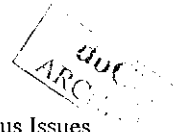


Hālau Kū Māna
New Century Public Charter School
Second Session
Of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
May 12-23, 2003
New York City, New York



Mr. Chair,

Members of the Permanent Forum,

Indigenous Brothers and Sisters,

Distinguished Representatives,

Aloha! 'O Po'okela Kapoi ko'u inoa. No Kalihi mai au. 'Umikumamakolu o'u makahiki. My name is Po'okela Kapoi and I am from Kalihi, on the island of O'ahu. I am thirteen (13) years old and I am a student at Halau Ku Mana, a Hawaiian charter school located at the University of Hawai'i Kamakakuokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies. Before I came to the charter school that I am at, I wasn't doing so well in the Department of Education system of schooling. I was hardly learning anything because I was stuck in a classroom just studying from a textbook. I'm a hands-on learner. At my charter school I am learning more in academics and cultural wise. My grades are getting better. In my old school my grades weren't so good. I couldn't keep up with the class. I couldn't really pay attention. But now I can understand most of my homework. The D.O.E. system hardly explained the homework. I attend school more now that I can understand the work and school is more fun to me now. I can do more writing and thinking now that the teachers explain the problems more. I am learning how to manage my time more. I now know the mistakes that I was doing in the D.O.E. system. I am more aware of what I can do in school and work. According to Article 15 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, "Indigenous children have the right to all levels and forms of education of the state. All indigenous peoples also have this right and the right to establish

and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning. “Indigenous children living outside their communities have the right to be provided access to education in their own culture and language. States shall take effective measures to provide appropriate resources for these purposes.”

The charter schools are only getting half of the funding that regular schools are getting. Thus, I humbly ask this distinguished body, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, to immediately adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples without any changes or amendments. Also, I would like to express my full support to the statement that will be made by the Pacific Caucus relating to education.

Thank you for listening to my testimony.

Mr. Chair, Members of the Permanent Forum, Distinguished Representatives, Indigenous Brothers and Sisters, mahalo!