

HB533
Relating to
Charter
Schools

HB533

Measure Title: RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS.
 Report Title: Charter Schools; Facility Funding (\$)
 Description: Appropriates funds for charter school facilities.
 Companion:
 Package: None
 Current Referral: EDN, FIN
 Introducer(s): OHNO, AQUINO, BROWER, EVANS, KEOHOKALOLE, KONG, LOWEN, MCKELVEY, MIZUNO, NISHIMOTO, ONISHI, OSHIRO, QUINLAN, SAIKI, SAN BUENAVENTURA, TAKUMI, Ichiyama, Nakashima

<u>Sort by Date</u>	Status	Text
1/20/2017	H	Pending introduction.
1/23/2017	H	Pass First Reading
1/25/2017	H	Referred to EDN, FIN, referral sheet 3
2/2/2017	H	Bill scheduled to be heard by EDN on Wednesday, 02-08-17 2:00PM in House conference room 309.

S = Senate | **H** = House | **D** = Data Systems | **\$** = Appropriation measure | **ConAm** = Constitutional Amendment

Some of the above items require Adobe Acrobat Reader. Please visit [Adobe's download page](#) for detailed instructions.

HB533

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that facilities funding
2 has been a long-standing issue for charter schools nationally
3 and locally. In Hawaii, start-up charter schools have paid the
4 costs of their facilities from operational funds. However, Act
5 159, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, authorized the state public
6 charter school commission to request facilities funding as part
7 of its annual budget request to the director of finance
8 beginning with the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Act 234, Session Laws
9 of Hawaii 2015, authorized a framework for providing facilities
10 funding and support for public charter school facilities with
11 adequate prioritization, oversight, and accountability by the
12 charter school facilities funding working group to be convened
13 by the state public charter school commission.

14 The legislature further finds that public charter schools
15 receive inadequate funding to support student learning. While
16 the state public charter school commission may request
17 facilities funding as part of its annual budget request, the



1 amounts received in recent fiscal years have not kept pace with
2 the cost of providing and maintaining high-quality facilities.
3 Public charter schools that lack adequate building facilities
4 are sometimes forced to hold classes outdoors, on covered
5 lanais, or in unstable temporary structures.

6 The purpose of this Act is to provide funding to the state
7 public charter school commission for the acquisition, repair,
8 maintenance, and rental of charter school facilities.

9 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
10 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$10,000,000 or so
11 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and
12 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
13 year 2018-2019 for the state public charter school commission to
14 allocate to charter schools for facilities projects and rent
15 assistance based, in part, on the need and financial performance
16 of the charter schools, as determined by the state public
17 charter school commission.

18 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the state public
19 charter school commission for the purposes of this Act.



H.B. NO. 533

Report Title:

Charter Schools; Facility Funding

Description:

Appropriates funds for charter school facilities.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.



DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CATHERINE PAYNE
CHAIRPERSON

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

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>
1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

FOR: HB 533 Relating to Charter Schools
DATE: Wednesday, February 8, 2017
TIME: 2:00 PM
COMMITTEE(S): House Committee on Education
ROOM: Conference Room 309
FROM: Sione Thompson, Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

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

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of HB533, which seeks to provide facilities funding for charter schools.

Facilities costs for charter schools is one of the greatest unaddressed challenges for Hawaii’s chartering system. Facilities funding has been a long-standing issue for charter schools. During school year 2015-2016, charter schools collectively spent over \$5.3 million on rent for school facilities. Public charter schools that lack adequate building facilities are sometimes forced to hold classes outdoors, under a tarp or in a temporary structure. Charter schools facilities funding would significantly benefit charter schools to acquire, repair, maintain and rent school facilities.

The Charter Schools Facilities Funding Working Group established pursuant to Haw. Rev. stat. (“HRS”) §302D-29.5 is being formed and scheduled to meet at least three times over the next couple of months. It is tasked with providing a framework to assist the allocation of the funding to support charter school facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



HB533
RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS
House Committee on Education

February 8, 2017

2:00 PM

Room 309

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment Committee will recommend that the Board of Trustees **SUPPORT** HB533, which provides funding to the State Public Charter School Commission to allocate to charter schools for facilities projects and rent assistance. **This measure would 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 innovations labs." [Emphasis added].

Hawai'i public charter schools are deserving of equity, and have indeed demonstrated outstanding accomplishments and innovation in the latest Strive HI SY 2015-2016 performance scores, even dominating in certain indicators. Lessons learned in such high-performing charter schools as labs of innovation will benefit students and schools throughout our public education system. To fully realize the potential for innovation that charter schools offer for greater student success in our public school system as a whole, it is critical that public charter schools receive adequate appropriations for facilities funding. HB533 will help bring equity to charter schools and address the longstanding problem of financing charter school facilities.

Therefore, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** HB533. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

Testimony HB533
House Education Committee
February 8, 2017 Conference Room 309 2:00pm
Support

Dear Chair Takumi and committee members from Hawaii Island Onishi and Creagan,

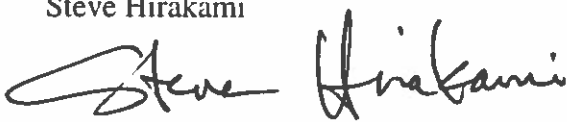
As you may know, I have been appearing before the House Education Committee since the inception of the Hawaii Academy of Arts & Science Public Charter School in June of 2001. One obstacle still stands prominently in the way of charter school progress: facilities funding. Every year, I have testified with a different approach. I have even stated the opening paragraph of Article X of the Hawaii State Constitution which states: "The State shall provide for the establishment, support and control of a statewide system of public schools free from sectarian control, a state university, public libraries and such other educational institutions as may be deemed desirable, **including physical facilities therefor**".

Facilities funding bills in the past several years have stalled for reasons out of our control. Several years ago, the former Executive Director of the Commission, Tom Hutton, had his own personal agenda on getting charter school funding from the legislature. He single handedly "garnished" 1.2 million dollars from the charter school allocation of Federal Impact Funds and created a pilot project where schools could submit request for proposals to get a share of those funds. When an Attorney General opinion was issued saying it did not follow the statute 302A-1401 which describes how the state department of education distributes federal funds, he decided to bring that sum to the legislature as matching funds, hoping the legislature would take the bait. The legislature was informed that this was federal funds and abandoned the bill. The next year, Hutton influenced a change in the charter school statutes 302D to exempt both the Commission and the charter schools from 302A-1401. That still stands as part of the statutes relating to charter schools.

So here we are, 18 years from the start of the first charter schools in the State, and we still haven't received a single dollar of support for facilities. We also do not get subsidized by the State for our food production costs that exceed our Federal National School Lunch Program reimbursement by about \$2.00 per meal. This accumulates over the school year to over \$150K for a school of 650 students. Also, we have no transportation besides buying our own buses, paying our drivers, fueling the buses, and maintaining the vehicles. Facility funding is only a part of the basics of education: getting children to and from school (transportation), feeding them breakfast and lunch (nutrition), and providing them adequate learning environments (facilities). So let's start with the one that has the greatest impact on their learning: facilities.

Studies have demonstrated that facilities play a direct role in student learning. For years, some charters held classes in tents. Some had no floors, except cinder or gravel base. Many charters have first-hand experience in the correlation between adequate facilities and student achievement. So on behalf of HAAS and the other ten thousand students in charter schools, I humbly ask you to commit to adequately fund charter school facilities. Thank you ahead of time for your consideration.

Steve Hiramami



Director, Hawaii Academy of Arts & Science PCS



Hālau Kū Māna
New Century Public Charter School

HB 533
RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS
House Committee on Education
Wednesday, February 8, 2017
2:00PM, State Capitol, Conference Room 309

Representative Roy Takumi, Chair
Representative Sharon Har, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee

The passage of **HB 533** would provide Hawaii charter schools with long overdue and much needed facilities funding. On behalf of Hālau Kū Māna Public Charter School (HKM), I submit this testimony in **strong support** of **HB 533**.

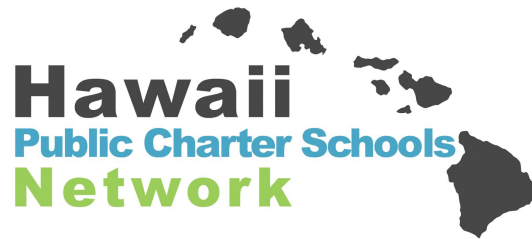
In addition to being an innovative school while maintaining high academic standards, we are also required to maintain a safe, adequate and accessible school campus. While we are fortunate to have a humble 1-acre campus, the lack of sufficient facilities funding prevents us from replacing old and rusted portable classrooms and providing a facility that is conducive to teaching and learning. Recently, HKM spent nearly \$100,000 to repair dilapidated areas of the school and install roofing over the walkways not only to provide shelter from the rain, but also to protect the walkways from becoming rotted.

The passage of HB 533 will allow our school to continue to deliver high-quality education while having the necessary financial resources to provide a high-quality, conducive, and safe physical space for teaching and learning.

I invite the committee and its legislative colleagues to visit Hālau Kū Māna to not only see first-hand our facilities, but also to see how impactful our model of education is for our students, families and community.

Respectfully, I submit this testimony in **strong support** of **HB 533** and encourage the committee to do the same.

Mahalo,
Brandon Keoni Bunag, Ed.D.
Po‘o Kumu – Head of School/Principal



February 7, 2017

To: Hon. Roy Takumi, Chair
Hon. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair
Hon. Richard P. Creagan, Member
Hon. Richard H.K. Onishi, Member
Hon. Mark J. Hashem, Member
Hon. Kaniela Ing, Member
Hon. Justin H. Woodson, Member
Hon. Lauren Kealohilani Matsumoto, Member
Hon. Takashi Ohno, Member
House Committee on Education

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

**Re: HB 533 - Relating Charter Schools - SUPPORT
Conference Room 309 – Hawaii State Capitol – Feb. 8, 2017, 2:00 P.M.**

On behalf of the Hawaii Public Charter School Network (HPCSN) and its member schools, we respectfully submit our testimony in support of [HB 533](#).

Hawaii's public charter schools do not get facilities funding from our state. This is a problem because a school's building costs must be squeezed out of a small funding pot -- \$7080/per pupil allocation (PPA) per year. (Cost for facilities and maintenance is roughly 9% of a school's budget, but this varies among start-up or conversion schools.) The same PPA must also stretch to pay for salaries, collective bargaining costs, curriculum, equipment and supplies, utility services and a mountain of other expenses required to run a school. More progress is needed to allocate facilities resources and funding for public charter schools.

Turning the dial forward on facilities support

When charter schools were first authorized in 1999, sponsors of the legislation planned a system based on school/community-based management principles to support conversions of department schools into charter schools, which remained in the DOE school facility. Waialae and Lanikai elementary schools were the first conversion charters. Charter school law was amended overtime to recognize culture-based learning opportunities and ushered

in a number of start up charter schools. In 2013, state law was overhauled to make way for model law recognizing the role of the state's charter school authorizer and setting governance and performance framework requirements for Hawaii's public charter schools. Next school year, the Hawaii Public Charter School Commission's ("Commission") portfolio of schools will grow from 28 to 31 start up charter schools and six conversion charter schools, for a total of 37 schools.

Facilities are a major expense for charter schools. Both conversion and start up charter schools receive the same per pupil funding, but there is no separate funding for facilities to aid start up charter schools that use a sizeable portion of their per pupil allocations toward obtaining and paying for facilities expenses. For example, a study by the National Charter School Resource Center in 2016 found that California charter schools that owned their own buildings paid about 13% of their per pupil revenue for facilities while the average of charters that leased their buildings paid 8%. In Hawaii, lease costs vary between urban areas and rural areas. On average Hawaii's startup charters use 9% of the per pupil revenue toward lease costs . This does not include costs for renovation, repair or maintenance of an existing building to make it suitable for school use. Start ups that pay mortgage on their school facilities have higher costs.

Conversion charter schools facilities costs, repair and maintenance are supported separate by the State and the DOE. Conversion schools are satisfied by this support; and, therefore, HPCSN is not advocating for separate maintenance funding for conversion charter schools. We support the continued maintenance of DOE facilities.

[HPCSN supports efforts to address the equity gap and appropriate facilities funding support for charter schools to access resources for use toward lease costs, maintenance and repair of facilities.](#)

Time is right to the next step and make progress on facilities funding

Research shows a significant relationship between the condition of school facilities and student performance. Hawaii charter school facilities challenges have been documented in the [media](#) as recently as [last week](#) and recognition of facilities funding needs have been supported by the Commission and the BOE.

Sixteen jurisdictions are providing per pupil funding allowance to charter schools: Arizona; California; Colorado; Florida; Georgia; Idaho; Indiana; Massachusetts; Minnesota; New Mexico; New York; Ohio; Pennsylvania; Tennessee; Utah; and Washington, D.C. according to the National Alliance of Public Charter Schools in 2016.

[The state legislature approved Act 234, Sessions Laws of Hawaii 2015, to address facilities needs for charter schools,](#) that requires the Legislature, starting with FY 2016-17 to consider appropriations and bond authorizations for charter schools facilities; and establishes a charter school facilities funding working group within the DOE and gives guidance for the Commission to develop criteria to determine the distribution of funds

appropriated.

This year the Commission is moving to convene the facilities funding working group to meet this session to advise on how funds for facilities may be distributed if general and bond funds are appropriated during the session.

The best time to support facilities funding was back when we welcomed start up charter schools. Eighteen years later, 2017 is a great time to start facilities funding for charter schools. Every child is deserving of safe public school facilities including those who chose to enroll in public charter schools.

HPCSN humbly urges this committee to take the next step by passing this bill. Let's make progress on the promise of Act 234. Let's change this equation by adding facilities funding for charter schools in the next biennium budget.

HPCSN works to support public charter schools in Hawaii and to be a voice for children and families that seek choice in an independent public school setting. We appreciate your favorable consideration of this bill.

EDNtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 5, 2017 11:22 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: terriyork2@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM

HB533

Submitted on: 2/5/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Terri York	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support facilities funding for charter schools. Charter school students deserve facilities funds just as DOE students receive. These students need to know that Hawaii legislature cares that ALL students in Hawaii learn in facilities that support educational excellence.

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EDNtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 4, 2017 8:56 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: rnaasuncion@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM

HB533

Submitted on: 2/4/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
rhea asuncion	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I work at a charter school and know that if the school facilities were funded with real monies then more funds could go to more curriculum which would directly impact the students learning and developing abilities.

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EDNtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 3, 2017 7:34 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: kamakane73@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM*

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

HB533

Submitted on: 2/3/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kama Hopkins	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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EDNtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2017 8:39 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: nellandis@netzero.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM

HB533

Submitted on: 2/6/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Renelle Leinbach	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I have 2 children that attend a charter school in Pahoa on the Big Island. Please support this bill with real money. The children desperately need better and improved facilities for learning. We love the charter school (HAAS) that they attend and feel it is the best school in the area. Please help them make the school even better.

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EDNtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2017 9:19 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: thomas.brennon@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM

HB533

Submitted on: 2/6/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Thomas Brennon	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please appropriate funds for all charter schools

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EDNtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2017 9:39 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: mailani22@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM

HB533

Submitted on: 2/6/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rene Souza	Individual	Support	No

Comments: As a charter school graduate, a parent of a child attending a charter school, and an employee of a charter school, I wholeheartedly support Bill HB533. Charter schools need and deserve funding for facilities to ensure the safety and well-being of their students and staff. Students of charter schools deserve to be educated in facilities that can support excellent learning opportunities just as other schools can. I ask that you support this bill and provide the requested funds for such facilities.

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EDNtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2017 10:17 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: jenniclear@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM

HB533

Submitted on: 2/6/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dr. Jenni Clear, D.C.	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha. My husband and I are both chiropractors. We have three children enrolled in Hawaii Academy of Arts and Science. We love this charter school. It has dedicated, caring teachers; small class sizes; and a safe and nurturing environment. We both feel that charter school students deserve a fantastic environment for learning. Please financially support this bill for the benefit of our next generations. Mahalo nui Loa!

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EDNtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 7, 2017 8:08 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: pulermq@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM*

HB533

Submitted on: 2/7/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
RuthMarie Quirk	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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EDNtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2017 6:57 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: cchaudron08@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM

HB533

Submitted on: 2/6/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Camila Chaudron	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha, My name is Camila Chaudron, I am a constituent from the Manoa/Makiki area and I strongly support this bill. Education is the key to a successful future. I am an educator, as are my sister and mother. Charter schools are paving the way in Hawaii, creating a model for successful public education institutions. Charter schools are doing a lot of great work to create quality learning environments for Hawai'i's students, and they need all of the support they can get. Thank you for supporting this important investment in our state's future. Mahalo!

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EDNtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2017 2:24 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: burgharc@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM

HB533

Submitted on: 2/6/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
cheryl	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Repeating testimony from other bill: I believe that the schools should be supported equally. One of the reasons we have these charters is because the DOE has not adequately met the requirements and needs of ALL children. The DOE currently does not provide proper instruction in Hawaiian, though it is the law that both English and Hawaiian are languages of the State. In the quest for the \$\$ from the Feds. the DOE has become test crazy and the basic needs of learning are being met in the charters.

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EDNtestimony

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Sent: Monday, February 6, 2017 1:46 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: jennaway@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM*

HB533

Submitted on: 2/6/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jenna Way	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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EDNtestimony

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Sent: Tuesday, February 7, 2017 2:55 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: annie@projectvisionhawaii.org
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM*

HB533

Submitted on: 2/7/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
ELIZABETH A HILLER VALENTIN	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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EDNtestimony

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Sent: Tuesday, February 7, 2017 1:55 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: jenkeala@hotmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM

HB533

Submitted on: 2/7/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Barra	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Charter schools need facility funding! This bill is a small start at addressing the funding disparities public charter schools face! Thank you!

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EDNtestimony

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Sent: Tuesday, February 7, 2017 1:18 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: jdraznov@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM

HB533

Submitted on: 2/7/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jill D. Raznov	governing board member - charter school	Support	No

Comments: I have one child who attends a Hawaii charter school (HAAS). I also sit on the governing board of my child's school. My child deserves to be educated in facilities that promote excellent learning opportunities, with the support of the larger community and our government. We chose this charter school because of its project based learning and "out of the box" curriculum, its commitment to maintain programs that enhance and inspire learning such as music, art, Hawaiian studies, physical education, and its excellent STEAM program. we also benefit from its commitment to tangibly include parents and families in a community of learners and the larger community we all inhabit. I ask you to support this bill with real funds so that my child and his schoolmates can continue to grow and prosper in their school. We live in an area in Puna, where schools have often been neglected. We ask you to stop the neglect and commit to our schools. Mahalo!

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EDNtestimony

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Sent: Tuesday, February 7, 2017 11:56 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: akamaimom@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM

HB533

Submitted on: 2/7/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Felicia Cowden	Akamai Learning	Support	No

Comments: Please support funding the annual facilities costs of Charter Schools. Charter Schools should not be treated as the unwanted step-child of education. The word "Charter" evokes the mental image of tents, no cafeteria, hardship, and haphazard physical environments. Let's build the Charter children a school they are proud and excited to attend. As a youth advocate for decades, we have much experience with young people students who fail to thrive in traditional public school. The other student learning often suffers as a result of having frustrated classmates. The community suffers as many of these students are our natural born leaders with vibrant, independent temperaments. The right inspiration turns them into entrepreneurs and leaders of all kinds. Education outside of their learning style or cultural foundation often frustrates them into the criminal justice system, social services, or sometimes early successful lives when they are simply freed from going to school. Let's lovingly welcome them with a flexible school environment where parents, teachers, and community members are excited to support and participate. The big difference is the facilities funding. I have been the co-chair of Kauai's youth council, the chair of the School Community Council for Kapaa High School and have run a small alternative program called Akamai Learning for five years that helps to address the needs of the students who don't want to be in school. They thrive with a learning-by-doing model. A good number of the students who have the greatest need for this environment do not come from wealth. We need to nourish this population. Please support the Charter efforts in all ways possible so everybody wins. Felicia Cowden Kilauea, Kauai www.akamailearning.org

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EDNtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 7, 2017 9:58 AM
To: EDNtestimony
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Subject: Submitted testimony for HB533 on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM

HB533

Submitted on: 2/7/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 8, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susanne Spiessberger	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support HB533 and appropriate facilities funding for our public charter schools.

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February 7, 2017

Testimony: In Support of H.B. NO.533:
RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS
FACILITY FUNDING

To Chair Takumi and Committee,

I have been a Hawaii Academy of Arts and Science parent for six years. Two of my daughters have graduated and moved on to a college education from HAAS and two still presently attend. My children benefit from a richly dynamic education at HAAS. Over the years I seen the school struggle to stay financially afloat due to underfunding. Administration has to make challenging decisions pertaining to the academic needs vs. the health and safety. Health and safety take precedence leaving what is left to attend the academic needs. This leaves very little finances for any kind of academic growth. There has been times if the school was unsure if it could afford to keep its doors open. I give a tremendous amount of credit to the staff for their commit it to the students. Typical public schools have only a academic budget to consider and don't have to worry about facility costs. This is unfair and unequal. I urge you to support HB533 and care for all of Hawaii's public school students equally. Thank you for your care and consideration.

Sincerely,
Maria Kottwitz

John D. Wacker
HC 2 Box 6832
Kea'au, HI 96749

February 6, 2017

Testimony: In Support of H.B. NO. 533:

RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter Schools; Facility Funding (\$)

Aloha Chair Takumi and Committee,

It is with great pleasure that I have the opportunity to provide my testimony in support of H.B. NO. 533. As a parent of a public charter school student, I have experienced the overwhelming benefits of a public charter school. It is the perfect environment and opportunity for our youth to grow and excel in their education! However, I have also experienced the negative effects of underfunding our public charter schools.

Our public charter schools compliment our state's educational system and live by the same rules and are measured by the same benchmarks as public schools. Yet, our public charter schools do not receive the facility funding necessary for growth, or even repair and maintenance, that they desperately need and deserve.

Funds for school facilities are a necessity, not a luxury. Our students need safe, clean, and maintained facilities on a daily basis. They should not be forced to set up temporary structures, clean areas subject to weather, or travel to other facilities prior to class. It takes unnecessary time away from their class periods that they should be learning. Also, the negative effect of high classroom temperatures is clear: students and teachers are unnecessarily fatigued which also takes away from students' learning potential. Finally, our students health and fitness must be given the highest priority. If they don't even have adequate facilities to run around and play, their health and fitness suffer, which will affect their studies and possibly their life.

Equally and possibly even more frustrating, is the fact that our administration, staff, teachers, students, and families are successful, but due to lack of funding, cannot grow and secure facilities needed to meet ever-changing educational needs. Our students' potential is being severely limited. This "cost" is a burden that will be carried by our

children throughout their lives. They have every right to be provided the environment that will help them develop the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in college, their careers, in their families, and in our community.

In summary, again, I am so excited to see the work being done to provide for facility funding for charter schools! These funds will work directly and immediately to address serious deficiencies and to support our children and our future.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

John D. "J.D." Wacker
Parent of a Hawaii Public Charter School Student