

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR



CATHERINE PAYNE  
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII  
**STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**  
**(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)**

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>  
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Tel: 586-3775 Fax: 586-3776

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FOR: SB2516 SD2 Relating to Facilities Funding for Charter Schools  
DATE: Friday, March 28, 2014  
TIME: 3:00 p.m.  
COMMITTEE(S): House Committee on Finance  
ROOM: Conference Room 308  
FROM: Tom Hutton, Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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**Testimony in support of SB2516 SD2**

Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Nishimoto and Johanson, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission is pleased to submit this testimony in strong support of this measure, which would make a general fund appropriation for the Commission to allocate to charter schools for facilities projects, based, in part, on the need and performance of the respective schools.

The need to address facilities costs is arguably the single greatest unaddressed challenge for Hawaii’s chartering system. Currently, start-up charter schools must pay for the costs of their facilities from out of their already stretched operational funds.

As noted in the bill’s findings, the Commission currently is implementing a Facilities Pilot Program for the awarding of funds to charter schools for relatively small-scale facilities projects and has allocated approximately \$680,000 of federal Impact Aid funds to this program from out of a temporary but sizable increase in such funds for the current fiscal year. Funds for the pilot program are planned for distribution around the beginning of the 2014 academic year.

Despite some controversy among some schools over this initiative, the Commission has seized the opportunity to move forward, in an attempt to demonstrate that a program for charter school facilities will prove a sound investment for the public, and, importantly, to allow the system to work through any legal and practical issues before any additional state funds are

invested. The appropriation envisioned in this bill would enable the Commission to continue this program after the federal Impact Aid funds awarded in the pilot are exhausted.

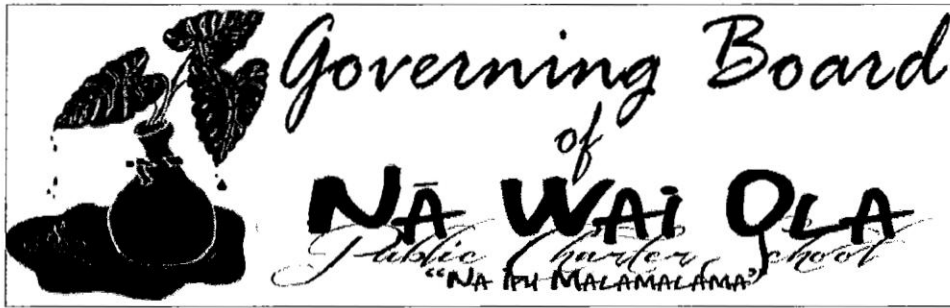
We note that this year, as in past years, the Commission also submitted on the schools' behalf capital improvement project (CIP) requests totaling some \$31 million. Eligibility for these requests is limited to start-up charter schools located on state land. We believe that these projects are meritorious, but, as in past years, so far none has been included in the budget. The Commission recognizes that there have been questions regarding CIP funding for charter schools, and we would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with the Legislature, the Department of Budget and Finance, and others to identify and address those questions. If in the meantime, however, traditional CIP projects for start-up charters are not to be considered, and if some means of state financing cannot be utilized by some schools, in our view it is all the more important that several options for providing incremental support for the charter schools' varied facilities needs be implemented.

In this regard the Commission notes that another measure before this Committee, SB 2517 SD2, Relating to Charter Schools, would authorize the Commission to request the issuance of general obligation bonds from the Director of Finance for charter school facilities needs. We address this proposal in separate testimony, but to the extent that the financing mechanism proposed under that measure would be unavailable for certain types of equally compelling charter school facilities costs, we would respectfully request that, at least for discussion purposes at this stage in the legislative process, the Committee consider the two proposals to be complementary, rather than mutually exclusive.

The Commission also believes that a third proposal for charter school facilities support that was reported out by this Committee is worthy of the Legislature's continued consideration. HB 2576 HD1 SD1, Relating to Education, would make an appropriation for a charter school facilities funding but also would establish an income tax credit for taxpayers who make contributions to the development of charter school facilities and would allow funds to be used for credit enhancement as well as project financing.

The Commission acknowledges that revised projections by the Council on Revenues complicate the prospects for these proposals. Nevertheless, we remain hopeful that among the various proposals currently in motion in the Legislature, a way can finally be found to make a start in addressing this longstanding problem.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 2516 SD2

A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO FUNDING FOR  
CHARTER SCHOOLS

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair

Friday, March 28, 2014, 3:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Honorable Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Nishimoto and Johanson, and Members of the Committee on Finance, Maurice C. Messina, Na Wai Ola Public Charter School (PCS) Governing Board Chair submits the following testimony in support of Senate Bill No. 2516 SD2.

The purpose of this measure is to appropriate funds for the State Public Charter School Commission to allocate to Charter Schools for facilities projects based, in part, on the need and performance of the Charter Schools.

The need to address facilities costs is arguably the single greatest unaddressed challenge for Hawaii's Charter Schools - Na Wai Ola PCS is no exception. Our school is classified as a "Recognition School" and the only Charter School in the state to be ranked in this first tier; however, our students and staff must endure daily hardships that are directly tied to a lack of facilities funding.

The costs of facilities construction, rental, maintenance and repair directly impacts and limits the funds Charter Schools can access for student education. With instructional budgets already seriously under resourced, every dollar spent on facilities are taken directly from our funding for classrooms. Charter Schools currently receive less funding than their DOE counterparts and are left to their own devices to raise additional capital to make up the difference.

For these reasons, I STRONGLY SUPPORT the passage of Senate Bill No. 2516 SD2. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Respectfully,  
Maurice C. Messina  
Chair, Na Wai Ola PCS Governing Board



Friday, March 28, 2014  
3:00 PM  
Conference Room 308

TESTIMONY TO  
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE  
ON FINANCE

**RE: SB 2516 SD2– Relating to Facilities Funding for Charter Schools**

Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Nishimoto and Johanson, and members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Witt, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaiian Educational Council (HEC). In a partnership between HEC and the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS), Nainoa Thompson and I have founded the Mālama Honua Learning Center (MHLC), a public charter school committed to providing the students of Hawai'i a rigorous, values-based, and place-based education. MHLC stands to provide the community with a school dedicated to indigenous cultural values that nourish goodness; in addition to helping students develop into wise, compassionate navigators of their learning, lives and 21st century global world.

The purpose of our school is to perpetuate the legacy of the Worldwide Voyage (WWV). All of the invaluable lessons learned and knowledge gained over the course of the four-year voyage will reside at MHLC to benefit the students and teachers of Hawaii for many generations to come.

**HEC is in strong support of SB 2516 SD2**, a bill for an act which would appropriate funds for the state public charter schools for facilities projects.

HEC, as well as the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), an organization of which I am the Executive Director, believe in the public purpose of education and that families should have choices when it comes to the education of their children. Charter schools in Hawaii provide that option for our families who otherwise may not be able to find a regular public school that shares their educational values.

Charter schools currently receive less funding than their DOE counterparts for the education of their students and are left to their own devices to raise additional revenue to make up the difference. More importantly, charter schools must use these same operational funds to build new facilities or for the upkeep of their current ones, thereby stretching their already limited funds further.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.



# Ho'okāko'o Corporation

Hawaii State House of Representatives  
Committee on Finance

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair  
Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair

## **Testimony In Support of SB 2516 Relating to Facilities Funding for Charter Schools**

Honorable Chair Sylvia Luke,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on SB 2516. The Ho'okāko'o Corporation is committed to excellence in public education through our work with conversion charter schools, which educate nearly 20% of Hawaii's charter school student population in grades Pre-Kindergarten through 12.

HC wishes to express support for SB 2516.

Hawaii's charter schools have accepted the challenge to provide public education opportunities to Hawaii's children to promote their academic achievement and ensure their success in school and in life. Through innovations, best practices, and operational efficiencies, and while remaining accountable for the same state and federal standards and requirements, charters are attempting to give its students an educational experience and learning environment beyond what district schools are providing. But, as a charter school community, we are asked to build quality public schools with fewer dollars per pupil than non-charter schools receive.

The cost of facilities construction, rental, maintenance and repair directly impacts and limits funds charter schools can access for student education. With instructional budgets already seriously under resourced, every dollar spent on facilities are funds taken directly from our classrooms.

While efforts continue to achieve greater parity in per-pupil allocations, facilities funding for charter schools through appropriations to the State Charter School Commission will provide charters with a valuable resource and will strengthen partnerships as we together work to transform public education for all of Hawaii's public school students.

We appreciate this opportunity to testify on behalf of this legislation, and urge the committee to vote in favor of SB 2516.

Mahalo,

Megan McCorriston, Executive Director  
Ho'okāko'o Corporation



**finance1**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 26, 2014 8:05 AM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** stevealt@hawaiiantel.net  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB2516 on Mar 28, 2014 15:00PM

**SB2516**

Submitted on: 3/26/2014

Testimony for FIN on Mar 28, 2014 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Steven Alterman	Individual	Support	No

Comments: My child has excelled at WHEA charter school. Through a dedicated staff they have succeeded with few facilities and on a shoe string budget. I encourage you to support these schools, as they are succeeding in teaching our children.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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finance1

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Tuesday, March 25, 2014 7:32 PM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: nhhdebbie@hotmail.com  
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2516 on Mar 28, 2014 15:00PM

**SB2516**

Submitted on: 3/25/2014

Testimony for FIN on Mar 28, 2014 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Debra Washburn	Individual	Support	No

Comments: My family supports funding for WHEA school-which is an excelling school where as Kealekehe high is a failing school.

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**finance1**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 26, 2014 8:45 AM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** kkuehme@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB2516 on Mar 28, 2014 15:00PM

**SB2516**

Submitted on: 3/26/2014

Testimony for FIN on Mar 28, 2014 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
karl kuehme	Individual	Support	No

Comments: West Hawaii Explorations Academy has been a true blessing for my son and his girlfriend. These children will enter society as educated, motivated and creative adults, ready to make a positive difference in our world. Charter schools should receive full funding!!!

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## finance1

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 26, 2014 4:20 PM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** wheapcs@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB2516 on Mar 28, 2014 15:00PM

### SB2516

Submitted on: 3/26/2014

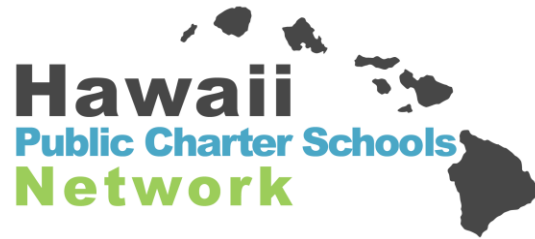
Testimony for FIN on Mar 28, 2014 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Curtis Muraoka	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chairs Johanson and Nishimoto, and Esteemed Members of the Committee on Finance: As you well know, facilities support has been the greatest challenge for start-up public charter schools like West Hawaii Explorations Academy. Despite nearly two decades as a consistently high-performing program, WHEA has operated on the thinnest of margins, parlaying \$300,000 of CIP provided pre-charter, to educate over 2,500 students (that's \$120 per student) at one of the most innovative and far-reaching public school programs in the nation. WHEA's Project-based Learning model puts forward over 30 student-driven projects every year, and WHEA's largest project, Aloha Kai, hosts over 1,500 visiting school children every year, primarily from Oahu DOE schools visiting the Big Island. Since 1994, Aloha Kai has served an estimated 28,000 visitors. As you consider varied types of support for your charter schools, please understand that the CS funding bills before you fulfill discreet niches of need. Neither one by itself is a panacea, but together they potentially address the majority of school situations. As you well know from your visit to WHEA last year, schools like ours are both needing and deserving of "Three Scoops of Aloha" on the menu of facilities funding. The most recent and tangible example of why the need for facilities is more urgent than ever is the new requirements of statewide testing, especially stricter ACT requirements. Our students take this high stakes test on picnic tables under tents because we lack facilities suitable to test large numbers within limited time frames. The day before testing, WHEA closed due to heavy rains and wind. If that had been test day, most students would not have shown up, and even if they did, we would not have enough space to follow ACT testing rules, and might have had our scores invalidated entirely. Please pass both SB2516 and SB2517, and continue to support HB2576. Mahalo Nui Loa for your consideration.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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**LATE**

State of Hawaii, House of Representatives  
Committee on Finance

DATE: Friday, March 28, 2014  
TIME: 3:00 pm.  
PLACE: Conference Room 308, Hawaii State Capitol

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, Vice Chair Johanson and members of the Committee on Finance,

Re: SB2516 SD2 – Strong Support

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on SB2516 SD2 Relating to Education. Hawaii Public Charter Schools Network (HPCSN) is committed to quality education for all public school students in Hawaii through our support of, and work with, Hawaii’s public charter schools. The number one priority for HPCSN this legislative session is to help make progress to address the financial challenges, most especially with facilities, that exist for Hawaii’s public charter schools. Our objectives are:

- 1) to gain facilities funding/support for charter schools in a variety of scenarios;
- 2) to reassure legislators that the charter accountability system is fair, strong and getting stronger;
- 3) to make reasonable and incremental progress on facilities funding; and,
- 4) during the process, to provide transparency and good data to help inform decisions.

In 2005 the Legislative Reference Bureau in its report entitled, *On the Level? Policy, Law and the Charter School Movement* stated, “Unlike their public school, conversion school, and school-within-school counterparts, start-up schools must rent or build facilities, or ask the public to donate facilities, or both. The cost of building public schools is usually spread out over twenty years through the issuance of general obligation bonds. Neither the BOE, the HIDOE, nor individual public schools are responsible for debt service—or the payment of principal and interest on these bonds. These bonds are the responsibility of the State, and are backed by it’s the full faith and credit (i.e., taxing power).” Some charter schools have facilities on state land and have access through the normal CIP process - others do not (see attachment).

Solutions are not easy given the state’s many priorities for funding. This bill is one part of a small group of bills to address funding and facilities support for charter schools. Previously, stumbling blocks would

be identified during discussions that would stop progress instead of work toward solutions. Now, the DOE, BOE, Dept. of Budget and Finance, State Public Charter School Commission and charter schools, through an informal working group, expressed their willingness to work through these challenges. HPCSN strongly supports the following bills as they relate to funding and facilities support:

- SB2516/HB2438 is funded by general funds and has the flexibility to provide facilities funding to charter schools that are currently not on state land. This solution also moves from previous efforts to obtain per pupil facilities funding to all charter schools to a more nuanced process that considers charter school performance and need.
- SB2517 proposes to address a more consistent way to fund charter school facilities for charter schools on state land.
- SB2518/HB1789 adds a line item to the state budget separate from the charter school per pupil funding to acknowledge the significant and growing responsibilities of each and every charter school governing board since the passing of Act 130 SLH of 2012. The charter school governance structure is very different from the HDOE model. This will allow charter schools additional funds to start to build a shared system of supports that charter schools lost when the Charter School Administrative Office was eliminated.
- HB2576 proposes a special fund and a tax credit system to support charter school facilities.

Attached is additional information that could be helpful to your decision making process.

Mahalo for your support of Hawaii's public students, their families and public charter schools.



Lynn Finnegan  
Executive Director

Attachments

# Charter Schools Facilities Bills

Disclosure: Confirmation of data is in progress with schools.

			SB2517	SB2516/ HB2438	HB2576
			CIP (G.O. Bond)	Facilities Pilot (Gen Funds)	Tax Credit/ Special Fund
On state land	Lease	Kawaikini, Kekaha+, Kanuikapono, Halau Ku Mana, ULS, Hakipuu, Ka Waihona,	P	A	A
	USDA loan	Kamakau, WHEA~+, Kanu o ka Aina, Volcano ~+	P	A	A
	Conversions	Kualapuu, Lanikai^, Waialae^, Kamaile, Waimea Middle^, Lapahoehoe	P	A	A
Not on state land	Lease	Kihei, KANAKA, MBTA, HTA, Voyager, Halau Lokahi, Connections+, Na Wai Ola, Kua o ka La, HAAS, SEEQS		P	A
	USDA loan	Kona Pacific, Innovations.		P	A
Facilities are on both on state land and not on state land		Nawahi	A	P	A
Checking status		Ka Umeke, Laahana		A	A

Note: Leases could be held by non-profit, school enters lease with non-profit

Blue = Checking/verifying with schools

P = Priority

A = Applies

+ Received GIA

^ Received CIP and/or upgrades through the DOE system

~ USDA in process

# McKeague and Roberts. Memo to Karen Street – Chair Hawaii Public Charter Schools Commission, CSAO, Honolulu, HI 11 October 2012.

Attachment 2

## Lump-sum Funding Request For Facilities

Act 130 Section 3(b)(1) provides the following with respect to a needs based facilities funding request:

“... in preparing the budget request with regard to needs-based facilities funding, the executive director shall ensure that, as a budget item separate from other operating costs, the request is accompanied by a detailed explanation of the formula used and a funding request breakdown by school;”

On September 17, 2012 the CSAO distributed an email to all charter schools requesting that they submit to the CSAO their projected facilities related expenses for FB13-15. The email included a spreadsheet for each charter school to use in providing their projected facilities expenses to the CSAO. The CSAO requested that charter schools provide all projected facilities related expenses, including utility costs, maintenance costs, custodial costs, etc.

The following table summarizes the data that was submitted by the charter schools. Four schools did not respond to the CSAO's request, for those four schools their projected facilities related expenses were estimated by the CSAO using actual FY11-12 facilities costs. The data was summarized into three different columns for each year: Projected lease/rental of building and grounds costs; adjusted projected facilities expenses and total projected facilities expenses. The CSAO has based the lump-sum facilities budget request on the adjusted facilities expenses columns.

The column labeled Rental/Lease of Building and Grounds is the most restricted of the columns. It reports only projected lease/rental of facilities costs as reported by the charter schools. The column labeled Adjusted Proj. Facilities Expenses includes rental/lease of buildings and grounds plus rental/lease of building/grounds equipment, depreciation of equipment and buildings and maintenance of building and grounds. The total projected facilities expenses column also includes projected utilities, maintenance and operations salaries and custodial supplies expenses.

This request is described as a “lump-sum” request because many of the charter schools, should this item be funded, would like to further develop a more precise distribution methodology different from the projected expense amounts per the attached schedule. The charter schools, with the HPCSN and the CSAO have not developed a methodology at the time this request was prepared. However, there is precedence for this based on the distribution methodology used in FY 10-11 and 11-12 for the small carve out funding for facilities in those fiscal years. Any distribution methodology so developed would be subject to Commission approval.

School Name	ORGID	Reported Projected Facilities Expenses FY13-14			Reported Projected Facilities Expenses FY14-15		
		Rental/Lease of Building & Grounds	Adjusted Proj. Facilities Expenses FY 13-14	Total Projected Facilities Expenses FY 13-14	Rental/Lease of Building & Grounds	Adjusted Proj. Facilities Expenses FY 14-15	Total Projected Facilities Expenses FY 14-15
Waialae-PCS	149	\$0	\$3,500	\$316,634	\$0	\$3,710	\$335,632
Kamalei	275	-	50,000	705,000	-	50,000	750,000
*Lanikai-PCS	320	-	15,034	178,468	-	15,034	178,468
Laupahoehoe Community PCS	377	-	64,000	420,513	-	69,120	334,604
Waimea Mid-PCS	394	-	25,000	218,494	-	25,000	221,605
Connections-PCS	396	501,600	549,900	971,300	501,600	549,900	971,300
Kanu O Ka'aina-PCS	397	537,500	582,500	786,000	537,300	583,300	790,000
Waters of Life-PCS	398	29,050	64,050	119,595	29,050	65,396	125,990
West Hi Explor-PCS	399	10,000	29,000	221,869	70,000	110,000	393,369
Kualapuu-PCS	411	-	-	298,614	-	-	275,614
KANAKA - PCS	466	45,000	69,000	103,100	45,000	69,000	103,700
Halau Ku Mana-PCS	540	300	399,878	521,898	300	399,878	521,898
Voyager-PCS	541	643,600	697,300	717,500	669,800	724,800	746,000
Halau Lokahi NC-PCS	542	321,780	334,280	434,588	321,780	334,280	434,588
Educ Lab: A Hawaii NC-PCS	543	100,000	125,000	125,000	100,000	125,000	125,000
Myron Thompson Acad-PCS	544	371,798	442,298	481,298	385,487	455,987	494,987
*Ka Waihona O Ka Naaauo-PCS	545	-	298,257	895,247	-	298,257	895,247
Hakipu'u Learning Ctr-PCS	546	17,021	53,181	80,681	18,000	56,000	84,000
Ke Kula O Kamakau Lab-PCS	547	144,105	174,447	385,617	144,105	174,447	416,517
Innovations-PCS	548	360,000	395,000	560,000	360,000	395,000	560,000
Ke Ana La'ahana-PCS	549	15,000	29,000	127,000	17,250	33,450	142,150
Hawaii Technology Academy	551	295,000	598,800	830,800	309,750	615,350	833,250
Kihai-PCS	554	816,000	1,139,000	1,454,000	900,000	1,240,000	1,574,000
Ke Kula Ni'ihau Kekaha-PCS	556	-	42,200	96,555	-	43,500	272,450
Kua O Ka La-PCS	557	147,615	153,615	225,115	167,615	179,615	270,115
Volcano Sch of A&S-PCS	560	36,918	66,518	198,268	38,764	70,265	208,183
Hi Academy of A&S-PCS	561	365,000	469,000	803,000	385,000	496,000	850,500
Ka 'Umeke Ka'eo-PCS	562	207,420	231,420	379,965	207,420	231,420	391,815
*Ke Kula Nawahi Iki Lab-PCS	563	133,632	162,246	358,347	133,632	162,246	358,347
*Kanuikaponu-PCS	564	1,690	8,434	50,038	1,690	8,434	50,038
Kawaikini	565	72,000	95,400	132,400	72,000	95,400	132,400
Kona Pacific	566	167,100	189,100	243,178	167,100	189,100	243,178
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>\$5,339,129</b>	<b>\$7,556,758</b>	<b>\$13,440,082</b>	<b>\$5,582,643</b>	<b>\$7,868,889</b>	<b>\$14,084,945</b>

\* These schools did not submit estimated FY 14 & FY15 facilities related costs. Therefore, their estimated costs were based on actual FY11 facilities costs.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

House of Representatives  
Twenty-Seventh Legislature 2014  
State of Hawai'i

**LATE**

TO: Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Honorable Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair  
Honorable Aaron Johanson, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Finance

DATE: March 28, 2014  
TIME: 3:00 p.m.  
PLACE: Conference Room 308  
Hawai'i State Capitol

FROM: Kamehameha Schools

**RE: SENATE BILL 2516, SD2, RELATING TO FACILITIES FUNDING FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS**

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, Vice Chair Johanson and members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on SB 2516, SD2, relating to facilities funding for charter schools. Kamehameha Schools offers comments in support of appropriating funds for the state public charter school commission to allocate to charter schools for facilities projects based, in part, on the need and performance of the charter schools. This bill also requires annual reporting to the legislature.

Kamehameha Schools supports promoting the achievement and success of Hawai'i's public school students and, as such, has been a collaborator with the Hawai'i public charter schools for over a decade. Through our work with public charter schools, we hope to significantly impact more children and their families through education. We believe charter schools provide positive choices for education and ultimately enhance both achievement and engagement for students across Hawai'i.

Financial support for the charter school system is crucial in maintaining the services these schools provide. We ask that you help to provide our state's most innovative educators with the strong support and stable foundation they need continue their positive growth. We believe efforts to improve the public charter school system improve access to education and, ultimately, enhance education for all of Hawai'i's children.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



March 27, 2014  
Supporting Testimony for SB 2516, SD2

**LATE**

Currently the level of funding directed to Hawaii's charter schools is just a part of the full cost of keeping the lights on. In some cases, the funding may not go much further beyond paying staff salary. This leaves each charter school on its own to find the money to pay rent in one of the most aggressive real estate markets on the planet.

It calls into question the very motivation for charter schools in Hawaii. The motivation should be to implement methodologies that have been proven to work in the rest of the country. The motivation should be to give Hawaii families these options for their children. If these are the motivation, then Hawaii's charter schools should be given a fair chance to succeed.

I do not think that being given a fair chance has to mean financial equality. However, there is a great disparity between the value of public school facilities and the lack of facilities for charter schools. We as a state must decide if we want our charter schools to succeed and strength our educational system or if they are a means to save money by spending significantly less on charter school students.

Thank you for supporting this bill.  
Justin Lolofie