

Linda Lingle
Governor



Vanelle Maunalei Love
Executive Director

Charter School Administrative Office

1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: 586-3775 Fax: 586-3776

FOR: SB2903 SD1, Relating to the Hawaiian Language College
DATE: Thursday, February 18, 2010
TIME: 9:30 a.m.
COMMITTEE(S): Committee on Ways and Means
ROOM: Conference Room 211
FROM: Maunalei Love, Executive Director

Comments **opposing** S.B. No. 2903 S.D. No. 1

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

Aloha, I am Maunalei Love, executive director of the Charter School Administrative Office. I want to thank the chair and the entire committee for the time and effort being spent to remedy the issue of providing funding and resources for the public charter schools.

This bill seeks to build upon the successes achieved by Nawahiokalani'opu'u and the Hawaiian Language College at the University of Hawaii at Hilo. They have shown a model for maintaining and, indeed, promoting the resurgence of the teaching of the Hawaiian Language while demonstrating overall educational achievements by their students. The CSAO lauds these accomplishments and believes that they should be celebrated. However well this bill is intended, we must oppose it for the reasons noted below:

- The bill seeks to impose a requirement that the DOE and CSAO provide to the college "all written...organizational, operational, and management materials and communications, as applicable." This would not only create an onerous task upon the parties involved but would seriously delay the turnaround on time sensitive communication.
- It seeks to transfer functions to the college that are the legal responsibilities of the DOE and CSAO.
- Some of the supports that the college seeks to give can be provided already without any changes to the statutes.
- The state and Federal Governments are asking that the CSAO demonstrate more authority and accountability, not less.
- The bill seeks to enable the transfer of funds from the CSAO to the college. The CSAO does not have the resources to be transferring any funds to the college.

We continue to advocate for support of the public charter schools and maintaining their independence and innovation with accountability and commend the committee for its attention and support to ensuring that such issues be addressed. As always, the CSAO is ready, willing, and able to help with any questions and/or revisions. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
February 18, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.

by

Dr. Kalena Silva

Director, Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani
College of Hawaiian Language, UH Hilo

SB 2903, SD1 RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE COLLEGE

Aloha, Members of the Senate Ways and Means committee. I am Dr. Kalena Silva, the Director of Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. I urge passage of SB 2903, SD1.

I wish to express appreciation to this body, including the sponsors of SB 2903, SD1, for years of support in developing education through the Hawaiian language. Hawai'i is now the national leader in education through a Native American language. Not only are we known for reviving an endangered language, but for increased academic achievement among students in Hawaiian immersion schools.

The state's Hawaiian language college was established through legislative mandate in 1997 to allow for a P-20 system of education through Hawaiian. We offer programs through to the Ph.D. while serving as a unique resource for the development and support of P-12 education through Hawaiian.

Among the mandates from the 1997 legislature when it created our College was for us to develop a laboratory school program at Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u School, a site which was created through a partnership between the State DOE, the non-profit 'Aha Pūnana Leo, and Office of Hawaiian Affairs. We have done so, and now have a full P-20 education system in Hawaiian, based around that site. Nāwahī includes both a K-8 charter component and a 9-12 off-site standard public high school component. Three other charter schools have joined our laboratory school program along with the statewide Pūnana Leo preschool system that lies at the base of the Hawaiian immersion schools.

SB 2903, SD1 represents a step toward developing administrative practices that will further strengthen Hawaiian medium education. We seek to pilot the use of Hawaiian in administrative communication, modification of administrative services to meet unique Hawaiian medium education in-service needs, and other modifications of standard English medium education practice as appropriate to the unique needs of education within the context of revitalizing an endangered indigenous language.

Mahalo iā 'oukou no kā 'oukou kāko'o i ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

Testimony in Support of SB2903

Kaleihōkū Kala'i, Department Chairperson,

Ke Kula 'O Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u

Aloha e nā Kenekoa hanohano o ka 'Aha'ōlelo o Hawai'i nei. My name is Kaleihōkū Kala'i. I am one of the five high school teachers assigned to the DOE under Hilo High School whose full time work takes place at the Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u (Nāwahī) laboratory school site located in Kea'au, Puna. I am the Department Chairperson for the Nāwahī faculty and serve as the head representative at all Hilo High School administrative meetings. I urge passage of SB2903.

Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u was initiated as a special program within Hilo High in the 1990s with support of the Hawaiian program at UH-Hilo along with OHA and the 'Aha Pūnana Leo. When the UH-Hilo Hawaiian program became the Hawaiian language college we were designated its laboratory school and thus have a special status within Hilo High. A charter school was subsequently added at our site to serve elementary students. Having both a charter model and a standard public school model allows the laboratory school to work on best practices for both Hawaiian language schools using either the charter school or standard school administrative model.

This past year has been a challenging one where Nāwahī, like all government schools, has had to deal with severe budget reductions and furloughs. Nāwahī's charter school was able to prioritize funds to assure students were served, but those of us administered under Hilo High had to take furloughs. This hurt the school as a whole since we closely coordinate programming from preschool through high school and into college – a P-20 model. Perhaps if this bill had been passed earlier, the College might have been able to work with us to avoid furloughs at the high school level.

Nāwahī has greatly benefited from its relationship with the College and this bill will move us further in our effort to return Hawai'i to the international educational leadership it had in the 1800s. We are already making some progress in this area.

Students at Nāwahī school overall come from approximately 70% free and reduced lunch backgrounds, yet our students have done much better on average than their peers taught through English. Our high school graduation rate has been 100% per year since our first class in 1999

and we usually have an 80% college attendance rate. Former Nāwahī students have graduated from Stanford, Loyola Marymount, and other prestigious universities. One is a doctoral candidate at Oxford. Our students have tended to win academic accolades under Hilo High greater than their percentage of the overall enrollment of Hilo High. SB2903 will help us continue to make progress and then extend what we have learned to other sites.

Mahalo nui loa i ka ho‘olohe ‘ana mai i kēia ‘ōlelo hō‘ike kāko‘o a‘u.

Me ka ‘oia‘i‘o,

Kaleihōkū Kala‘i