to the 2011 Hawai'i State Legislature and "On The Level? Policy, Law and the Charter School Movement," a report by the Legislative Reference Bureau in 2002, clearly stated that charter schools should receive facilities funding.

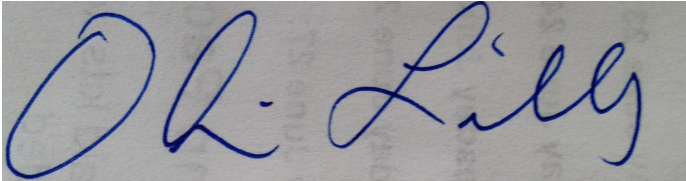


LATE

Kama'aha Education Initiative on behalf of Ka 'Umeke Kā'eo charter school would like the State Legislature to support this measure and put sufficient funding into charter school facilities.

Our keiki deserve EQUITY. Nothing more. Nothing less.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Olani Lilly". The signature is written in a cursive style on a light-colored background.

Olani Lilly
Executive Director