

Date: 03/29/2010

Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2903, SD2, HD1 Relating to the Hawaiian Language College

Purpose of Bill: Requires the Hawaiian Language College at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, Department of Education, and Charter School Administrative Office to enter into an agreement regarding the Hawaiian Language College's functions related to Nawahiokalani'opu'u School and other schools as laboratory schools. Effective July 1, 2050. (SB 2903 HD1)

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) does not support SB 2903, SD 2, HD 1 as amended. As written, this bill continues to be ambiguous about who directs the Department's Hawaiian Medium Education program/s as identified in this bill. Specifically this bill states that "the department of education and the charter school administrative office **shall consult** with the Hawaiian language college..." Clarification is needed as to who directs the programs as they exist or will exist in order to clearly understand the responsibilities of each of these entities in the agreement.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
March 29, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

by
Dr. Kalena Silva
Director, Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani
College of Hawaiian Language, UH Hilo

SB 2903 SD2 HD1 RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE COLLEGE

E nā Lunamaka'ainana, aloha kākou. 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 SD2 HD1.

I wish to express appreciation to this body, including the sponsors of SB 2903 SD2 HD1 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 SD2 HD1 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 hano hano 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

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Line 1

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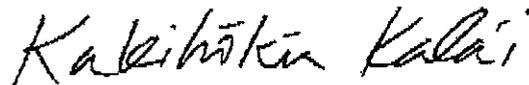
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and we usually have an 80% college attendance rate. Former Nāwahī students have graduated from Stanford, Loyola Marymount, and other prestigious universities. One is a doctoral candidate at Oxford. Our students have tended to win academic accolades 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'oloha 'ana mai i kēia 'olelo hō'ike kāko'o a'u.

Me ka 'oia'i'o,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kaleihōkū Kalā'i". The signature is written in a cursive, fluid style.

Kaleihōkū Kalā'i

Testimony in Favor of SB2903 - Dr. William H. Wilson

Aloha members of the House Finance Committee. My name is Dr. William H. Wilson, from UH-Hilo. Chair of the Academic Programs Division of the Hawaiian language college.

In asking your support of SB 2903, I would like to first point out that Hawai'i is the national leader in indigenous language schooling. Nāwahī, our laboratory school in Hilo in particular, has many American Indian communities visiting to learn how to develop such schooling.

How did Hawai'i and UH-Hilo get to be such a leader? Through your legislative action. You in the State Legislature listened to our requests in 1986 to allow schools taught through Hawaiian. When the DOE did not carry out the law, the Legislature pushed. The Legislature then supported with a resolution to Congress. The resulting federal act removed antiquated federal restrictions on all U.S. indigenous languages. Next the Legislature established a center at UH-Hilo to provide curriculum materials that the state DOE could not provide, later adding a Hawaiian language college to expand upward. Much of this work was initiated by the Legislature with no funds. We in Hilo sought grants to move things forward - and we succeeded.

In 2004 the Legislature passed Act 133 (302H) to allow the DOE to move Hawaiian language education to a new level of excellence in cooperation with our Hawaiian Language College. Superintendent Hamamoto was very supportive, and our College and Nāwahī School actually sent the DOE grant funds to assign a DOE employee to planning the project. The biggest problem has been bureaucratic delays in the DOE and UH system. SB 2903 will help us move Hawaiian medium education to a new level of success by requiring the bureaucracy to move and actualize 302H, or at least part of it.

SB2903 asks no funds. However, providing line items in the budget with a token one dollar could help us get grants. If you feel that such line items are inappropriate, please pass the bill out without them and we will work around that challenge.

Mahalo again for your past support.