

LATE TESTIMONY

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY BY GEORGINA K. KAWAMURA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2672

January 30, 2008

RELATING TO GRADUATE LOAN PROGRAMS

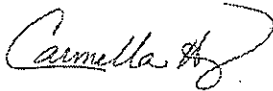
Senate Bill No. 2672 establishes a five-year pilot graduate school loan program and special fund for qualified individuals in the areas of occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language pathology, and school psychology. The bill also includes loan forgiveness provisions based upon employment in Hawaii with the State or another qualifying institution following completion of the graduate program. The program would be financed by the Rehabilitative and Related Services Graduate School Loan Program special fund created by this bill. The fund would generate revenues through legislative appropriations, private contributions, loan payments, interest, and moneys from other sources. Senate Bill No. 2672 appropriates \$350,000 from the general fund for deposit into the special fund, and \$350,000 in special funds to the Center for Disability Studies of the University of Hawaii to administer the program.

We are opposed to this bill. As a matter of general policy, this department does not support the creation of any special or revolving fund which does not meet the requirements of Sections 37-52.3 and 37-53.4 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes. Special or revolving funds should: 1) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries of the program; 2) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and 3) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. It is difficult to determine whether the fund will be self-sustaining.

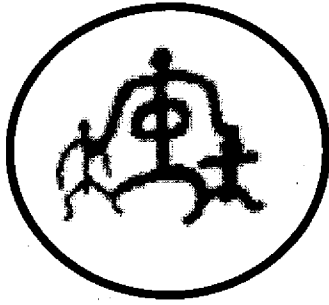
As I understand it, Aloha and other Hawaii-based carriers are asking Hawaii's lawmakers to remedy an inequity, by clarifying state law to extend a tax exemption that other airlines already have. If federal law does indeed regard them as interstate carriers, and if interstate carriers are exempt from GET on fuel purchases from the free trade zone at Honolulu Airport, then you should act swiftly to unburden Hawaii's airlines and secure those benefits for them.

Our inter-island airlines have been dedicated to serving Hawaii for decades. Without the reliable passenger and cargo service they provide, and the helping hand they offer to Hawaii's people, we would all be lost. Aloha Airlines is always ready to help when the need arises, as noted earlier – in good times and in bad - now its time for the Aloha State to help all our local airline companies by passing SB 2913. To help them is to help the communities we live in. I urge you to think of who we are and what we care about, and pass Senate Bill 2913 to give our local airlines the same benefits already enjoyed by other airlines.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carmella Hernandez".

Carmella Hernandez
State Director
March of Dimes Hawaii Chapter



HAWAI'I EARLY INTERVENTION
COORDINATING COUNCIL

1350 South King St. Suite 200 Honolulu Hawai'i 96814

DATE: January 30, 2008

TO: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair

FR: Leolinda Parlin, Chair, Hawai'i Early Intervention Coordinating Council

RE: SB 2672 RELATING TO GRADUATE LOAN PROGRAMS

On behalf of the Hawai'i Early Intervention Coordinating Council (HEICC), I submit this testimony in **strong support** of SB 2672, which establishes a graduate school loan program and corresponding special fund for qualified individuals in the areas of occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language pathology, and school psychology. Most important to our program is that the loan forgiveness schedule is based upon the applicant's commitment to complete an employment cycle here in Hawai'i.

The HEICC is the federally mandated advisory in Hawai'i for the services and programs defined in Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Because of the scope and nature of services mandated through Part C, our Early Intervention system of care relies heavily upon a team of qualified rehab professionals to serve our most vulnerable children who have or are at risk for developmental delay. Whether these providers are part of the state system or are contracted through our Purchase of Service agreements, the fact remains; there are **not enough** therapists to meet the needs of the children we are mandated to serve. Because of the existing shortages of these health care disciplines, the finite number of resources in our state, and the aging and retirement of the existing workforce, the state must seek unique remedies to address these needs or face the consequences of noncompliance.

In recent years, much attention has been given to the "brain drain" whereby our own young adults are pursuing careers away from home. For our *keiki 'o ka 'āina* who pursue career pathways in occupational and physical therapy, we are already at a disadvantage as they must seek their higher education in the mainland, making it that much harder to get them to return to Hawai'i. With the high cost of living, it is very difficult for our local graduates to return home. With the incentive for loan forgiveness, we anticipate that this may be the right kind of attraction to minimize the brain drain in these much needed health care disciplines.

Thank you for your time and consideration in passing this measure.

January 28, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

LATE

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

Dear Senator Sakamoto, Senator Tokuda and Committee on Education:

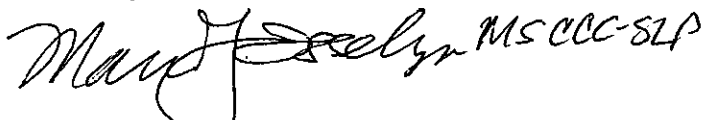
I am a Speech Language Pathologist at Easter Seals Hawaii Sultan Early Intervention Program. I am writing in strong support of SB 2672 relating to Rehabilitative and Related Services Graduate School Loan Program.

It is my privilege to work collaboratively with children from birth to 3 years of age with developmental delays and their families. The goal of early intervention services is to assist the child in reaching age appropriate skills and aid the family in achieving their goals for their child. These services are provided by physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, social workers and special educators. In order to help the State provide federally mandated early intervention services and meet mandated timelines, the pool of therapists with the highest professional standards must be increased.

I support this bill as it will improve opportunities for students to earn graduate degrees in physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, or school psychology and return to Hawaii to work. The bill will allow students to borrow up to \$10,000 per academic year. The total loan will be forgiven if the student returns to Hawaii and works for the State or a non-profit agency or health care organization for at least three years after graduation. This bill will help increase the number of available therapists to serve Hawaii's children and adults with developmental delays or disabilities.

I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Marci Josselyn, M.S. CCC-SLP

January 28, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
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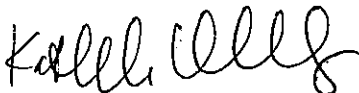
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Wong, MSW, LSW

January 28, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

LATE

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

Dear Senator Sakamoto, Senator Tokuda and Committee on Education:

I am a Physical Therapy Student at Easter Seals Hawaii's Sultan Early Intervention Program. I am writing in strong support of SB 2672 relating to Rehabilitative and Related Services Graduate School Loan Program.

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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Joni Kaitoku SPT

January 28, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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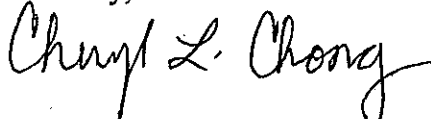
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Cheryl L. Chong, Data Clerk

January 28, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

LATE

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

Dear Senator Sakamoto, Senator Tokuda and Committee on Education:

I am an Administrative Assistant/Program Assistant at Easter Seals Hawaii's East Sultan Early Intervention Program. I am writing in strong support of SB 2672 relating to Rehabilitative and Related Services Graduate School Loan Program.

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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Cynthia A. Shinn

January 28, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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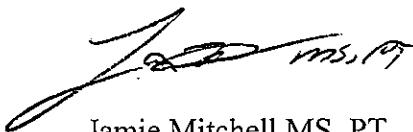
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Jamie Mitchell MS, PT

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
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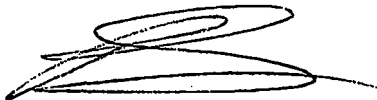
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Paula Fitzell, M. Ed.

January 29, 2008

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Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
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Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
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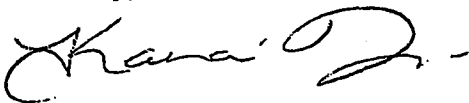
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Kanani Dias, MSW

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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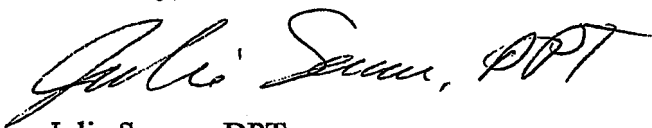
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Julie Seman, DPT

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Michelle Merget, OTR

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
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Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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Sincerely,



Jason Landgraf, MA

January 29, 2008

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Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,


Nicole Schulz, CFY-SLP

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,

 OTR/L
Darlene Yasharian, OTR

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
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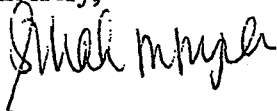
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Sarah Miyake, MSW, LSW

January 29, 2008

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Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
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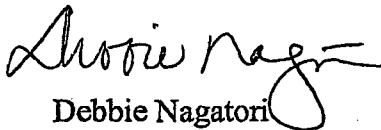
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Debbie Nagatori

January 29, 2008

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It is my privilege to work collaboratively with children from birth to 3 years of age with developmental delays and their families. The goal of early intervention services is to assist the child in reaching age appropriate skills and aid the family in achieving their goals for their child. These services are provided by physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, social workers and special educators. In order to help the State provide federally mandated early intervention services and meet mandated timelines, the pool of therapists with the highest professional standards must be increased.

I support this bill as it will improve opportunities for students to earn graduate degrees in physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, or school psychology and return to Hawaii to work. The bill will allow students to borrow up to \$10,000 per academic year. The total loan will be forgiven if the student returns to Hawaii and works for the State or a non-profit agency or health care organization for at least three years after graduation. This bill will help increase the number of available therapists to serve Hawaii's children and adults with developmental delays or disabilities.

I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Roda Agpaoa, MSW, LSW

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

Dear Senator Sakamoto, Senator Tokuda and Committee on Education:

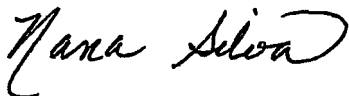
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Nana Silva

LATE

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

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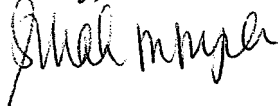
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Sarah Miyake, MSW, LSW

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

Dear Senator Sakamoto, Senator Tokuda and Committee on Education:

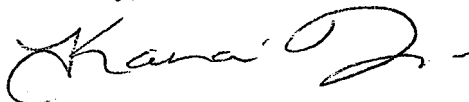
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kanani D.", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Kanani Dias, MSW

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

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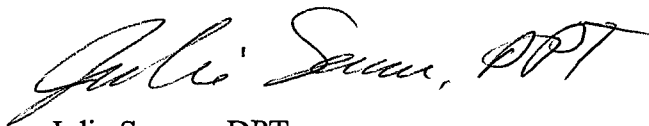
I am a Physical Therapist at Easter Seals Hawaii's Sultan Early Intervention Program. I am writing in strong support of SB 2672 relating to Rehabilitative and Related Services Graduate School Loan Program.

It is my privilege to work collaboratively with children from birth to 3 years of age with developmental delays and their families. The goal of early intervention services is to assist the child in reaching age appropriate skills and aid the family in achieving their goals for their child. These services are provided by physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, social workers and special educators. In order to help the State provide federally mandated early intervention services and meet mandated timelines, the pool of therapists with the highest professional standards must be increased.

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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Seman, DPT". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Julie Seman, DPT

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

Dear Senator Sakamoto, Senator Tokuda and Committee on Education:

I am an Occupational Therapist at Easter Seals Hawaii's Sultan Early Intervention Program. I am writing in strong support of SB 2672 relating to Rehabilitative and Related Services Graduate School Loan Program.

It is my privilege to work collaboratively with children from birth to 3 years of age with developmental delays and their families. The goal of early intervention services is to assist the child in reaching age appropriate skills and aid the family in achieving their goals for their child. These services are provided by physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, social workers and special educators. In order to help the State provide federally mandated early intervention services and meet mandated timelines, the pool of therapists with the highest professional standards must be increased.

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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle Merget". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michelle" and last name "Merget" clearly distinguishable.

Michelle Merget, OTR

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

Dear Senator Sakamoto, Senator Tokuda and Committee on Education:

I am a DOH Care Coordinator at Easter Seals Hawaii's Sultan Early Intervention Program. I am writing in strong support of SB 2672 relating to Rehabilitative and Related Services Graduate School Loan Program.

It is my privilege to work collaboratively with children from birth to 3 years of age with developmental delays and their families. The goal of early intervention services is to assist the child in reaching age appropriate skills and aid the family in achieving their goals for their child. These services are provided by physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, social workers and special educators. In order to help the State provide federally mandated early intervention services and meet mandated timelines, the pool of therapists with the highest professional standards must be increased.

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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Jason Landgraf, MA

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

Dear Senator Sakamoto, Senator Tokuda and Committee on Education:

I am an Occupational Therapist at Easter Seals Hawaii's Sultan Early Intervention Program. I am writing in strong support of SB 2672 relating to Rehabilitative and Related Services Graduate School Loan Program.

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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,

 OTR/L
Darlene Yasharian, OTR

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

Dear Senator Sakamoto, Senator Tokuda and Committee on Education:

I am a Speech Language Pathologist at Easter Seals Hawaii's Sultan Early Intervention Program. I am writing in strong support of SB 2672 relating to Rehabilitative and Related Services Graduate School Loan Program.

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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,


Nicole Schulz, CFY-SLP

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

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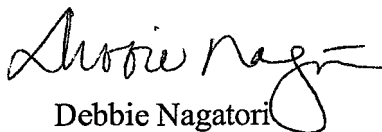
I am a Data Clerk at Easter Seals Hawaii's Sultan Early Intervention Program. I am writing in strong support of SB 2672 relating to Rehabilitative and Related Services Graduate School Loan Program.

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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Debbie Nagatori

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roda Agpaoa". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial letter.

Roda Agpaoa, MSW, LSW

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

Dear Senator Sakamoto, Senator Tokuda and Committee on Education:

I am a Program Assistant at Easter Seals Hawaii's Sultan Early Intervention Program. I am writing in strong support of SB 2672 relating to Rehabilitative and Related Services Graduate School Loan Program.

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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,



Nana Silva

January 29, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Twenty-fourth Legislature
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: In support of Senate Bill (SB) 2672

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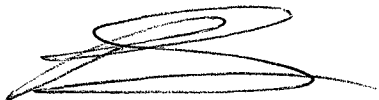
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I ask you to support SB 2672.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paula Fitzell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paula Fitzell, M. Ed.

Susan Rocco
1716 Piikea Street
Honolulu, HI 96818
(808) 422-5759
Piikea@earthlink.net

Senator Normal Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
January 30, 2008

Support of ~~SB~~ 2672 – Relating to Graduate Loan Programs

As the parent of a young adult with developmental disabilities I would like to add my voice to those who are proposing a loan program to encourage college students to pursue graduate programs in occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language pathology and psychology and to have these loans forgiven in exchange for employment with the State or a nonprofit agency or health care organization.

My son Jason received occupational, physical and speech language therapies throughout his early intervention and special education programs. While the quality of these services was above average, we often experienced turnover of therapists that hampered Jason's progress toward goals. Because of the chronic shortage of qualified personnel in Hawaii, there was considerable competition from the private sector, including rehabilitation service providers and facilities serving elderly clients, who often were able to offer higher wages and benefits than the Department of Education or the Department of Health.

At the same time, our early intervention program has grown to serve thousands of young keiki, and there are many more students with complex therapy needs, including students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, being served in our public schools. The proposed loan program with its option for loan forgiveness can go a long way to increase Hawaii's resource of highly trained, highly motivated therapists to help our students with disabilities reach their goals related to mobility, communication, independent living and mental health. And for young adults like Jason, an enhanced pool of qualified therapists can ensure that his lifelong support needs will be met.

Sincerely,

Susan Rocco