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

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FOR: SCR 203/SR 191 URGING THIS BODY TO ESTABLISH A PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL WORKING GROUP TO EXAMINE THE SUPPORT SYSTEMS AVAILABLE TO STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS AND DETERMINE WHETHER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CENTRALIZED PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL DISTRICT OR SIMILAR SERVICE COOPERATIVE WOULD PROVIDE IMPROVED SUPPORT TO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

DATE: April 16, 2026

TIME: 2:05 P.M.

COMMITTEE: Committee on Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309 & Videoconference

FROM: Ed H. Noh, Ed. D., Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in **SUPPORT OF THE INTENT of SCR 203/SR 191**, which:

1. Establishes a Public Charter School Working Group to examine support systems available to state public charter schools and determine whether the establishment of a centralized public charter school district or similar service cooperative would provide improved support to public charter schools;
2. Requests the Hawaii Public Charter Schools Network to convene and lead the Public Charter School Working Group; and
3. Provides the membership of the Working Group.

The Commission appreciates that this resolution is intended to determine what supports are needed by charter schools and how to implement and establish these support structures. The Commission is prepared to work with the Hawaii Public Charter Schools Network and the Working Group on the items identified in and requested by this resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



Testimony in Strong Support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 203

**EDN on Thursday, 04-16-2026 2:05PM in House
conference room 309**

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the House Committee on Education,

On behalf of the Hawaii Public Charter Schools Network, we are writing to express our unwavering support for SCR 203, which seeks to establish a working group to examine the support systems available to our state's public charter schools. Our public charter schools were established to provide innovative, community-driven educational opportunities that serve thousands of students statewide, including many Native Hawaiian students and underserved communities. However, despite being an integral part of the State's public education system, our schools continue to face severe operational challenges that threaten our ability to focus on our primary mission of student achievement.

The current reality in Hawaii is that school leaders must independently manage complex administrative burdens such as facilities acquisition and maintenance, transportation procurement, food services compliance, and human resources support. This fragmentation often forces a choice between instructional excellence and administrative survival. One potential solution highlighted in this resolution is the establishment of a centralized administrative charter school district or a statewide service cooperative that could provide coordinated back-office support. By evaluating whether we can separate school authorization functions from essential support services, we can ensure that our leaders are no longer bogged down by tasks that would be more effectively managed through a centralized structure.

We do not need to look far for evidence of success, as other states have already demonstrated that such a realignment leads to more efficient and equitable outcomes. Perhaps the most prominent example is New Orleans, which transitioned to a system comprised entirely of charter schools supported by a centralized framework. This model has gained such significant national attention for its ability to coordinate services and oversight that the upcoming National Charter Schools Conference will be held in New Orleans this June to allow educators from across the country to study their progress firsthand. In addition to the New Orleans model, Colorado utilizes service cooperatives that allow charter schools to pool their resources for business services, payroll, and audits, achieving economies of scale that individual schools simply cannot reach on their own.

Furthermore, states like Tennessee and Louisiana have successfully utilized centralized districts to provide governance and administrative frameworks that stabilize and scale innovative educational models. Texas similarly utilizes regional service centers to provide specialized

technical support in areas like legal compliance and special education, ensuring that even the smallest schools have access to the same high-level expertise as large urban districts. Even California is currently exploring how to consolidate administrative authority to reduce the fragmentation that often occurs when governance and support functions are blurred.

By passing SCR 203, this committee is taking a necessary step toward evaluating the feasibility, fiscal impact, and potential challenges of a centralized administrative structure for our public charter schools in Hawaii. The proposed working group (which would include stakeholders from the Board of Education, the Department of Education, the State Public Charter School Commission, and the Hawaii Public Charter Schools Network) is designed to develop recommendations that strengthen support for our schools through a preliminary cost-benefit analysis. We urge you to support this collaborative effort to identify the statutory changes needed to implement a more effective and sustainable governance model for our keiki.

Mahalo for your time and for your commitment to ensuring that every student in Hawaii's public school system has the support they need to succeed.