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## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

RE: SB 283 - RELATING TO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL PER-PUPIL FUNDING

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2023

OSA TUI, JR., PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports SB 283**, relating to public charter school per-pupil funding. The bill excludes from the charter school per-pupil funding calculation all amounts relating to programs that provide comparable benefits for all public school students regardless of whether the student is a Department of Education school student or a public charter school student.

Adequate funding is a long-standing issue for our public charter schools. Today, amounts received by charter schools fail to keep pace with the cost of providing and quality instruction. Charter schools were expected to receive \$8,745 per-pupil this school year, according to the Charter School Commission quoted in a Civil Beat article in August, most of which is disbursed toward operational expenses, often leaving charters to rely on private donations to fund extra costs including facilities and rent. Charter schools' per-pupil operating funds cover items like salaries, collective bargaining costs, curricula, school supplies, equipment, and utilities. Poorly funded charter schools are sometimes forced to hold classes in unstable temporary structures to the detriment of their students' learning and safety.

This bill will help the committee on weights, when calculating the per-pupil amount for our public charter schools, by asking them not to include amounts relating to programs that provide comparable benefits to students in both the DOE and in public charter schools. This will help our public charter schools with their funding issues.

To provide charter schools with the funds they need to succeed, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.

JOSH GREEN. M.D.  
GOVERNOR



CATHY K. IKEDA  
CHAIRPERSON

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

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FOR: SB283 Relating to Public Charter School Per-Pupil Funding  
DATE: February 10, 2023  
TIME: 3:00 P.M.  
COMMITTEE: Committee on Education  
ROOM: Conference Room 229 & Videoconference  
FROM: Yvonne Lau, Interim Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony providing **COMMENTS on SB 283** which excludes from the charter school per-pupil funding calculation all amounts relating to programs that provide comparable benefits for all public school students regardless of whether the student is a Department of Education school student or a public charter school student.

The Commission appreciates the intent of this measure as it presents the opportunity for charter schools, the Commission, and the Department of Education to engage in meaningful and straightforward discussion on these programs that are accessible and available to all public students. These discussions can begin to address any misconceptions and allow for a clearer focus on ensuring that the needs of all public school students are being met.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

**SB-283**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 2:50:44 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ka'ena Paikai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support

**LATE**

To: Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz and Vice Chair Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran

For: SB283

Position: Opposition

Dear Honorable Members of the Senate Committee,

My name is Alexis and I am a 7th grade student at Connections Public Charter School. I am writing in opposition of SB283.

I am thirteen years old. This bill affects me because I go to a Public Charter school and the bill as written will not provide the same per pupil funding as the DOE. The wording in the bill is not specific and it should be.

Every student in Hawaii should have an equal opportunity to be successful and that is not happening when funds are taken from them to pay for things that DOE students have provided. Things such as buildings, books ect. Please find a way to give every student equal opportunity. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for this bill. I hope the members will consider opposing SB283.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Alexis Raimon  
Student at Connections PCS

**LATE**

**SB-283**

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:43:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Hema Kealohanuikaiama Watson	Testifying for Halau Ku Mana PCS	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

Chair Donovan Dela-Cruz and Vice Chair Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee.

My name is Hema Kealohanuikaiama Watson and I am a senior at Hālau Kū Māna PCS, it's right up the road in Makiki.

I am testifying in support of SB 283 and the positive impact it will have on Charter Schools.

I'll tell you one story to summarize Hawaiian-focused charter schools across the board.

During COVID, we couldn't come together on campus and our buses weren't used for almost two years. They broke. Now, our whole school is a project-based learning school and without access to our projects across this island we are not able to effectively create learning spaces that would reflect our vision and mission.

We had to rely on angel donors to get new vans, vans that could just barely hold what our older buses used to.

Let me ask you this, why should my school have to hunt for grants just so we can get a new bathroom, or a new tent. Why has my school been forced to shut down their only water fountain on campus when I was in SIXTH GRADE? they said it was too expensive. I'm going to be honest, this is ridiculous. I know this bill won't fix everything but I don't want to feel degraded like this.

The fact that I even have to bring this up is hurtful. I deserve better, my school deserves better, and the thousands of students who attend charter schools deserve better.

Mahalo nō, oia wale.