



LATE

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
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Date: 02/12/2016
Time: 01:15 PM
Location: 229
Committee: Senate Education
Senate Judiciary and Labor

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2110 RELATING TO ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS FOR JUVENILES INVOLVED IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM.

Purpose of Bill: Appropriates funds to the department of education for two alternative schools to provide ongoing education to juveniles involved in the justice system or at risk of involvement in the justice system.

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of SB 2110 to provide ongoing education to juveniles involved in the justice system or at risk of involvement in the justice system for Alternative Learning Centers (ALCs) in Leeward Oahu and Honolulu districts.

Respectfully, it would be the Department's preference to expand programmatic services across all complex ALCs for at-risk youth to ensure that they have access to appropriate educational and support services in an alternative learning center. Further, the Department requests that the language in the bill be revised to strike the term "grant-in-aid" to better support ongoing program sustainability.

Currently, existing appropriated funds are allocated to complex areas. Complex area superintendents and principals collaborate and identify how to best serve their target juvenile population in their school community.

We appreciate that the bill recognizes the need for an additional general fund appropriation to assist with the effective implementation of this measure. The Department requests that the implementation of SB 2110 would not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in our Executive Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



LATE

SB2110
RELATING TO ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS FOR JUVENILES INVOLVED IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Senate Committee on Education
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

February 12, 2016

1:15 p.m.

Room 229

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) offers the following **COMMENTS** on SB2110, which would provide for the establishment of alternative schools for youth who have truancy or academic challenges, or who have been adjudicated by the juvenile justice system.

In 2010, OHA produced a comprehensive report detailing the overrepresentation and disparate treatment of Native Hawaiians in the criminal justice system.¹ This report found that, similar to Native Hawaiian adults, Native Hawaiian youth are disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system, and are also most frequently arrested in all offense categories.² Since 2012, OHA has administered the Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force (NHJTF), which was tasked by the Legislature to address this multi-faceted issue.³ In its report, the Task Force acknowledged that “an individual’s contact with the criminal justice system, regardless of race, often begins at youth.”⁴

OHA expresses concerns about removing youth from the stability provided by their home schools and friend groups at critical and particularly challenging times in their lives. For example, adjudicated youth who have experienced the stigma and trauma of involvement in the juvenile justice system and who have been removed from their ‘ohana and communities may have a much greater need for the support provided by well-known friends, teachers, and mentors, as well as a consistent academic environment. Accordingly, the resources provided by this measure may be better directed toward research of evidence-based intervention options, that minimize deviant influences while continuing the positive benefits of mainstream socialization.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

¹ THE OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, THE DISPARATE TREATMENT OF NATIVE HAWAIIANS IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM (2010), *available at* http://www.oha.org/sites/default/files/ir_final_web_rev.pdf.

² *Id.* at 68.

³ THE OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, NATIVE HAWAIIAN JUSTICE TASK FORCE REPORT (2012), *available at* http://19of32x2yl33s8o4xza0gf14.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2012NHJTF_REPORT_FINAL_0.pdf.

⁴ *Id.* at 21.