

MAR 11 2016

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING A STUDY ON THE PER-PUPIL FUNDING SYSTEM FOR PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE SYSTEM FULFILLS ITS STATUTORY PURPOSE OF EQUALIZING OPERATIONAL FUNDING AMONG PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii's public charter schools are a part of the
2 state public education system and contribute to that system as a
3 whole by providing alternative educational options and modeling
4 innovative practices; and
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6 WHEREAS, each public charter school is a single state
7 entity, self-governed by a volunteer governing board,
8 independently managed, and primarily dependent on state funding
9 in order to operate; and
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11 WHEREAS, charter schools receive the majority of their
12 funding through general fund appropriations based on a general
13 fund per-pupil allotment, which is based on a formula that adds
14 up the total funding allocated to certain programs within the
15 Department of Education and then distributes moneys based on
16 reasonable projected enrollment figures for each public charter
17 school; and
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19 WHEREAS, section 302D-28, Hawaii Revised Statutes, mandates
20 that the non-facility general fund per-pupil funding for public
21 charter school students be the same as the general fund per-
22 pupil amount provided to the Department of Education in its most
23 recently approved executive budget; and
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25 WHEREAS, questions have been raised about whether the per-
26 pupil funding system equalizes funding for public charter
27 schools as intended; and
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29 WHEREAS, public charter schools must also meet other
30 expenses, including, for example, facility costs; and
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1 WHEREAS, the State Public Charter School Commission has
 2 warned in its annual reports that financial data from the public
 3 charter schools reveal both short-term financial strain as well
 4 as long-term operational sustainability challenges; now,
 5 therefore,

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 7 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
 8 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2016,
 9 that the Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to conduct a
 10 study on the per-pupil funding system to determine whether the
 11 system fulfills its statutory purpose of equalizing operational
 12 funding among public schools; and

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 14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that by June 30, 2016, the State
 15 Public Charter School Commission is requested to provide
 16 specific data to the Legislative Reference Bureau detailing how
 17 the present system of funding fails to achieve its statutory
 18 purpose of equalizing funding, to permit the Bureau to target
 19 its study and complete it in a timely manner; and

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 21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State Public Charter School
 22 Commission is requested to provide other information and
 23 assistance as requested by the Bureau; and

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 25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
 26 Bureau is requested to submit a report of its findings and
 27 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
 28 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
 29 the Regular Session of 2017; and

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 31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 32 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the Legislative
 33 Reference Bureau, Chairperson of the Board of Education, the
 34 Superintendent of Education, the Chairperson of the State Public
 35 Charter School Commission, and the Executive Director of the
 36 State Public Charter School Commission.

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