



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 02/05/2016  
**Time:** 02:00 PM  
**Location:** 309  
**Committee:** House Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 2739 RELATING TO STUDENT TRAVEL.

**Purpose of Bill:**

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education strongly supports HB 2739, which appropriates funds to support the Department of Education's Student Travel Program.

In its Advisory Opinion dated August 4, 2015, the Hawaii Ethics Commission concluded that acceptance by teachers and other DOE employees of free travel and other free benefits from private tour companies violated five sections or subsections of the State Ethics Code.

These sections include:

1. The "Gifts Law", HRS 84-11
2. The "Gifts Reporting Law", HRS 84-11.5
3. The "Fair Treatment Law", HRS 84-13
4. Conflicts of Interest, HRS 84-14(a)(2)
5. Conflicts of Interest, HRS 84-14(d)

Although the liberal construction of the State Ethics Code was intended to promote high standards of ethical conduct in state government, broad application of the Ethics Code has resulted in unfortunate consequences to Hawaii's public school students. If teachers and other employees of the Department are prohibited from accepting free travel, an important educational opportunity may be denied Hawaii's public school students.

For over thirty years, Hawaii's public school students have been afforded the

opportunity to participate in educational trips that enrich their academic experience and allow them to develop a more global perspective. Inspired by the possibility of connecting curriculum to real-world experiences, teachers and other DOE employees voluntarily commit their own time to research, plan, and implement these trips. This does not arise from a desire on the employees' part for personal gain, but from a love of helping students grow and experience new things. Without the dedication of educators who expend their own vacation time to teach and chaperone students for the duration of these trips, many students would not have the opportunity to visit such distant, historical, and enriching places.

Educational tour companies exist to help teachers facilitate meaningful and safe travel for students. These companies are equipped with customized itineraries, years of experience, and a network of resources in each destination. Although each company varies in its itineraries and the services it offers, there is one constant among them: teachers' travel expenses are covered. Providing teachers with free travel is an industry norm that recognizes the indispensable role that teachers play in making educational travel possible.

If teachers and other employees are prohibited from accepting free travel, an important educational opportunity may be denied Hawaii's public school students. Although group fundraising efforts help defray some costs, travel expenses to international destinations easily reach \$4,000 - \$5,000 per traveler. The cost of trips to mainland destinations average \$2,000 - \$3,000 per participant.

HB 2739 seeks an appropriation of \$405,000 for deposit to the Department's Student Travel Program, a sub-account of the Department's Gifts and Donations account. The requested sum is based upon the cost of funding three teacher chaperones on 20 mainland trips and 15 trips to international locations. The Department's historical experience indicates that 35 educational tours occur annually. If excess funds remain in the Student Travel Program after chaperone expenses are paid, the Department would like to offer grants to students otherwise unable to participate in education travel opportunities.

The Department respectfully requests your favorable consideration of this measure and thanks you for the opportunity to testify.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHERINE PAYNE  
CHAIRPERSON

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

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FOR: HB 2739 Relating to Education  
DATE: Friday, February 5, 2016  
TIME: 2:00 PM  
COMMITTEE(S): House Committee on Education  
ROOM: Conference Room 309  
FROM: Tom Hutton, Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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**Comments only for HB2739**

Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Ohno, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission appreciates the opportunity to submit these comments regarding Senate Bill 3103, "Relating to Education." When proposed legislation addresses "public schools," this generally is understood to include public charter schools. We note that the bill appropriates general funds to the Department of Education (DOE) to provide for the direct travel expenses of chaperones and to fund scholarships to provide financial assistance to students who would not otherwise be able to participate in educational travel.

If the proposed requirements are intended to apply to DOE school chaperones and students only, we respectfully request that the bill be amended to change the references to "public school chaperones and students" to say "department school chaperones and students." We note that the proposed general fund appropriation to the DOE would be factored into calculating per-pupil funding to charter schools. However, if the intent is to provide direct support for public charter school chaperones and students as well, we respectfully request that the bill be amended to make this clear.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

**HB2739**

Submitted on: 2/2/2016

Testimony for EDN on Feb 5, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

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

Comments:

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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**HB2739**

Submitted on: 2/3/2016

Testimony for EDN on Feb 5, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Arvid Tadao Youngquist	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Chair, EDN Committee, House of Representative Members of the Honorable Committee I support the intent of HB No. 2739 and its companion bill SB 3103 being heard this very same day. I feel that other than the eventual amount of the appropriation set aside for page 3 of this legislation, most of the remaining language of measure should be left intact. I have no quarrels with the Ethics Commission of the State of Hawaii, nor the HRS and respective Administrative Rules, but chaperons for minors (students is a great expense for not only the parents, but also for teachers, if and when they have to foot all the expenses themselves. Within the fiscal limitations, and prudence as well as "common sense", it will be beneficial for the recognition of the students as well as the educators, coaches, and appropriate support personnel to be given as much assistance as practicable. Any and all consideration by this committee and subsequent committee(s), will be recommended with gusto. Mahalo, Arvid Tadao Youngquist Oahu Resident and Voter

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