WHEREAS, public charter schools are an essential part of
Hawaii's public education system and provide a quality education
to over 11,000 students; and

WHEREAS, public charter schools improve education standards
by giving families a choice, implementing innovative education
strategies, and often by integrating Hawaiian language, culture,
and history into the curriculum; and

WHEREAS, although the public charter school system benefits
Hawaii's students, the existing legal and financial frameworks
under which public charter schools must operate continue to
shortchange students; and

WHEREAS, the existing legal framework gives an unclear
scope of authority to the charter school commission, leading to
inconsistent enforcement of regulatory standards ranging from
inadequate to overbearing, and leaving students without clear
due process rights; and

WHEREAS, the broken financial system too often leaves
charter schools with inadequate facilities, underfunded special
education programs, and understaffed faculties; and

WHEREAS, according to section 302D-28, Hawaii Revised
Statutes, charter schools should receive the same per-pupil
allocation from general fund appropriations as Department of
Education schools, but public charter schools must use per-pupil
dollars to pay for rent, salaries, and other expenses while
Department of Education schools use rent-free state-owned
facilities and receive funds for other costs in addition to per-
pupil allotments; and

WHEREAS, the practical effect of this financial system is
that public charter schools must operate with thousands of
dollars less per student than Department of Education schools;
and

WHEREAS, because the pervasive financial and legal
inequalities in Hawaii's education system are so great and the
flaws too complex to fix piecemeal, the system needs to be
fundamentally rethought and reworked to protect children's
educational futures; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
of 2018, that the Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to
perform a study of:

(1) The current legal frameworks pertaining to public
charter schools; and

(2) The current financial systems pertaining to public
charter schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
Bureau is requested to create:

(1) Actionable proposals for structural reform of the
legal frameworks and financial systems pertaining to
public charter schools, incorporating multiple
philosophical perspectives; and

(2) Actionable proposals for financial reform aimed at
providing equal per-pupil funding for charter school
students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
Bureau is requested to submit a written report of its findings
and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
Legislature at least 20 days prior to the convening of the
Regular Session of 2019; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education and
the Charter School Commission are each requested to provide
statistics and other information as may be requested by the
Bureau to assist in the timely completion of the study; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the Legislative
Reference Bureau, the Chairperson of the Board of Education, the
Superintendent of Education, and the Chairperson of the Charter
School Commission.

OFFERED BY:

MAR - 9 2018