



HB2508 HD1
RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS
Senate Committee on Education

March 19, 2018

3:15 p.m.

Room 229

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HB2508 HD1, which would provide funding to the State Public Charter School Commission for charter schools' infrastructure costs, rental or lease of facilities, and repair and maintenance of network infrastructure, and offers suggested **AMENDMENTS** to further effectuate the intent of this measure. **This bill would help alleviate the unique financial burdens borne by start-up public charter schools in meeting their basic facilities needs.**

Addressing public charter schools' facilities needs has been a critical and longstanding issue in the charter school community. Currently, start-up charter schools must pay for their substantial facilities costs using their already-stretched operational funds. This is a cost that is not borne by conversion charter schools, or schools under the Hawai'i Department of Education.

Significantly, the State Board of Education (BOE) has recognized the importance of our public charter schools, as an integral component of our public education strategy. On December 6, 2016, the BOE approved an updated State Education Strategic Plan for 2017-2020, which describes "the shared objectives for equity and excellence for every child across Hawai'i's nearly 300 public schools, including our public charter schools and Hawaiian language medium schools"; the Plan includes the objective that "Hawai'i public schools will foster innovation and the expansion of existing public school 'Bright Spots,' which includes learning from charter schools that were established as innovation labs" (emphasis added).

Hawai'i's public charter schools are indeed deserving of equity, and have already demonstrated their potential for innovation and excellence notwithstanding their unique financial challenges. Most recently, public charter schools have achieved high rankings in the latest Strive HI SY 2016-2017 performance scores, with certain public charter schools even dominating in certain indicators; lessons learned in such high-performing charter schools can benefit students and schools throughout our public education system. **To fully realize the potential for innovation in charter schools that may in turn foster greater student success in our public school system as a whole, it is critical that public charter schools receive adequate appropriations for facilities funding.** HB2508 HD1 will help bring equity to charter schools and address the longstanding problem of financing charter schools' facilities.

As this measure notes, Act 234, Session Laws of Hawaii 2015, authorized a framework for providing facilities funding and support for public charter school facilities with adequate prioritization, oversight, and accountability by the charter school facilities funding work group convened by the State Public Charter School Commission.

However, it has recently been brought to OHA's attention that provisions of Act 234 (as codified in HRS §302D-29.5(a)), specifically regarding legislative appropriations and bond authorizations for the "design, planning, construction, repair, and maintenance of public charter school improvements to . . . expand or improve instructional space," may not currently authorize funding for rental or lease of charter school facilities, a major facilities cost for start-up schools. **Accordingly, OHA recommends the Committee consider revising HB2508 HD1 to add a new section amending HRS §302D-29.5(a) to better accomplish this measure's intent of allowing funding for rental or lease of facilities, as described further below.**

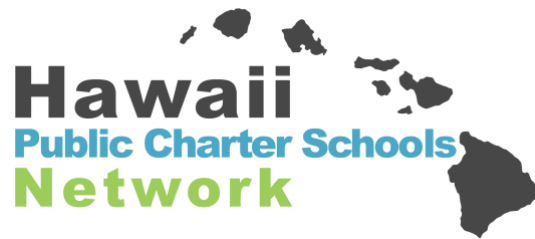
OHA further recommends that self-referential language be deleted from HRS §302D-29.5(a) for clarification purposes. **OHA respectfully submits that the language in section 302D-29.5 requiring appropriations under that section to be kept separate from appropriations made pursuant to the same section, is confusing and recommends its removal.**

Accordingly, OHA recommends the inclusion of an additional Section in this measure, to be appropriately inserted and to read as follows:

"SECTION 2. Section 302D-29.5 is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) Beginning with the 2016-2017 fiscal year, and each fiscal year thereafter, the legislature shall consider making an appropriation and bond authorization to the commission for the design, planning, construction, repair, and maintenance of public charter school improvements to address issues of health, safety, and legal compliance; expand or improve instructional space; provide for rental or lease of facilities; provide for food services; or provide restroom facilities. The appropriation and bond authorization for charter schools shall be separate from, and in addition to, any appropriation made to charter schools pursuant to ~~[this section and]~~ section 302D-28. These amounts shall be prioritized for allocation by the charter school facilities funding working group."

Therefore, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS WITH AMENDMENTS** HB2508 HD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.



March 19, 2018

To: Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education

From: Jeannine Souki, Executive Director
Hawaii Public Charter Schools Network

Re: **HB 2508 HD1 – RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS – SUPORT**
Conference Room 229 – Hawaii State Capitol – March 19, 2018, 3:15 P.M.

On behalf of the Hawaii Public Charter School Network (HPCSN), I respectfully submit our testimony in strong support for HB 2508 HD1, Relating to Charter Schools. Passing this bill represents a significant step to provide funding equity for all Hawaii public school students.

Public charter schools are serving 11,160 students in Hawaii in 2018. Schools in non-DOE facilities do not have adequate resources to cover facilities costs, which on average take a 10 percent of the non-facilities per pupil funding (\$7383/student in SY17-18).

Facilities costs do vary and sometimes are as much as 30 percent of the non-facilities per pupil amount. This means charter schools may lose anywhere from 10 to 30 percent of its instructional dollars. This also means that limited funds must stretch further to pay for salary increases and any bonuses required by state collective bargaining contracts, curriculum and programs, equipment and supplies, utilities, any school meal or transportation costs provided, and a mountain of other expenses required to run a school.

HB2508 helps to cover basic needs of students

- Adequate facilities are a basic student need and educational need to shelter kids from the elements of wind, rain or direct sun exposure and provide a comfortable and safe learning environment.
- Facilities costs take away from direct educational program costs if there are no adequate facilities funds to cover these fixed costs.
- The state recognizes these distinct needs by separately funding educational programs and the facilities and maintenance needs of DOE schools.
- Likewise, providing separate facilities funding for charter schools offsets fixed costs that ultimately add back resources intended for student educational program needs.

Charters that receive facilities funding may demonstrate the efficacy offsetting fixed facilities costs to add back resources for student academic needs or providing teacher training and support.

- HB2508 is intended to provide equity not equality to charter schools. With a \$10 million requested appropriation based on audited facilities expenditures by charter schools, this bill is not seeking a per pupil facility distribution request equal to traditional public schools (currently \$1700/student in SY2014-15, if applied to charter schools equally this would be double the requested amount). Instead this bill provides equitable funding to address current school expenditures on facilities costs.
- State Charter School Commission has annual independent audits for all charters which reflect the true expenditures on facilities, technology infrastructure, repair and maintenance costs. The Commission may establish a grant program that utilizes a proportional distributional formula based on audited financial reports of actual spending for any charter school per pupil facilities funds that are appropriated. Grant awards to qualifying schools may be based on demonstrated facility needs. California has a similar program for distributing facilities funds that is supplemented by a federal charter school grant program.
- Finally, providing separate state per pupil facilities funding is important to secure federal funds that help charter schools. States that established facilities funding for charter schools have leverage over other states in federal Charter Support Program (CSP) grant competitions. Next week Congress will be finalizing a budget for FY18-19 that will include \$500 million in funding for the federal CSP. This is a significant increase over the prior year from \$342 million. CSP funds are critical to support the launching of new schools, the replication and expansion of successful charter schools, and offer important resources to help charter schools access facilities.

Research shows a significant relationship between the condition of school facilities and student performance. In Hawai'i there is a great variance in the condition of facilities from school to school. But some charter schools now are still lacking even the most basic needs like classrooms with walls, flooring, windows and doors; plumbed bathroom facilities; school kitchens and cafeterias; and other weather-proofed spaces we would typically see in a public school. HPCSN believes every student is deserving of safe and appropriate school facilities including those who chose to enroll in public charters.

HPCSN strongly supports this bill to appropriate funds for infrastructure costs, the rental or lease of charter school facilities and the repair and maintenance of network infrastructure of charter schools because it can help raise the state's competitiveness to CSP grants for charter schools. We humbly urge your support for the passage of this bill.

HPCSN works to improve the operation and governance of public charter schools in Hawai'i and to be a voice for children and families that seek educational choices and quality in an independent public-school setting. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-2508-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/19/2018 8:54:26 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/19/2018 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Steve Hirakami	Testifying for HAASPCS	Support	No

Comments:

Please support this important bill to support our students in charter schools. Money taken from their educational funds to put a roof over their heads and turn the lights on could be better spent on giving them more access to quality education.

HB-2508-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/18/2018 3:15:59 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/19/2018 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for OCC Legislative Priorities Committee, Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2508-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/18/2018 3:47:44 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/19/2018 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sina Pruder	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this measure. My son has attended a public charter school for the last 7 years. I've often seen the school's administration often struggle to find funding to pay for rent and building repairs. A big portion of the money that is given to the public charter school has to go to rent. DOE schools don't have to worry about paying rent. My son has to pay \$5 for his lunch. His lunch is not subsidized like the students who attend a regular DOE school. Parents are often asked to participate in fundraisers to help the school raise funds to pay for supplies and building maintenance work because the funding to charter schools are inadequate. Charter Schools in Hawaii need the additional funding. Please pass this measure.

HB-2508-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/18/2018 9:55:08 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/19/2018 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Scott Garris	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2508-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/19/2018 6:34:48 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/19/2018 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shane Albritton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2508-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/19/2018 6:59:08 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/19/2018 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Star Carlin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support funding for adequate facilities for our students.

Providing for adequate facilities to shelter kids from the elements of wind, rain or direct sun exposure (such as instead of tents, adequate classroom spaces with walls, lighting and flooring; toilets not port-a-potty; or covered spaces for school meals or schoolwide assemblies).

- Adequate facilities are a basic student need and educational need.
- Facilities costs take away from direct educational program costs if there are no adequate facilities funds to cover these fixed costs.
- The state recognizes these distinct needs by separately funding educational programs and the facilities and maintenance needs of DOE schools.
- Likewise, providing separate facilities funding for charter schools offsets fixed costs that ultimately add back resources intended for student educational program needs.
- Finally, providing separate state per pupil facilities funding is important to secure federal funds that help charter schools.

Respectfully,

Star Carlin

teacher Volcano School of Arts and Sciences

HB-2508-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/19/2018 9:14:40 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/19/2018 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Usha Kilpatrick Kotner	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support this essential legislation. Adequate facilities are a basic student need and educational need. Facilities costs take away from direct educational program costs if there are no adequate facilities funds to cover these fixed costs, which compromises the quality of education in charter schools.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

Senate Committee on Education

Time: 3:15 p.m.

Date: March 19, 2018

Where: State Capitol Room 229

TESTIMONY

By Ka'ano'i Walk

Kamehameha Schools

RE: HB 2508, HD1, Relating to Charter Schools

E ka Luna Ho'omalu Kidani, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalu Kahele, a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike Ho'ona'auao o ka 'Aha Kenekoa, aloha! My name is Ka'ano'i Walk and I serve as the Senior Policy Analyst of the Kūamahi Community Education Division of Kamehameha Schools.

We are writing to **support** HB 2508, HD1, relating to charter schools, which appropriates funds for infrastructure costs, rental or lease assistance of charter school facilities, and the repair and maintenance of network infrastructure for charter schools. Adequate facilities are essential to providing an equitable public education to charter school students.

Kamehameha Schools advocates for and supports the achievement of Hawai'i's Native Hawaiian public school students. As such, we have been a collaborator with the Hawai'i public charter schools for over a decade. Through our work with Hawaiian-focused public charter schools, we hope to significantly impact more children and their families through education. We believe that Hawaiian-focused charter schools provide quality educational choices for all families and ultimately enhance both academic achievement and engagement for students. This bill is a good first step toward achieving necessary and sustainable funding for public charter schools. **Please advance this measure.**

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an organization striving to advance a thriving Lāhui where all Native Hawaiians are successful, grounded in traditional values, and leading in the local and global communities. We believe that community success is individual success, Hawaiian culture-based education leads to academic success and local leadership drives global leadership.

'A'ohē hana nui ke alu 'ia. No task is too large when we all work together! Mahalo nui.

HB-2508-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/19/2018 10:14:48 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/19/2018 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kai Knudsen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Kai and I am a student at the charter school SEEQS and I support this bill because of a couple of reasons. First, we get less money from the DOE and still have to pay for our campus. If we would get more money, we can use that money on our school and either have a better campus so that we can learn more and also experience things that we could not at our campus right now. Now we are sharing a campus with Kaimuki High School and if we had the whole campus to us, we can have more students, use things like the gym, auditorium, and things that we can not use and also benefit our learning so that our future that we will live in, can be a brighter future because all kids are the future.



To: Senate Committee on Education
Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Kaiali'i Kahele, Vice Chair

From: Ku'uipo Laumatia
Kamalani Academy Governing Board Chair

Date: March 19, 2018

Re: HB 2508 HD1 Relating to Charter Schools

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kahele, and Members of the Senate Committee on Education,

I strongly **support** HB 2508 HD1, which appropriates general funds for infrastructure costs, rental or lease assistance, and the repair and maintenance of network infrastructure for charter schools.

Kamalani Academy **is** an arts integration, Hawaiian-focused public charter school serving students in Grades K-8. Kamalani is open to all students and our students must meet the same academic standards as all other Hawaii public school students. Our arts integration curriculum uses the arts—drama, dance, music, and the like—to teach the traditional academic subjects of math, reading, science, and social studies while also incorporating Hawaiian language, dance, music, and culture.

Kamalani is located at 1403 California Avenue, Wahiawa, in the building previously occupied by Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School. We had to take out a temporary loan of approximately of \$2.8 million to renovate the building we are using for our school. We have been working on securing permanent financing for our loan but have met many roadblocks because of City & County and State of Hawaii regulations.

Even though we were fortunate to secure the location and facility that we have, we are still facing many facilities-related challenges. Our students have no separate facility or space to eat their lunches and are currently eating in their classrooms. Our students and faculty have no multi-purpose room which is sorely needed in an arts integrated approach to learning—drama, dance, creative movement, etc.

A public charter school should receive the same treatment as the DOE schools concerning facilities funding and support. If Kamalani had received additional funding for facilities, we may have been better able to secure or create the additional spaces needed for our school. Also, more of the per-pupil allocation could be used for the actual operation of the



school for the students. In the end, all charter schools need a way to secure financing for infrastructure, rentals and leases, and the ongoing repair and maintenance of infrastructure to operate our schools. Any support that this Committee and the Legislature can provide to charter schools relating to facilities funding would be greatly appreciated.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

HB-2508-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/19/2018 11:05:49 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/19/2018 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Erica Yamauchi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am Erica Yamauchi, a parent of a charter elementary school child from Kaimuki, and am writing in strong support of this bill.

I urge you to pass this bill, which will provide for adequate facilities to shelter kids from the elements of wind, rain or direct sun exposure (such as instead of tents, adequate classroom spaces with walls, lighting and flooring; toilets not port-a-potty; or covered spaces for school meals or schoolwide assemblies). Adequate facilities are a basic student need and educational need.

Facilities costs take away from direct educational program costs if there are no adequate facilities funds to cover these fixed costs. The state recognizes these distinct needs by separately funding educational programs, and the facilities and maintenance needs of DOE schools. Likewise, providing separate facilities funding for charter schools offsets fixed costs that ultimately add back resources intended for student educational program needs. Charters that receive facilities funding may demonstrate the efficacy offsetting fixed facilities costs to add back resources for student academic needs or providing teacher training and support.

HB2508 is intended to provide equity not equality to charter schools. With a \$10 million requested appropriation based on audited facilities expenditures by charter schools, this bill is not seeking a per pupil facility distribution request equal to traditional public schools (currently \$1700/student in SY2014-15, if applied to charter schools equally this would be double the requested amount). Instead this bill provides equitable funding to address current school expenditures on facilities costs. The State Charter School Commission has annual independent audits for all charters which reflect the true expenditures on facilities, technology infrastructure, repair and maintenance costs. The Commission may establish a grant program that utilizes a proportional distributional formula based on audited financial reports of actual spending for any charter school per pupil facilities funds that are appropriated. Grant awards to qualifying schools may be based on demonstrated facility needs. California has a similar program for distributing facilities funds that is supplemented by a federal charter school grant program.

Finally, providing separate state per pupil facilities funding is important to secure federal funds that help charter schools. States that established facilities funding for charter schools have leverage over other states in federal Charter Support Program (CSP)

grant competitions. Next week Congress will be finalizing a budget for FY18-19 that will include \$500 million in funding for the federal CSP. This is a significant increase over the prior year from \$342 million. CSP funds are critical to support the launching of new schools, the replication and expansion of successful charter schools, and offer important resources to help charter schools access facilities.

Thank you for your consideration, and I again ask you to pass this bill to adequately fund our charter school needs.

HB-2508-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/19/2018 11:12:57 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/19/2018 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Akiko Fujimoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

EDU Testimony

From: Shane Albritton <s.albritton@seeqs.org>
Sent: Monday, March 19, 2018 5:02 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Subject: Re: Written Testimony

Aloha Danica,

Thank you for your email. Please find my testimony below.

Mahalo,
Shane Albritton

Aloha Chair Kidani and Vice Chair Kahele,

My name is Shane Albritton, I'm a teacher at SEEQS Public Charter School in Kaimuki and I'm here to testify in support of HB 2508.

As you may know, SEEQS is unique in that we are the only public charter school that shares a campus with a DOE school. We currently share a campus with Kaimuki High School.

Last year, when the lease for the campus SEEQS had previously been renting expired, it took some work to find a new location, and the status of the 2017 - 2018 school year was in question for our 180 students, and our faculty and staff.

It wasn't until Principal Araki of Kaimuki High School agreed to host SEEQS at Kaimuki High School that our future as a school was assured.

We are very grateful to Principal Araki and Kaimuki High School, and at the same time conscious of our status as guests.

We currently occupy three classrooms, half of the cafeteria (which we use as a classroom), and a large tent. We also have shared office space in the Cafeteria and a trailer.

I teach in the tent, and as much as I love the flexibility of it, it is insecure. We have had multiple thefts throughout the year from both the tent and the cafeteria, and in light of the recent focus on school safety and lockdown drills, students and teachers alike have become acutely aware of the potential risk involved in having classes in such an insecure structure.

In the event of a lockdown situation, students and teachers in the tent have been instructed to cross the parking lot and enter the cafeteria.

During our last two lockdown drills, this detail was not lost on the students.

In short, Charter Schools need facility funding in order to address their most basic need - a safe place for children to learn.

Mahalo,
Shane Albritton

On Mon, Mar 19, 2018 at 4:38 PM, EDU Testimony <EDUTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov> wrote:

Aloha Shane,

Mahalo nui for coming in to provide oral testimony at today's Education hearing. Per Chair Kidani's request, please send your written testimony to this email so your input can be included in the record.

Mahalo,

Dancia

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