



Ho'okāko'o Corporation

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Education
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair
Re: SB 244 – Relating to Education

Wednesday, February 6, 2013, 3:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 414

Honorable Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the Senate Education Committee,

Re: SB244 – Support with reservations

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on SB244. The Ho`okāko`o Corporation (HC) is committed to excellence in public education through our work with conversion charter schools, which educate nearly 2,000 students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through 12. Ho`okāko`o has been a partner with HCPSN, the State Commission and BOE, in implementing Act 130 of the 2012 legislative session. We appreciate Chair Tokuda's tireless efforts on behalf of our public school children to raise the bar for high quality public charter education and advocate for a charter school system that is predicated on governing board and school leader accountability for student performance.

The task to create legislation that promotes a highly functioning public charter school system was not an easy one however Ho`okāko`o feels that these changes closely align and, indeed, validate the work of our organization. HC provides oversight, governance and performance monitoring of its three conversion charter schools to increase standards for academic excellence, operational viability and financial responsibility. We feel that most of the proposed measures in this bill will assist us in meeting our own targets for school and student performance.

While we testify in general support of these changes, we would like to request clarification on language in particular sections of this bill.

- 37-Charter schools; carryover of funds (Page 1, line 4): The charter schools operate on about half of the per-pupil allocation afforded to DOE schools, which is below the national trend for charter school per pupil funding. Public charter schools have been challenged to operate on sub-standard funding levels while sustaining operations by fostering partnerships with private entities and raising private funding to sustain operations and eventually meet the requirements of the bilateral contract between charter school governing boards and the State Public Charter School Commission. We would like clarification as to whether the 5% in this section relates specifically to the State per pupil allocation, or all of charter school carryover funding, including federal and private funds. If the latter, then Ho`okāko`o would advocate for a larger and more

adequate percentage of carryover funding to ensure sufficient funding to transition to sustain school operations, especially in the event that state, federal or indeed private funding were to be delayed in reaching our schools thereby threatening operations.

- 302D-C – Enrollment (Page 6, line 1). We would request clarification about the consultation process by which the DOE can consult the conversion school about the “realignment” of the charter school’s service area as part of the Department’s “overall service area reviews”. In that same section, Page 6, lines 15 – 22, we would like to request clarification about charter school enrollment. We would like to ensure that the proposed language does not preclude children under the age of six (6) to attend a public charter school or do so by way of withholding the per pupil allocation for early years education, which is one of the cornerstones of Ho`okāko`o school values and practices to see gains in student achievement across the P-20 continuum.
- 302D-14 – Conversion charter schools; establishment (Page 26, lines 9 – 10). HC has strong concerns about the addition of language suggesting that the conversion school’s plan for “identifying, recruiting, and retaining highly qualified instructional faculty, as defined by the department” might be misinterpreted to suggest that current policy to promote alternative pathways for the certification of teachers may come into conflict with the Department’s definitions of “highly qualified” teachers. HC respectfully recommends that this language be removed to allow for charter school recruitment of teachers using alternative pathways for teacher certification in line with the charter school’s mission and academic program.
- 302D – 21 – Annual board report (Page 40, line 16). The additional language: “shall include only those students who fall within the purview of section 302A-1132” will prohibit funding for students enrolled in kindergarten or students of various ages who are retained to increase their academic achievement. We would be challenged to support a bill that would not allow for continued per-pupil funding for these groups of students, especially as the State moves to increase funding for early years education which research shows to be directly linked to higher levels of student achievement K-12, and beyond.

In summary, Ho`okāko`o Corporation generally supports the changes in this bill that support increased accountability for student and school performance by all actors in the public charter school sector. We would like to ensure that, in realizing these positive changes, concurrent funding levels do not decrease but rather support public charter student performance in grades K-12, as well as college and career readiness. Ho`okāko`o believes this support begins in the early years of a child’s education, before Kindergarten. Ho`okāko`o was also the pioneer of Extended Learning Time (ELT) in the State of Hawaii, in order to ensure that the academic, social-emotional and physical well-being of our public school children is being met to a very high standard. We applaud the Committee’s efforts on behalf of our public charter school children and thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



Megan McCorriston
Executive Director



KANU O KA 'ĀINA LEARNING 'OHANA

Grows womb-to-tomb models of education that advance Hawaiian culture for a sustainable Hawai'i

Testimony as of February 1, 2013
SB244
EDU

LATE TESTIMONY

February 5, 2013

Aloha Chair Tokua, Vice Chair Kidani and Education Committee Members,

My name is Taffi Wise, testifying on behalf of Kanu o ka 'Āina - a member of Nā Lei Na'auao & HPCSN.

It was an honor to speak to you on February 1, 2013 at the joint committee hearing. The following are the points I was requesting you consider as you move these two bills forward.

Re: **SB244**: Requesting revisions

1. Regarding the 5% rule – no disrespect was intended in the past, charters were processed as DOE “venders” for the purposes of funding therefore the constitutional provision did not appear to be applicable to us. As adamantly stated, the constitutional carry over limitation must apply to charters, conversely so should the states obligation to provide facilities.
2. Please **remove** line 16, page 40, “shall include only those students who fall within the purview of section 302A-1132.”
3. Please consider **allowing charter school governing boards outside legal representation at their own expense**, especially for the purposes of negotiating the “bilateral contracts”. This would eliminate the time delays and inherent AG conflict of interest.
4. Section 302D-6 please include “all **internationally** and nationally recognized principles and standards....”.

Mahalo nui for all you do to support our children`s educational opportunities.

KANU O KA 'ĀINA LEARNING 'OHANA



Executive Director
Taffi Wise



West Hawai'i Explorations Academy

A Public Charter School located at the Natural Energy Laboratory Hawai'i, Keahole Point, Kona

73-4460 Queen Ka'ahumanu Highway

Kailua Kona, Hawai'i 96740

Phone: 808.327.4751

Email: explorations@whca.net

Domain: www.whca.net

Facsimile: 808.327.4750

February 5, 2013

Re: SB244

Position: Support with revisions

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair

Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice-Chair

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair Kidani, and Esteemed Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to improve public education for the sake of Hawai'i's keiki. I respectfully point out that some proposals in SB244 may actually become barriers to West Hawai'i Explorations Academy's efforts to provide high quality education via model hands-on, STEM methodologies.

In light of the recent severe economic downturn, carrying a buffer of 60-90 days operations (17-25%) seems a much more reasonable practice than the proposed 5% carryover language. As you know, charters must use what are generally considered operational funds to provide facilities, and this language will create a barrier to WHEA's progress. Restricting carryover in this way will hinder efforts to build smart using economies of scale, versus piecemeal in a "use it or lose it" manner. Schools that accumulate carryover funds specifically for program improvements, equipment and buildings should be allowed to show these funds as "restricted," and not have the amounts counted against the "5% carryover" notion.

In a related matter, in the case of WHEA being sited within an operating state facility (NELHA), providing clarifying language empowering governing boards to design, plan and build facilities under their internal policies and procedures for the procurement of goods and construction would be helpful in encouraging educational partnerships between state departments. WHEA actually began as a DOE and NELHA partnership in 1994, and such models of collaboration should be encouraged and cultivated.

(d) Governing boards shall be exempt from chapter 103D, but shall develop internal policies and procedures for the procurement of goods and services, including planning, design and construction of school facilities, consistent with the goals of public accountability and public procurement practices. Governing boards and charter schools are encouraged to use the provisions of chapter 103D wherever possible; provided that the use of one or more provisions of chapter 103D shall not constitute a waiver of the exemption from chapter 103D and shall not subject the charter school to any other provision of chapter 103D.

On an unrelated note, Section 3, amending 302A-1132 appears to unnecessarily add "public charter school," when "public school" should already suffice.

Mahalo Nui for your consideration and support.

Curtis Muraoka, Co-Director



**STATE OF HAWAII
Kualapu'u School
Public Conversion Charter**

P O Box 260
Kualapu'u, Molokai, Hawaii 96757
Phone: (808) 567-6900, Fax: (808) 567-6906

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Education

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair

Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Re: SB 244 – Relating to Education

Wednesday, February 6, 2013, 3:00 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 414

Honorable Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the Senate Education Committee,
Re: SB244 – Support with reservations

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on SB244. Kualapu'u Public Conversion Charter School, located on Moloka'i and is the largest elementary school on the island with 375 students. Kualapu'u also houses the island's Hawaiian language immersion program for elementary students. Kualapu'u Public Conversion Charter School is also a major feeder school to DOE Molokai Middle and Molokai High Schools. Kualapu'u is one of three schools under Ho'okako'o Corporation, our local school board. Along with Ho'okako'o, we appreciate Chair Tokuda's tireless efforts on behalf of our public school children to raise the bar for high quality public charter education and advocate for a charter school system that is predicated on governing board and school leader accountability for student performance.

The task to create legislation that promotes a highly functioning public charter school system was not an easy one however Kualapu'u School and Ho`okako`o feels that these changes closely align and, indeed, validate the work of our organization and our school.

While Kualapu'u School is in general support of these changes, we would like to request clarification on language in particular sections of this bill.

- 37-Charter schools; carryover of funds (Page 1, line 4): I would like to support that charter schools have unlimited capacity to have carryover funds. As a former DOE principal who operated under the 5% carryover restriction, I was unable to fully use funds strategically for long term planning for student achievement. In the current unrestricted carryover environment, I am now able to use state funds more strategically, plan for phasing in long-term projects, and make better use of state funds for impact. Under DOE, I used to spend money just to spend money, the "use or lose" mentality.
- 302D-C – Enrollment (Page 6, line 1). We would request clarification about the consultation process by which the DOE can consult the conversion school about the "realignment" of the

charter school's service area as part of the Department's "overall service area reviews". In that same section, Page 6, lines 15 – 22, we would like to request clarification about charter school enrollment. We would like to ensure that the proposed language does not preclude children under the age of six (6) to attend a public charter school or do so by way of withholding the per pupil allocation for early years education, which is one of the cornerstones of Ho`okāko`o school values and practices to see gains in student achievement across the P-20 continuum.

- 302D-14 – Conversion charter schools; establishment (Page 26, lines 9 – 10). HC has strong concerns about the addition of language suggesting that the conversion school's plan for "identifying, recruiting, and retaining highly qualified instructional faculty, as defined by the department" might be misinterpreted to suggest that current policy to promote alternative pathways for the certification of teachers may come into conflict with the Department's definitions of "highly qualified" teachers. HC respectfully recommends that this language be removed to allow for charter school recruitment of teachers using alternative pathways for teacher certification in line with the charter school's mission and academic program.
- 302D – 21 – Annual board report (Page 40, line 16). The additional language: "shall include only those students who fall within the purview of section 302A-1132" will prohibit funding for students enrolled in kindergarten or students of various ages who are retained to increase their academic achievement. We would be challenged to support a bill that would not allow for continued per-pupil funding for these groups of students, especially as the State moves to increase funding for early years education which research shows to be directly linked to higher levels of student achievement K-12, and beyond.

In summary, Kualapu'u School generally supports the changes in this bill that support increased accountability for student and school performance by all actors in the public charter school sector. We would like to ensure that, in realizing these positive changes, concurrent funding levels do not decrease but rather support public charter student performance in grades K-12, as well as college and career readiness. Kualapu'u believes this support begins in the early years of a child's education, before Kindergarten. We currently have a 4-year old pre-kindergarten program for 18 students approved by the Charter School Review Panel. Kualapu'u also has an Expanded Learning Time (ELT) program with a site-based agreement with HSTA, in order to ensure that the academic, social-emotional and physical well-being of our public school children is being met to a very high standard. We feel that the increased flexibility along with accountability have allowed our school provided a high standard of education. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,



Lydia M. Trinidad
Principal
Kualapu'u Public Conversion Charter School
Kualapu'u, Moloka'i, Hawai'i