

1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Corey Rosenlee
President
Osa Tui Jr.
Vice President
Logan Okita
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION

RE: SB 912 - RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2019

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

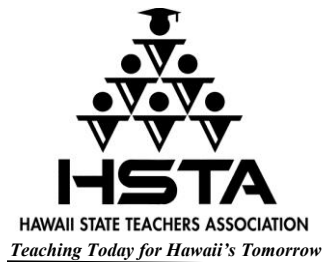
Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports SB 912**, relating to charter schools.

The Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) is the exclusive representative of the state's 13,700 public school teachers as the local affiliate of the 2.2 million member National Education Association. This measure would appropriate funds to the state public charter school commission for charter schools.

HSTA believes that all public charter schools deserve funding for facilities and to be able to use these funds for improvements, rental, and construction and other infrastructure improvements. Currently across the state charter schools have to use rundown buildings, and even lanais with tarps to provide classrooms. These "facilities" are not conducive to learning, and do need to change. They can't change without funding.

Facilities funding is a long-standing issue for charter schools. In Hawai'i, start-up charter schools have paid the costs of their facilities from operational funds. In 2013, however, lawmakers authorized the Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission to request facilities funding as part of its annual budget request. Later, in 2015, legislators called for a working group to establish a framework for providing facilities funding and support for public charter school facilities with adequate prioritization, oversight, and accountability.



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Today, amounts received by charter schools fail to keep pace with the cost of providing and quality instruction and maintaining adequate facilities. Charter schools receive \$7, 323 per-pupil, most of which is disbursed toward operational expenses, often leaving charters to rely on private donations to fund facilities and rent. Charter schools' per-pupil operating funds cover items like salaries, collective bargaining costs, curricula, school supplies, equipment, and utilities, but do not encompass the facilities and maintenance costs that comprise approximately 10 percent of charter school budgets, according the Hawai'i Public Charter Schools Network. Poorly funded charter schools are sometimes forced to hold classes in unstable temporary structures to the detriment of their students' learning and safety.

Accordingly, we urge the committee to approve additional state funds for the repair, maintenance, acquisition, and rental of charter school facilities. We also encourage your committee to consider ways of improving charter school facilities funding over the long-term, rather than through one-year legislative add-ons, to ensure that our state's public charter school students have the opportunity to receive instruction in 21st Century facilities that prepare them for today's cutting-edge workplace.

To provide charter schools with the funds they need for their students to succeed, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** SB 912.



LATE

SB912
RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS
Senate Committee on Education

February 6, 2019

2:55 p.m.

Room 229

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment Committee will recommend that the OHA Board of Trustees **SUPPORT** SB912, which would provide funding to the State Public Charter School Commission to allocate to state public charter schools for charter school facilities, as determined by the Commission. **This bill would help alleviate the unique financial burdens borne by start-up public charter schools in meeting their basic facilities needs.** OHA does not take a position on the bill provisions relating to debt service for financing.

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, some public charter schools have outperformed the state average in areas such as on-time graduation rates, college matriculation rates, and reduced chronic absenteeism, as reflected in the latest Strive HI SY 2017-2018 performance scores; lessons learned in such charter schools can benefit students and schools throughout our public education system. As a testament to Hawai‘i’s charter schools’ success, on December 6, 2016, the BOE-approved updated State Education Strategic Plan for 2017-2020 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 also 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).

Unfortunately, although Hawai‘i’s public charter schools continue to demonstrate their distinct value to Hawai‘i’s students, addressing public charter schools’ facilities needs continues to be a critical and longstanding issue in the charter school community. Start-up charter schools in particular 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, and that may unfairly impede start-up schools from realizing their full potential for their students and as “innovation labs” for public education as a whole.

Notably, the State Board of Education (BOE) itself has acknowledged the longstanding need to address this funding disparity, and its most recent report to the 2019

Legislature “recommends that the Legislature provide some form of facilities funding to charter schools to address this unmet [facilities funding] need.” The BOE’s report also recognized the importance of our public charter schools as an integral component of our public education strategy.

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. SB912 will help bring equity to our public charter schools, and address the longstanding problem of funding for charter schools’ facilities.

Therefore, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** SB912. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

Senate Committee on Education

Time: 2:55 p.m.

Date: February 6, 2019

Where: Conference Room 229

TESTIMONY

By Ka'ano'i Walk

Kamehameha Schools

RE: **SB 912, Relating to Charter Schools**

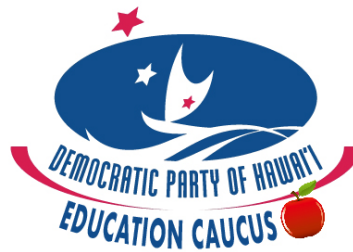
E ka Luna Ho'omalua Kidani, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalua Kim, a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike Ho'ona'auao o ka 'Aha Kenekoa, aloha! My name is Ka'ano'i Walk, the Senior Policy Analyst for Kamehameha Schools.

SB 912, relating to charter schools, allows charter schools to use appropriated funds for facilities improvement, rental, and construction and other infrastructure improvements. This measure also appropriates funds for facilities and infrastructure improvement. We are writing in **support** of this measure.

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 great step forward toward achieving necessary and sustainable funding for public charter schools.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an educational organization striving to restore our people through education and 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! **Please advance this measure.**



SENATE BILL 912, RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS

FEBRUARY 6, 2019 · SENATE EDUCATION
COMMITTEE · CHAIR SEN. MICHELLE N. KIDANI

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus supports SB 912, relating to charter schools, which allows charter schools to use appropriated funds for facilities improvement, rental, and construction and other infrastructure improvements, and appropriates funds for facilities and infrastructure improvement.

Public charter schools serve as sources of scholastic innovation. While many charter schools operate in urban areas, others meet the academic needs of remote areas lacking comprehensive public school facilities and programming. Additionally, many charter schools provide immersive instruction in Native Hawaiian culture and language.

Yet, charter schools receive inadequate funding to support student learning. While traditional DOE schools receive \$13,748 per-pupil each year, charter schools receive roughly \$7,500 per-pupil, out of which must be paid operational costs including curricula, salaries, and school supplies, leaving little for facilities, maintenance, and rent. Although the Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission may request facilities funding as part of its annual budget request, amounts received in recent fiscal years have not satisfied the rising cost of providing and maintaining quality

facilities. In turn, charter schools that lack adequate building space are forced to conduct class outdoors, on covered lanais, or in unsafe provisional structures.

To compensate for insufficient facilities funding, charter schools often seek revenue from nongovernmental, nonprofit, and corporate entities. While all charter schools in Hawai'i are required to operate as public schools, forcing charter schools to rely on nongovernmental funding sources increases private involvement in charter school programming, which undermines public accountability of the state's charter school network. Furthermore, reliance on private funding by public charter schools could generate efforts to establish private charter schools and private charter school authorizers in Hawai'i, which would transfer control of public education to private entities and erode available resources for traditional public schools. To maintain the public status of charter schools, then, lawmakers should appropriate no less than \$10 million to HSPCSC to allocate based on need and financial performance.

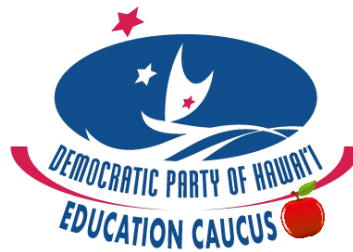
SB-912

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 2:35:05 PM

Testimony for EDU on 2/6/2019 2:55:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sheryl Turbeville	Testifying for Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission	Support	Yes

Comments:



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