

Date of Hearing: March 27, 2008

Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: S.B. 2878, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, (H.S.C.R. 1289) Relating to Early Learning

Purpose: Establishes an early learning system in the state. Creates the Early Learning Council to develop and administer the early learning system. Establishes the Three- and Four-year-old Program.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) is in support of S.B. 2878, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, (H.S.C.R. 1289) as it promotes the creation of an infrastructure that supports early learning for all of Hawaii keiki.

The Department welcomes the opportunity to continue working with its early childhood partners, in both public and private settings, to ensure universal access to quality early learning opportunities. Our collective efforts will help young children to be at optimal levels of readiness for learning, particularly as they make the transition into a K-12 learning system.

Every year, approximately 13,300 students are enrolled in the Department's two-tiered kindergarten. It is estimated,

that four out of ten, or roughly 5,320 kindergarteners are not at optimal levels of readiness—academically, socially, emotionally—to meet the rigor of a standards-based classroom for our youngest learners. As more attention is provided to the early learning needs of children, prior to entering kindergarten, we would be better poised to effect a smoother transition into the Department's community of learning and supports for our youngest learners. On a larger scale, our collective work would serve to ensure that all students in the public education system are able to meet the Department's Vision of a Public High School Graduate.

The Department appreciates the focus on enhancing parent involvement and engaging parents in a learning system. This is critical area if we are to work collegially to support the learning of young children.

The Department seeks clarity in the definition and parameters of the three- and four-year-old program.

Although the initial focus may be on three and four-year-olds, we suggest that as appropriate, programs and services also be offered to younger children, in order to promote the vision of an early learning system that meets the needs of all children from birth to age five.

As the department begins to examine facilities on public school campuses that are available to house early childhood programs, the Department would suggest language be included in the bill {Section 6, (b)} with priority also be given to public schools sites in geographic locations with limited access to early childhood programs, in addition to sites in areas that serve at-risk children.

Finally, the Department suggests that the definition of "at-risk children" be revisited, so it does not unintentionally exclude those young children whose parents are simply not able to afford the center-based program of their choice.

The Department truly appreciates the opportunity to support the thoughtful work of the Early Learning Task Force and the legislature, in creating the opportunity for all of us to work to develop an early learning system that will address the development and learning of our youngest learners throughout the state.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
March 27, 2008 at 3:00 p.m.

by

Linda Johnsrud

Vice President for Academic Planning and Policy, University of Hawai'i

SB 2878, SD2, HD1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and members of the House Committee on Finance:

I am Linda K. Johnsrud, Vice President for Academic Planning and Policy, University of Hawai'i System. On behalf of the University System, I am testifying in support of Senate Bill 2878, Senate Draft 2, House Draft 1, which establishes an early learning system for Hawai'i, creates an Early Learning Council to administer the system, and establishes the Keiki First Steps three- and four-year old program.

The University of Hawai'i is a strong advocate of measures to increase the success of Hawai'i's students as they move through the educational pipeline from birth through adulthood. We are an active partner in the Hawai'i P-20 Initiative, and firmly believe that higher education's role is critical if we are to improve the educational level of all of Hawai'i's citizens.

As a partner in Hawai'i's P-20 Initiative with Superintendent Pat Hamamoto and Good Beginnings President Liz Chun, we grapple with the questions as to what strategies are needed to ensure every child enters school ready to succeed, schools are ready for children, and early childhood professionals have access to education that will increase their capacity to teach and nurture the young learner. The Kellogg Foundation Grant of \$10 million is an example of our efforts at statewide collaboration and commitment toward early childhood education at the community level.

We believe there must be a concerted effort to provide quality early education for Hawai'i's keiki, and know that ultimately how successfully children progress through the educational pipeline will affect their entrance into higher education and lifelong learning.

The University of Hawai'i is prepared to work with the early learning system to provide the early childhood education and professional development that are referenced in the language of the bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 27, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: **S. B. 2878, S.D. 2, H.D. 1 - RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**
Hearing: Thursday, March 27, 2008; 3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of S.B. 2878, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, is to create an Early Learning Council to govern the State's early learning system, establish an Early Learning System, and establish the Keiki First Steps program.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates and supports the intent of this bill and we have the following concerns and recommendations. The purpose of our proposed amendments is to support the establishment of the Early Learning Council (ELC) and a comprehensive Early Learning System (ELS), and clarify the role of the ELC to avoid unnecessary conflicts between its jurisdiction and Federal mandates, the Hawaii State Constitution, and other Hawaii State systems involved in the ELS.

The following are some of the key amendments that will help to establish an Early Learning System and Council that will avoid unnecessary conflicts with Federal mandates, State law, and the Hawaii State Constitution. This bill should:

- Should acknowledge that many of the key components of the proposed ELS currently exist through programs operated by DHS and contracted partners, including but not limited to the Department of Health (DOH), the

Department of Education (DOE), the University of Hawaii Center on the Family, Kamehameha Schools, Parents Attentive To Children (PATCH), the Good Beginning Alliance (GBA), the Hawaii Association for Education of Young Children (HAEYC), the University of Hawaii Cooperative Extension Program, and Head Start.

- Clarify that DHS and other State departments involved in childcare and early learning shall continue their authority to set regulatory standards and budget priorities, obtain Federal and State funding and contract for childcare and early learning services.
- Should attach the Early Learning Council to DHS, rather than to the Department of Education (DOE) as currently proposed, since DHS is already the single- State agency for the Federal Child Care Development Fund and already regulates childcare and early learning under State law.
- Ensure that parents have choices of early learning settings for their children.
- Encourage the expansion and improvement of all early learning settings: center-based childcare, family-child interaction learning and family childcare.
- Should require the Early Learning Council to give DHS access to its financial records to maximize the ability of DHS to draw down Federal funds for childcare and early learning.
- Specify that no voting member of the Early Learning Council can have a financial interest in any childcare or early learning business or any other related business to avoid a conflict of interest.

A key conclusion of the Act 259 (SLH 2006) Task Force Report, at page 79, is that “[t]he proposed early learning system will consist of independent but interrelated components that will utilize the strengths of other Hawaii state systems, such as health and social services.” [Emphasis added.] The bill needs to acknowledge that many of the key components of the proposed ELS currently exist through the efforts of our competent staff and contracted partners, including but not limited to the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Education (DOE), the University of

Hawaii Center on the Family, Kamehameha Schools, Parents Attentive To Children (PATCH), the Good Beginning Alliance (GBA), the Hawaii Association for Education of Young Children (HAEYC), the University of Hawaii Cooperative Extension Program, and Head Start. Attached is an eleven-page listing of DHS Childcare and Early Learning Services Contracts as of February 20, 2007.

For example, DHS already directly or through its partners: provides training to childcare providers to increase their skills in working with young children; provides scholarships for college classes to early childhood professionals to increase their knowledge of best practices in working with children; maintains a registry of early childhood professionals; offers a waiver program to allow staff at preschools to be counted in the staff-employment sequence while in the process of obtaining the required credentials; offers financial incentives to childcare providers who meet the State's quality content standards; develops and implements professional development standards so that there is continuous program improvement which results in better care for our young children; ensures through our childcare licensing program the health, safety, social and emotional well-being of children; provides for educational and professional criteria for childcare and early learning staff through our childcare licensing program which establishes standards for professional development (staffing credentials, staff-child ratios, experience, training, and competence) in a variety of quality childcare settings; offers subsidies to allow needy families to access preschool programs; provides appropriate nutrition information to childcare providers; provides a system for better trained health consultants for preschools; offers financial incentives to expand childcare capacity; funds the Learning to Grow Project which offers training to legally-exempt childcare providers to increase their skills in caring for children; provides for before- and after-school childcare programs; and funds the Malama Mobile project which offers parenting skills training and childcare for homeless families, using the "Tutu and Me" curriculum.

The ELC, as proposed in this bill should not regulate the early learning programs or activities of the DHS, the DOH, and "other Hawaii state systems." For example, the ELC cannot regulate the early learning programs implemented by DHS, in particular, because DHS is the single State agency designated by the

Governor, pursuant to Federal law, to implement the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) program. The CCDF regulations mandate that DHS use the funds to: enhance the quality and increase the supply of childcare; improve the quality of and coordination among childcare programs and early childhood development programs; increase the availability of early childhood development programs; implement licensing requirements applicable to childcare services provided within the State; maximize parental choice through the use of certificates and through grants and contracts; include in their programs a broad range of childcare providers, including center-based care, family childcare, in-home care, and care provided by relatives and sectarian childcare providers; and provide childcare subsidies to eligible families, in accordance with the provisions of 42 U.S.C. §§9858 – 9858q.

Given these broad Federal childcare and early learning mandates, which are the responsibility of the DHS as the CCDF single State agency for Hawaii, it makes compelling sense for the ELC to be attached to the DHS, and not to the DOE as proposed in this bill. Therefore, we respectfully request amending this bill to identify that the ELC shall be attached to DHS.

Further, the grants of State funds by the ELC cannot require Hawaii State departments, such as the DHS and DOH, to seek approval of the ELC to obtain State appropriations from the Legislature because such would be inconsistent with the Hawaii State Constitution.

DHS also recommends making the following additional amendments to this bill to clarify the role of the ELC to avoid unnecessary conflicts between its jurisdiction and Federal mandates, the Hawaii State Constitution, and other Hawaii State systems involved in the ELS:

- Amend the section (a) in the Early Learning Council portion of the bill by deleting items 2, 3, 4, and 9, and adding the following:

The administrative authority of the council shall extend to its own programs, and the standards and rules established by the council for its programs shall be coordinated to the extent possible with the rules for programs administered by other state agencies.

The council shall identify all state programs that it considers necessary to coordinate, improve, and expand as part of the early learning system, provided that

all programs shall be coordinated by their respective state agencies to the extent possible with the other programs that are identified as part of the early learning system, as recommended by the council.

The council may provide policy recommendations to other state agencies to promote the coordination of services provided by those agencies.

- Add the following language to the section concerning the Early Learning Council:

Each state agency shall retain its inherent authority to administer its programs, including but not limited to establishing regulatory standards and budget priorities, and promulgating rules affecting its programs; provided that an agency's programs shall be coordinated to the extent possible with the other programs that are identified as part of the early learning system, as recommended by the council.

Each of the agencies represented on the council shall participate in the council in good faith to achieve coordination of the standards and priorities determined by the council to lead to the goal of a seamless comprehensive early learning system.

The council shall allow the department of human services or its designee to have access to the council's expenditure records, and shall establish a system to account for expenditures of non-federal funds by all state and private agencies participating in the early learning system that would qualify for matching federal childcare and development funds, or other federal funds, in order to maximize the availability of those federal funds.

No voting member of the council shall have a financial interest in any childcare or early learning business or any other related business.

The council shall ensure that parents have choices of early learning settings and encourage the expansion and quality of all three settings: center-based, family-child interaction learning, and family childcare.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill.

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Name of Service	Contractor	Contract Amount	Area Served	Estimated No. of Children Served per month	Description
Child Care Subsidy Type Services					
A+ Program	Dept. of Education (DOE)	\$6,383,360.00	Statewide	23,562	This is a State-funded contract that pays for the cost-share portion for children enrolled in DOE A+ program. DHS has agreed to pay the cost-share for children receiving free or reduced lunch. The contract pays for low income children enrolled in the A+ After-School program located in DOE or charter school campuses statewide. Their parents do not need to pay individual monthly tuition for this care on days when school is in session during the school year.
Preschool Open Doors	Maximus, Inc.	\$293,750.00	Statewide	1,650	This is a Federally-funded contract that issues State funds to eligible families. The purpose of the services is to provide case management and issue child care subsidies for preschool-aged children statewide. An open enrollment period occurs annually in the spring for four year old children. If after the initial enrollment period it is determined that we have not reached the maximum number of children who can be served, the enrollment remains open and applications are processed until the maximum number is reached. The program is designed for eligible children to experience a year of preschool prior to entering kindergarten. Their preschool year would be effective either in August or September. Their parents need <u>not</u> be employed, attending school, or in job training. Families are ranked according to income limits and age of the child. Special needs three year olds, who have applied to the DOE Special Education program but were not accepted, also have the next priority in applying for this program. Income eligibility limits for this POD program are the same as for the other DHS child care programs that use Federal funds (where the parents <u>are</u> required to be working, attending school or participating in job training.).
Full Inclusion for Infants and	Dept. of Health (DOH)	\$215,000.00	Statewide	37	The Inclusion Project is a statewide project for infants and toddlers

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Toddlers					with developmental delays. This project provides assistance to families to identify appropriate inclusion placements specific to the family's desires and needs, provide parent education and support, arrange for special supportive or therapeutic services needed by children, and work with families and agencies to assure a smooth transition of the child from early special needs intervention into a preschool system of services. This project surveys existing State resources to identify programs and individuals to serve children with special needs. The Inclusion Project also provides assistance to child care providers throughout the State by identifying and delivering training needed by existing staff who will enable them to continue to serve children with developmental delays. Additionally, care providers in each inclusive placement will receive on-going training and support specific to each child they are serving. The Inclusion Project will maintain an ongoing dialogue with programs to identify new needs and areas that require further training and support for successful placements. The Zero-To-Three Hawaii project is the child care financial assistance portion of the Inclusion Project. Zero-to-Three Hawaii provides financial support (tuition assistance) to eligible families who do not have funds to provide their infant or toddler with an inclusive setting.
Infant & Toddler Care for Teen Parents	DOE	\$95,172.53	Waiakea	3	The seven listed contracts are for infant/toddler centers to provide child care for teen parents enrolled in/attending these high schools and participating in the DOE GRADS program to continue their schooling. This child care service enables them to remain in school, and/or to be promoted/graduate from high school to increase their self-sufficiency. The DOE staff of these high schools select motivated students and refer them to the child care program. The
		\$80,000.00	Konawaena	7	
		\$52,700.00	Kapaa	7	

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		\$102,910.00	McKinley	6	students' attendance and grades are monitored by DOE staff. Participation in the child care program activities is expected. The teen parents sign a contract with respect to enrollment/participation in this service. Violation of their personal contracts dismisses them from using the child care service. The DHS contracts infant/toddler care for the children of teen parents and provides parent education activities to increase their parenting skills and knowledge of child development, and participation by the parents of these teens. The service is available when DOE is in session, and is open half an hour before the school day begins, and half an hour after the school day ends.
		\$104,006.00	Kealakehe	2	
		\$75,162.00	Maui	5	
		108,062.00	Waianae	10	
FTW On-Site Child Care	Kama'aina Kids	\$55,000	Pohulani	25	The goal is to enable TANF clients in the First-To-Work (FTW) program to participate in required program activities, designed to lead to economic self-sufficiency, by providing on-site drop-in child care services to clients who are unable to arrange care for their children during program activity sessions. The ages of the children will range from over two (2) years of age to under thirteen (13) years of age. Child care services may be provided for up to twelve (12) children at any one time daily. The child care program is required to meet all DHS regulations set forth in Hawaii Administrative Rules, Title 17, Chapter 17-892.1, "Licensing of Group Child Care Centers And Group Child Care Homes."
		\$174,000	Wahiawa Waipahu Waianae	80	
Child Care Quality Services					
Oahu Child Care Background Check	Insights to Success (ITS)	\$112,000.00	Statewide	Not applicable.	Services include conducting criminal history and child abuse background checks on license-exempt child care providers who seek DHS child care subsidies, A+ staff, and the child care providers in the DOH Inclusion Program.
Infant & Toddler Training	PATCH (People Attentive	\$180,000.00	Statewide	Not applicable.	The purpose of the services is to provide for infant and toddler

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	To Children)				trainers through the nationally recognized, California-based WestEd program. In turn, those trained through the WestEd program will provide trainings/workshops statewide. The target group for these trainings/workshops is child care providers who work with infants and toddlers in centers and in homes. The goal is to increase the number of child care providers who care for infants and toddlers who are adequately trained.
Training and Scholarship Services	PATCH (People Attentive To Children)	\$558,000.00		Not applicable.	PATCH provides training to all licensed providers statewide and those interested in becoming licensed. The training modules vary in the information presented, but the overall goal of all trainings is to improve the quality of the child care settings. In addition, they are giving out scholarships to anyone who takes college classes in early childhood with the goal of increasing the supply of qualified individuals in early childhood education and care settings. The goal is to increase the pool of adequately trained child care professionals.
Resource & Referral	PATCH (People Attentive To Children)	\$240,000.00	Statewide	Not applicable.	PATCH provides statewide child care resource and referral services to the public. The resource information includes available training opportunities for child care providers, available funding/subsidies for child care, etc. For the referral services, PATCH obtains a listing of licensed providers from our Child Care Connection Hawaii (CCCH) units and maintains a database of provider information. This information is mainly for parents when requesting a listing of licensed providers in a specific area. PATCH also provides information and guidance to parents about choosing child care. The goal of this service is to provide a single organization that would be the warehouse of information on child care related services.
Learning to Grow	University of Hawaii, Center on the Family	\$588,156.00	Statewide	Not applicable.	The purpose of this contract is: 1) to educate parents who receive child care subsidies from DHS and the license-exempt providers who

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					care for their children ages 0-5 years old about improving the quality of care that is provided; 2) to educate parents who receive child care subsidies from DHS about choosing quality care for their children; and 3) to establish family resource network centers that provide resource information to families about supportive services that are available to assist the family so that their children are safe, healthy, and ready to learn.
Child Care Provider Registry	PATCH (People Attentive To Children)	\$275,000.00	Statewide	Not applicable.	The Registry provides for evaluation of educational documents of staff at licensed child care facilities statewide. This information will be kept on a database set-up by the contractor for the DHS to evaluate the numbers of child care providers with specific types of degrees. Also, the Registry provides professional development counseling to individuals in the early childhood field with the goal of increasing the number of qualified staff in the field.
Nutrition Consultation and Menu Review	University of Hawaii – Cooperative Extension Program	\$100,000.00	Statewide	Not applicable.	The University of Hawaii will conduct menu reviews for licensed facilities that are required to have one completed as well as provide nutrition consultation and training services for any licensed provider who is seeking that type of information. The goal of this service is to allow DHS licensed child care programs to meet the licensing requirements as well as provide a resource for licensing staff as well as child care providers for consultation.
Healthy Child Care Hawaii	Department of Health (DOH)	\$106,875.00	Statewide	Not applicable.	The purpose of this contract is to fund the DOH's Healthy Child Care Hawaii Project which provides training to pediatricians in becoming a health resource for licensed child care providers as well as to provide technical assistance to licensing staff and child care providers on national safety and health standards.
Keiki Care Project Coordinator	Department of Health (DOH)	\$72,634.00	Statewide	Not applicable.	This funds the Project Coordinator position for this DOH service. The Project Coordinator shall work statewide to assist in the

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					development of an integrated service system of care for children with special needs ages 3-5. This requires working closely with Health, Education, and Social Service Programs serving preschool children and other community service providers. In addition, the Coordinator works with public and private agencies involved in various initiatives to integrate services, provide training and consultation, and create new service options for young children with special needs. This effort will focus, in particular, on children who exhibit challenging behaviors in preschool settings.
Child Care Advocacy & Facilitation Services	Good Beginnings Alliance	\$300,000	Statewide	Not applicable.	To assist and support the State in coordinating the early childhood system by providing a sustainable, collaborative, and integrated early childhood system that ensures that children ages 0 – 5 are safe, healthy, and ready to learn when entering the school system. The outcomes of the service include identifying all partners required to have a comprehensive system to support that children are safe, healthy and ready to learn; develop partnerships with key stakeholders and policy makers in order to determine the most effective use of financial resources; develop a plan for each community that addresses their specific and unique needs; recommend a method of tracking and achieving common outcomes for young children; and linking families to services that support children's health, protection, and development.
Quality Care Project	University of Hawaii – Center on the Family	\$646,798.00	Statewide	Not applicable.	This contract supports the quality incentive program in the area of evaluation of whether preschools meet the Hawaii Preschool Content Standards (HPCS) and home-based child care providers meet the Developmental Guidelines in order to receive incentive payments from DHS. The goal of the program is to improve quality in all child care settings and provide funding to allow programs to continuously

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					strive towards improvement. Since this is a relatively new program, there are discussions about the type of evaluation that needs to be done to determine increased quality.
Pre-Plus Programs	Oahu Head Start	No contract funds are allocated, but DHS issues child care subsidies, through HMS 305, to reimburse eligible families for the tuition that providers charge.	Aiea Elem.	20	The primary purpose of the Pre-Plus Program is to provide preschool opportunities for disadvantaged children who in the past would not have had the opportunity due to lack of financial resources and availability of services. The measurable outcomes of this program would include: the number of preschool slots provided, as indicated by capacity; the number of children enrolled in the programs; the number of children with special needs (DOE qualified) who are served; and, the number of children enrolled who are receiving DHS subsidies.
	Oahu Head Start		Ewa Elem.	16	
	Parents & Children Together (PACT) Head Start		Fern Elem.	20	
	Oahu Head Start		Jefferson Elem.	20	
	Oahu Head Start		Ka'ala Elem.	20	
	Oahu Head Start		Kailua Elem.	18	
	Seagull Schools		Kapolei Elem.	28	
	Kama'aina Care, Inc.		Keonepoko Elem.	14	
	Oahu Head Start		Kuhio Elem.	20	
	MEO Head Start		Lihikai Elem.	20	
	HCEOC Head Start		Mt. View Elem.	20	
	Oahu Head Start		Salt Lake Elem.	20	
	Oahu Head Start		Wahiawa Elem.	20	
	Oahu Head Start		Waiiau Elem.	20	
	Oahu Head Start		Waimanalo Elem.	19	
Kama'aina Care, Inc.	Waipahu Elem.	11			

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Other Programs Offered Through TANF Funds					
Read Aloud America Program	Read Aloud America	\$533,715 (awaiting contract execution)	Currently offered in the following elementary schools and is planned to be offered statewide: August Ahrens, Mililani Uka, Nanaikapono and Kalihi Elementary Schools.	Not available at this time as we will receive the initial reports from the programs upon contract execution.	The primary purpose of this funding is to offer the Read Aloud Program (RAP) to 50 elementary schools statewide by the fourth year of the contract. RAP is a family-based read aloud program which is offered for one semester after school hours. The program provides a faculty presentation, six early evening family sessions, and nine classroom visitations. The purpose of the program is to train parents in strategies to establish a literate environment in the home and help their children achieve academic success.
Family Literacy Through the Tutu and Me – Malama Mobile Program	Partners In Development Foundation (PIDF)	\$350,000 (awaiting contract execution)	Leeward Coast	Not available as the services have not started yet.	The Malama Mobile is a new partnership project between DHS and Kamehameha Schools to provide mobile outreach designed to address the needs of the homeless population on the Leeward Coast. The mobile outreach will provide basic life needs such as food and clothing and collaborate with other community agencies to provide professional services such as medical, dental and legal services. The portion of the project that will be funded through this contract with DHS funds is the implementation of a program to help promote family wellness and literacy. The adult education component extends basic educational skills to parents; the child education component, which uses the Tutu and Me curriculum, is designed to promote the growth and development of children from birth to eight

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					years old by offering a traveling preschool program; a parent and child interaction component; and a parent component designed to provide parents with information on effective life skills.
Other Early Childhood Education Initiatives					
Child Care Capacity-Building and Quality Incentive Payments					
<p>As of April 1, 2006, DHS is offering several types of quality incentive payments to preschools to reward those who meet a certain level of quality and allow them to increase the quality in their child care settings. These incentives also provide the opportunity for preschools to expand capacity. DHS also provided a time-limited (10/1/05 – 3/31/06) capacity-building incentive for preschools to expand their enrollment if their facility or program could accommodate expansion. The following are the types of incentives offered:</p>					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time-limited incentives (10/01/05 – 03/31/06): \$75/month per subsidized child; 2. Hawaii Preschool Content Standards: \$50/month per subsidized child; 3. Professional Development Standards – Level 1: \$50/month per subsidized child; and 4. Professional Development Standards – Level 2: \$25/month per subsidized child. 					
<p>From 4/1/06 to 6/30/06, we issued the following amounts for each of the incentive types:</p>					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time-limited incentives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 92 preschools \$487,425.00 2. Hawaii Preschool Content Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 47 preschools \$70,150.00 3. Professional Development Standards – Level 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 83 preschools \$109,250.00 					

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4. Professional Development Standards – Level 2 1 preschool \$0 payments issued From 7/1/06 to 2/26/07, we have issued the following amounts to date: 1. Hawaii Preschool Content Standards 62 preschools \$249,400.00 2. Professional Development Standards – Level 1 136 preschools \$531,250 3. Professional Development Standards – Level 2 1 preschool \$700.00					<p>In 2/07 we issued applications (approximately 4,000) to offer quality incentive payments to home-based providers (which includes both licensed, license-exempt and relative providers). DHS identified the license-exempt and relative providers as being those who are known to the Department as caring for children who are receiving child care subsidies.</p> <p>Note: For both the incentives issued to preschools having curricula aligned with the Hawaii Preschool Content Standards and to home-based providers who participate in monthly activities to improve the quality of care that they provide, we have contracted with the University of Hawaii – Center on the Family to determine whether they qualify for the incentive. We are working with the Center on the Family to develop and issue a survey form to review what they used the incentives for and how it improved the quality of care that they provide to children.</p> <p>Preschool directors have commented that they use the new DHS incentive payments to offer training opportunities for staff, obtain substitutes for staff who attend training, provide bonuses to staff, and purchase new equipment and supplies for their program for the children’s use. The survey that we plan to issue will allow us to fully evaluate on a larger scale how they have</p>

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Name of Service	Contractor	Contract Amount	Area Served	Estimated No. of Children Served per month	Description
improved the quality of care, and whether they've increased their capacity (and by how many slots).					
<p>Super-Waivers</p> <p>This is a pilot project that DHS started in 12/05 to allow preschool staff who are only Aide qualified to be waived into a Teacher position in a preschool, provided that they will meet the education and experience requirements within a two-year period. The following are the statistics to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of waivers approved (includes the 7 who later withdrew from the project due to new employment or other reasons): 102 • Total number of preschools requesting waivers: 81 • Total number of staff completing waivers who are now teacher qualified: 4 <p>Staff are currently in the process of evaluating the applicant's progress.</p>					

OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRACTICES

STATE OF HAWAII
NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT BUILDING
250 SOUTH HOTEL STREET, SUITE 107
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: 808-586-1400 FAX: 808-586-1412
EMAIL: oip@hawaii.gov

To: House Committee on Finance

From: Paul T. Tsukiyama, Director

Date: March 27, 2008, 3:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 308

Re: Testimony on S.B. 2878, S.D. 2, H.D. 1
Relating to Early Learning

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on S.B. 2878, S.D. 2, H.D.

1.

The Office of Information Practices ("OIP") takes no position on the substance of this bill, which would, among other things, establish an Early Learning Council, but seeks clarification of a provision regarding workgroups and subcommittees of the council which states (at page 15 lines 1-2):

The workgroups and subcommittees shall be exempt from chapter 92, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

The Sunshine Law (which is part I of chapter 92, not all of chapter 92) applies to discussions of board business between members of a board. Thus, even if the workgroups or subcommittees formed by the Early Learning Council are not themselves boards subject to the Sunshine Law, the council members' discussion of council business as part of their participation in those workgroups or subcommittees would likely still fall within the Sunshine Law's scrutiny. This interpretation would be supported by this Committee's earlier statement regarding

the same language in H.B. 2973, H.D. 2 (which replaced this bill's earlier text), that it would "[s]ubject[] Council meetings to the laws relating to public agency meetings and records." To comply with the Sunshine Law, council members' discussions of council business outside a meeting would have to fit within one of the Sunshine Law's permitted interactions, such as the one allowing board members (less than a quorum) to be assigned to investigate an issue together and report back to the board.

If this Committee's intent was instead to allow council members to freely discuss council business in closed meetings of workgroups and subcommittees without having to be previously assigned or to report back to the full council, then this Committee would better achieve that intent through adding a permitted interaction to this bill. However, this Committee should be aware that permitting any number of council members to discuss council business outside a council meeting in this way could obviate this Committee's intent to require public meetings of the council. The public council meetings could, in that case, become a mere formality to ratify decisions already made in the workgroups or subcommittees. Thus, if this Committee wishes to add such a permitted interaction for this council, OIP would recommend that the interaction be limited to less than a quorum of council members. The following language would allow less than a quorum of council members to discuss council business as part of the workgroups or subcommittees: "Two or more council members, but less than a quorum, may discuss matters relating to official council business in the course of their participation in a workgroup or subcommittee, and such discussion shall be a permitted interaction as provided for in section 92-2.5."

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY BY GEORGINA K. KAWAMURA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2878, S.D. 2, H.D. 1

March 27, 2008

RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING

Senate Bill No. 2878, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, establishes: 1) a comprehensive early learning system to be known as Keiki First Steps; 2) an early learning council to develop and administer the early learning system, and 3) the three- and four-year olds program.

We do not support this bill.

In response to the Council on Revenues' most recent projections, the Administration is currently taking precautionary fiscal measures to address a potential revenue reduction of over \$45 million each fiscal year in FB 2007-09. Therefore, while State-sponsored early childhood education is a laudable goal, the Department of Budget and Finance believes that it is far too costly to implement at this time.

To: Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair
Representative Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

From: Sharon Taba
President
Good Beginnings Alliance Board

Date: Thursday, March 27, 2008
3:00 PM, Room 308
Agenda 2

Subject: SB2878 SD2, Early Learning System; Early Learning Council; Keiki First Steps

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and members of the House Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding SB2878 SD2 HD1. I am Sharon Taba, President of the Good Beginnings Alliance Board. I strongly support the intent of this bill.

The Act 259 Early Learning Educational Task Force has proposed a high-quality early learning program for Hawaii's 4-year-olds, which culminated in the task force's final report to the Legislature in December 2007. Principles of quality, such as degreed teachers and administrators, appropriate teacher-student ratios, accredited programs, or curricula that meet the Hawaii Preschool Content Standards are foundational elements for our keiki to succeed in school and in life.

Our Board supports the creation of the public-private Early Learning Council, recommending that it be attached to a state agency for fiscal and administrative purposes only. This council must have a **broad representation from both the public and private sectors, especially from the early learning community and neighbor islands.**

Further, we urge your continued support for helping our early education professionals to obtain their required college degrees and early childhood courses. Extensive research has shown that highly-trained teachers and administrators significantly impact the quality of the early learning experience for children, and this will truly be a worthwhile investment.

Finally, we support the start-up of the three- and four-year-old program for our young children in at-risk communities and a strong commitment to expanding these services during the 2009 Legislative Session. Over 80 percent of our current public school kindergarten classes do not have most of their students displaying the necessary pre-literacy skills during their first month of kindergarten, and we need to make a stand now. Forty other states already have some type of publicly-funded early childhood education program in their states, and Hawaii must take this next step forward for the benefit of our young children, their families, our communities, and our state in the future.

Early childhood has made great strides in recent years, yet many families and children continue to lack access to high quality early care and education. As the state faces a deficit and a recession, now is the time to ensure that parents can access high quality early learning choices for their children to prepare them for school and for life. Our children, our families, our communities, and our state will benefit. Invest now!"

I strongly urge you to support this bill for the good of all of Hawaii's children.



To: Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair
Representative Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

From: Liz Chun
Executive Director, Good Beginnings Alliance

Date: Thursday, March 27, 2008
3:00 pm, Room 308

Subject: SB 2878 SD 2 HD1, Relating to Early Learning

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and members of the House Committee on Finance. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding SB 2878 SD2 HD1. Good Beginnings Alliance supports SB2878 HD1 to create the Early Learning Council, establish the Keiki First Steps Early Learning System, and establish the 3- and 4-year-old program.

Governance and Early Learning Council

It is vital that Hawaii's early learning system have a governance structure that has authority and accountability, and the proposed Early Learning Council is a critical first step in the right direction. This governance structure must be attached to a public agency which will allow both authority and accountability to rest with this new entity.

Hawaii is one of only 10 states without a state sponsored early learning system. The focus of this system is on the young learner. It is a system that acknowledges the public and private nature of early education programs and that health and safety programs are part of that system. The educational programs are located in mostly private settings and are funded by both public and private sources. The Early Learning Council's first priority will be to oversee the development of a three and four year old educational program that promotes school success.

The Act 259 Task Force recommended that mechanisms be established so that administrative agencies will be able to identify and resolve potential overlaps in service. We recognized a long-term commitment among the education, health, and child safety serving agencies to pursue joint planning through a public/private planning group such as this Early Learning Council. Starting now, will allow adequate time to work out the inevitable kinks of coordination and to evolve into a well-designed system.

It will be the responsibility of this Council, which is formed from a representation of public and private entities, to then describe and implement how the programs within other departments and in the private sector will connect and coordinate to maximize their resources.

It is our recommendation that this Early Learning Council link with community based councils so that input is received as to the needs of programs and families. This Council must develop protocols and procedures for establishing these linkages.

Good Beginnings Alliance

Section 3 Early Learning Council, item f(1): We recommend should read:

The Council shall form workgroups and subcommittees, including individuals who reflect the early childhood community throughout the state and who are not council members to:

- (1) Obtain resource information from early learning professionals, local communities and other individuals as deemed necessary by the council;

Section 3 Early Learning Council, item i: We recommend should read:

The council may contract with any (state) public and private agencies to administer various components, programs, and services of the early learning system.

Professional Development

One of the most crucial elements for early education is the building of a qualified work force. We must recruit new and support existing early education teachers. Scholarships, advisors and mentors, remediation and tutoring, and an increase in the locations for delivery of early education courses are needed.

Direct Services

The newly established three and four year old program will be developed by the Early Learning Council and administered by the Department of Human Services. The programs are voluntary and respect parent choice including center-based, family child care, family child interaction learning programs, as well as home-based instruction. The model requires all settings receiving state funding to follow Hawaii Preschool Content Standards, employ early childhood professionals with degrees in early childhood, and ensure accountability for results.

This legislation does not mean the Department of Human Services will relinquish their responsibility for licensing of child care programs. It does not change lead agency designation for federal early childhood programs such as the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF). The goal of the Early Learning Council would be to create a coordinated system with the CCDF funding and with state funded early learning programs for three and four year olds.

The import of the Early Learning Council is for public and private entities supporting young children to develop a methodology for financing that complies with state and federal mandates – and maximizes the resources available.

Part IV: Pre Plus

Pre Plus is a public/private partnership to operate the preschool programs on public school land. As new facilities through expanding PrePlus are opened, we also must provide funding for the educational services. PrePlus provides for construction of facilities. Funding direct service programs in these facilities is a necessary companion.

This bill is a first step. We must not be intimidated by the long-term costs. So many children will benefit if we begin. The journey to reach all eligible children may take many, many years. However to not begin for even a few, will hold back so many children from this crucial first step.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS
Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Hearing Date: Thursday, March 27, 2008
3:00 p.m. – Conference Room 308

By Christopher Pating
Vice President, Strategic Planning & Implementation
Kamehameha Schools

Thursday, March 27, 2008

Re: **SB 2878, SD2, HD1** - Relating to Early Learning

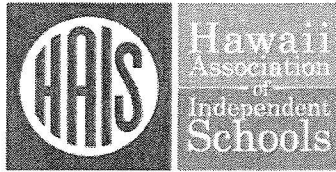
Good afternoon Chair Oshiro, Vice-Chair Lee and members of the House Committee on Finance. My name is Christopher Pating and I am Vice President, Strategic Planning & Implementation for Kamehameha Schools. Thank you for this opportunity to testify on **SB 2878, SD2, HD1**.

Kamehameha Schools applauds the legislature for its interest in establishing an early learning program and to enhancing the early education opportunities of children across the state. We have been participating extensively in the Early Learning Education Task Force established by the legislature and strongly support the Task Force's report. We look forward to participating in on-going dialog on this critically important matter and ask you to support advancing this measure.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is a statewide educational system supported by a trust endowed by Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, whose mission is to improve the capability and well-being of Native Hawaiian children through education. We serve 5,400 K-12 students through campus programs on O'ahu, Hawai'i and Maui, and 1,317 three-and-four-year-olds at 31 preschool sites statewide. Last year, we provided \$4.4 million in scholarships to 850 keiki attending community preschools.

Since its inception more than 20 years ago, the Kamehameha Schools Early Childhood Education (ECE) Division has provided more than 11,000 keiki with their first preschool experience. Early childhood education and parental support is the cornerstone of the Education Strategic Plan adopted in 2005, which seeks to foster long-term intergenerational change in the way Native Hawaiian families approach learning. Research demonstrates that early education is a key factor in lifelong success for all children, and we strongly urge the legislature to promote, enhance and support the efforts of the State of Hawai'i to appropriately address the needs of Hawai'i's pre-kindergarten children.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



March 27, 2008
3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308

TESTIMONY TO
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

RE: SB2878, SD2, HD1 – Relating to Early Learning

Dear Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Witt and, as executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), I am submitting this written testimony on behalf of the association's board of directors and 96 member schools.

We are in strong support of the proposals outlined in Senate Bill 2878, Senate Draft 2, House Draft 1.

The HAIS Board of Directors unanimously supports the Act 259 Task Force's recommendations regarding the establishment of an early learning system in Hawaii and believes that these suggestions are the best way to ensure that our state will be able to provide our young children with high-quality learning opportunities.

In particular, we believe that there are two recommendations that are essential to the long-term success of this initiative: ensuring that the members of the Early Learning Council are from both the public and private sectors, reflecting and representing the composition of the early learning community in Hawaii; and empowering the Early Learning Council to effectively implement the Keiki First program by giving it the authority to set and regulate policies related to early education, to develop quality indicators for early education institutions and providers, and to hold these schools and teachers accountable.

Our association is proud to be a regular contributor in the educational dialogue of our community. We believe that the betterment of humankind is inherently possible, and that education is prominent among the forces which can stimulate positive change. Furthermore, we have always been passionate advocates for early childhood education, have supported measures before this committee in the past that have advanced efforts to

address the needs of young children, and have partnerships with such early childhood organizations as Good Beginnings Alliance, the Keiki Childcare Coalition, and others.

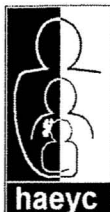
“First steps” is an apt metaphor. Yes, it calls to mind the first steps of children, but let us take our own first steps and resolve to make a commitment to all of Hawaii’s keiki by approving a measure by the end of this session that will allow us to create a universally accessible, comprehensive and instructionally rigorous early childhood system.

We also recognize that there is essential work that needs to get underway immediately to build capacity for an expanded early education teaching profession for Hawaii. Let’s act now to support the growth and development of those already in the profession, and to recruit, train, and retain newcomers to the field of early education.

In summary, our association believes the time is NOW to commit to a statewide comprehensive early learning system. We continue to strongly encourage policy makers during this session to agree on a long-term vision for early education, to identify or create a dedicated funding source, and to define a structure for stewardship.

We believe that such a vision and an investment in early learning by the state will very positively impact the success of children in our elementary and secondary schools, and thereby support the goals of the state’s P-20 collaborative to significantly increase the percentage of adults in Hawaii with four-year college degrees.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this urgent matter.



Hawai'i
Association for the
Education of
Young
Children

1806 So. King Street | Suite 30 | Honolulu, HI 96826 | (808)942-4708 | FAX (808)955-2739 | haeyc@hawaiihaeyc.org

To: Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair
Representative Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

From: Katherine Murphy
Act 259 Task Force co-Chair
HAEYC Executive Director

Date: Thursday, March 27, 2008
3:00 pm, Room 308

Subject: SB2878 SD2, Early Learning System; Early Learning Council; Keiki First Steps

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee and Members of the House Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding SB2878 SD2. I am Kathy Murphy, co-Chair of the Act 259 Task Force and the Executive Director of the **Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children**. *HAEYC supports the intent of this bill.*

The time is now to move ahead and take first steps to ensure that ALL families have the opportunity to provide their children with a high quality early learning opportunities which lay the foundation for life long learning (see recommendations in the Act 259 Task Force Report to the Legislature (December, 2007)).

The creation of Early Learning Council, with the authority to set and regulate policy as well as hold those who deliver services accountable, must be a priority. The council must have a broad representation from both the public and private sectors (as did the Task Force), especially from the early learning community and neighbor islands. **The proposed make up of the Early Learning Council does not meet this recommendation nor does it utilize the expertise of the early childhood community as a whole.**

Also, critical to quality in early learning is the state of the work force, both in terms of numbers available and educational background. Early childhood courses are critical to providing developmentally appropriate settings for children and current teachers as well as those planning to enter the field; both need professional development opportunities and support. **Building capacity requires increasing the number of qualified and available teachers with degrees.**

Finally, increasing services by reaching more children, especially four-year olds, is the ultimate outcome of the entire Keiki First Steps program. **Young children-at-risk and in communities where services are few should be the early target with expansion as possible in future years.**

HAEYC is aware of the reality of the economy in Hawaii and that this legislature will have to make difficult decisions and at the same time we know that it will take years to fully implement a high quality program; but the commitment must begin now. **Let's put our Keiki First and Do the Right Thing!**

Our mission is to promote, support, and expand quality and professionalism in early childhood programs and services for Hawai'i's young children (0-8) and their families.



Testimony Before the Committee on Finance
 House of Representatives, Twenty Fourth Legislature
 March 27, 2008 Agenda #2, Measure SB 2878, HD1

2007 - 2008

March 26, 2008

President
COLLEEN WONG

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

President-Elect
CHRISTINE LAU

The Junior League of Honolulu supports SB 2878, HD1. SB 2878 contains many of the quality components in Act 259, *Keiki First, A Statewide Early Learning System for Hawai'i*.

Community Vice President
STACIA MURRAY

Membership Vice President
MATTY SCLIBETZ

The Junior League of Honolulu (JLH) is an organization of women of diverse backgrounds united to initiate significant change, build partnerships and inspire shared solutions to strengthen the community. JLH places particular emphasis on projects that empower and develop the potential of women and children. SB 2878 aims to create an early learning council, develop an early learning system for 3 and 4 year olds, provide teachers with higher education classes and otherwise prepare the keiki of Hawai'i for kindergarten.

Fundraising Vice President
ROANNE MATSUURA

Communications Vice President
KIMBERLY FRANK

Recording Secretary
MELISSA LAMBERT

Treasurer
SUZANNE COBIN

Nominating Chair
TERI OGAWA

61% of JLH members have children and the JLH recognizes the urgent need in Hawai'i to have our preschool aged keiki ready for kindergarten so that they are eager and excited to make learning a life-long experience. A quality early education helps each child to reach full potential and become a future contributing member of society. An investment in the early education of a child is a wise investment in the future of Hawai'i.

Parliamentarian
TRACY JONES

Sustainer Representative
BETTY MASFRANTONIO

Sustainer Advisory Board

- Karen "Tookie" White (1942)*
- Bevy Vitousek (1951)
- Bessie Kamahale Dawson (1964)
- Barbara Muramoto (1971)
- Sarah Richards (1975)
- Jane Taitbauer (1975)
- Lila Johnson (1977)
- Cherpe Pierce (1980)
- Allene Suesmon (1983)
- Margery Zildir (1983)
- Nancy Pace, MD (1989)
- Helen MacNeil (1990)
- Kristy Luan Ni'ao (1992)
- Cheryl Hetherington (1995)
- Badra An Pleadwell (2000)

JLH was concerned to learn that currently in only 17.3% of kindergarten classrooms are Hawai'i's keiki ready for the most basic of literacy concepts and skills, including the ability to recognize only 4 letters. A mere 26% of the classrooms are the majority of entering children equipped with the necessary math and concepts skills needed in kindergarten. JLH supports programs and ideas like those proposed in SB 2878, HD1 that will ensure that the children of Hawai'i are ready and eager to learn when they enter kindergarten.

*Member since

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in writing.

A member of The Association of Junior Leagues International, Inc.

Christine Lau

Christine Lau
President Elect, Junior League of Honolulu

1500 South Beretania • Suite 100 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96826 • Telephone (808) 946-6466 • Fax (808) 949-4617
 e-mail: info@JuniorLeagueofHonolulu.org • web: www.JuniorLeagueofHonolulu.org

The Junior League of Honolulu, Inc. is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.

From: Linda Elento, Member of The Hawaii Down Syndrome Congress

To: FINANCE COMMITTEE
Rep. Marcus Oshiro, Chair
Rep. Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair

Re: **SB2878 FIN March 27, 2008, 3pm**
Request to include children with special needs, Not keep them separate. See attached chart from USDOE.

As you know, **SB2878** Early Childhood Learning bill expects a lot of money for another early childhood grouping and focus on facilities. We are in support of the Hawaii Revised Statutes Quality Early Education Plan and ask for the Committee to consider not deleting this section as proposed.

Rather, SB2878 needs to include a focus on Young Children With Disabilities, Policy Changes, Parents And Families, and Parent Choice, **not a system of few program choices selected for our keiki by agency personnel, which is happening to many young children with special needs. Our programs keep our keiki separate and away from their families.** Programs for typically-developing children turn our keiki away. We need policies that help our keiki and their families with their special needs. If they did not have the special needs, they would not need extra help, would they?

Our youngest keiki with disabilities will never see change without your help by considering a few simple policy changes--not more money, but rather a new way to spend the money that we already are spending. A way where DOH, DHS and DOE can allow parents to choose from any program across the agencies as if the young keiki did not have special needs., or home as a place for receiving needed special services as entitled through the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004*.

Immediate action (no more delays for another grandiose plan or member force that does not change NOW how our keiki with disabilities are treated) may be taken with legislation that specifically names where special education services may be provided for preschool-aged children with disabilities, including home as the first Least Restrictive Environment considered, as well as the community, part-time or full-time (NOT only a special education classroom with special education children and staff), such as the following:

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS: Do not delete, but rather add to—
HRS §302A-410 Quality early education plan.

...

(f) Preschoolers with disabilities. * §302A uses "exceptional child"

(1) For a preschool aged child, home may be the least restrictive environment.

(2) Continuum of Alternative Placements for Preschool Children (ages 3 through 5): Home, Early Childhood Setting, Early Childhood Special Education, Part-time Early Childhood/Part-time Early Childhood Special Education, Itinerant Services Outside the Home, Reverse Mainstreaming, Separate School, Residential Facility.

(3) Preschoolers with disabilities may be placed in a private early childhood program, if appropriate, to provide the opportunity for education and interaction with nondisabled preschoolers. The program must be licensed or approved by a governmental agency. The district must assure that the student's IEP can be implemented and any special education or related services must be provided by appropriately certified and/or licensed professionals. Paraprofessionals may be used to provide services, when appropriate.

(g) PreKindergarten: "A program operated by a school district or by a community agency under contract from a school district that is open to children who are at least 3 years of age and completed prior to the school district's entry age for kindergarten, unless individual exception* to the age requirements are made by the school district."

** Children with Down syndrome need this age exception, depending on developmental stages due to slower rate of growth at this age.*

References:

Pennsylvania, Oklahoma and New Jersey education codes.

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act – 2004* definition of Least Restrictive Environment, and "appropriate activities" for preschoolers with disabilities.

Immediate action can be taken with legislation to recognize the State's option to choose the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004's allowance for children who turn 3 years old to continue early intervention services *in lieu of* preschool special education, by modifying the HRS definition of infants and toddlers with disabilities to mirror the IDEA federal definition to include children who would also qualify for special education preschool until ready for kindergarten. Another option that other states choose is to continue the same services with the same providers for children; only the federal lead agency that pays for those services changes--in Hawaii that would be the Dept. of Health (early intervention) and Department of Education (special education preschool). [www.idea.ed.gov]

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments supporting new legislation in supporting young children with disabilities and their first teachers: their parents and families.

Attention: Rep. M. Oshiro, Chair, Finance; Rep. Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair, Finance SB2878 EARLY CHILDHOOD
From: Linda Elento, Hawaii Down Syndrome Congress, 235-7610 RE: HB2435, HB2973

Purpose: To meet the mandated requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 by including children with disabilities. US DOE website: <http://www.ed.gov/fund/data/report/idea/partbspap/2007/hi-aprtbl-2007b.doc>

WHY ARE THESE NUMBERS NOT 100%? Current policies give these results:

Hawaii's Part B FFY 2005 SPP State Performance Plan /APR Annual Performance Report Response Table

Monitoring Priorities and Indicators	Status	OSEP Analysis/Next Steps
<p>6. Percent of preschool children with IEPs who received <u>special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers (i.e., early childhood settings, home, and part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education settings)</u>. [Results Indicator]</p>	<p>The State's FFY 2005 reported data for this indicator are <u>35.86%</u>. This represents progress from the State's FFY 2004 reported data of 35.65%. The State did not meet its FFY 2005 target of 38%.</p>	<p>Please note that, due to changes in the 618 State-reported data collection, this indicator will change for the FFY 2006 APR, <u>due February 1, 2008</u>. States will be required to describe how they will collect valid and reliable data to provide baseline and targets in the FFY 2007 APR, <u>due February 1, 2009</u>.</p>
<p>7. Percent of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrate improved:</p> <p>A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);</p> <p>B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/ communication and early literacy); and</p> <p>Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs. [Results Indicator; New]</p>	<p>Entry data provided.</p>	<p>The State reported the required entry data and activities. The State must provide progress data and improvement activities with the FFY 2006 APR, <u>due February 1, 2008</u>.</p>
<p>8. Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated <u>parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities</u>. [Results Indicator; New]</p>	<p>The State's FFY 2005 reported baseline data for this indicator are <u>34%</u>.</p>	<p>The State provided baseline data, targets, and improvement activities and OSEP accepts the SPP for this indicator.</p> <p>OSEP's March 23, 2006 SPP response letter required the State to: (1) clarify whether parents of preschool-aged children with disabilities participate in the survey; and (2) submit a copy of the survey with the February 1, 2007 APR. The State reported that parents of preschool children participate in the parent survey and that the State's baseline data reflects this participation. However, the State did not include a copy of the survey as was required by the instructions for the SPP/APR submission for this indicator. The State must submit a copy of the parent survey in the FFY 2006 APR <u>due February 1, 2008</u>.</p>

To: Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair
Representative Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

From: Robert G. Peters, EdD
Act 259 Task Force co-Chair
Hanahau`oli School

Date: Thursday, March 27, 2008
3:00 pm, Room 308

Subject: SB2878 SD2, Early Learning System; Early Learning Council; Keiki First Steps

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee and Members of the House Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding SB2878 SD2. I am Bob Peters, co-Chair of the Act 259 Task Force and Head of Hanahau`oli School. I strongly support the intent of this bill and its timeliness.

Hawaii remains but one of 10 states which have not initiated some type of publicly-funded early education program. This bill provides us the opportunity to remedy that situation as it promotes a plan to establish a cohesive, sustainable early learning system to provide quality early learning for young children. The time is now to move ahead and take first steps to ensure that our families have the opportunity to help their children pursue healthy and productive lives, the foundation for which can be found in quality, early learning settings as recommended in the Act 259 Task Force Report to the Legislature (December, 2007).

The creation of an Early Learning Council, with the authority to set and regulate policy as well as hold those who deliver services accountable, should be a priority. The Council should reflect both the public and private sectors as did the Task Force and be an autonomous body. It will both develop and administer the state's early learning system.

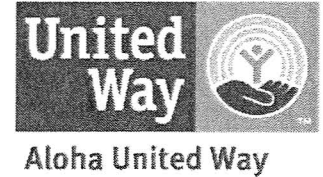
Critical to quality in early learning is the state of the work force, both in terms of numbers available and educational background. Early childhood courses are critical to providing developmentally appropriate settings for children and current teachers as well as those planning to enter the field; both need professional development opportunities and support. Building capacity requires increasing the number of qualified and available teachers with degrees.

Finally, increasing services by reaching more children, especially four-year olds, is the ultimate outcome of the entire Keiki First Steps program. Young children-at-risk and in communities where services are few should be the early target with expansion as possible in future years.

I recognize it may take years to fully implement an ideal program; yet, we cannot wait for that time to start a program. Knowing the impact of quality early learning upon children's long-term development and motivation, as described in the research, there is a moral imperative for us to start now. Increasing access and equalizing opportunities for young children is, as David Kirp notes in his book The Sandbox Investment, "increasingly regarded as both an obligation of the society and a benefit to the rest of us." Let's put our Keiki First!

Aloha United Way

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March 24, 2008

House Committee on Finance:
Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
Rep. Marilyn B. Lee, Vice Chair
Thursday, March 27, 2008, 3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308

SB 2878, SD2, HD1 Relating to Early Learning- Strong Support

Dear Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

Aloha United Way strongly encourages your favorable consideration of SB 2878, SD2, HD1 which creates the Early Learning Council and the state's early learning system known as Keiki First.

Keiki First is the outcome of the Act 259 Task Force and is the first step in a process that will create a comprehensive early learning system for Hawaii's children. An alarming 40% of our children arrive at kindergarten so far behind their peers that their success in our education system is questionable. When children don't succeed in school they require additional services, are over represented in the juvenile justice system and fail to achieve the skills necessary to live a self-sufficient life as adults. An early investment in our children will significantly reduce the added cost to society in future years – national studies indicate that a \$1 investment in early childhood development will save \$7 in future costs.

Aloha United Way is cognizant that 2008 will be a difficult year financially. We fully understand that the legislature will have to make some very tough choices. We believe that Keiki First deserves the highest priority because it addresses at its the root a key cause of poor school performance – a lack of readiness for school.

Simply put, Keiki First presents the legislature with the opportunity to positively and significantly impact our future – our Keiki. We must begin this long process of establishing our early learning system. To help inform this process, Aloha United Way has produced a report with the UH Center on the Family entitled School Readiness in Hawaii. We hope you will find it helpful as you consider this important issue. Aloha United Way thanks you for your consideration and we strongly encourage favorable consideration of SB 2878, SD2, HD1.

Sincerely:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Doyle".

Susan Doyle
President & Chief Professional Officer

To: Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair
Representative Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

From: Robin S. Midkiff
Vice President, Atherton Family Foundation, Advisory Member, Good
Beginnings Alliance

Date: Thursday, March 27, 2008
3:00 PM, Room 308
Agenda 2

Subject: SB2878 SD2, Early Learning System; Early Learning Council; Keiki First
Steps

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and members of the House Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding SB2878 SD2 HD1. I am an Advisory Member of the Good Beginnings Alliance. I strongly support the intent of this bill.

The Act 259 Early Learning Educational Task Force has proposed a high-quality early learning program for Hawaii's 4-year-olds, which culminated in the task force's final report to the Legislature in December 2007. Principles of quality, such as degreed teachers and administrators, appropriate teacher-student ratios, accredited programs, or curricula that meet the Hawaii Preschool Content Standards are foundational elements for our keiki to succeed in school and in life.

I support the creation of the public-private Early Learning Council, recommending that it be attached to a state agency for fiscal and administrative purposes only. This council must have a **broad representation from both the public and private sectors, especially from the early learning community and neighbor islands.**

Further, I urge your continued support for helping our early education professionals to obtain their required college degrees and early childhood courses. Extensive research has shown that highly-trained teachers and administrators significantly impact the quality of the early learning experience for children, and this will truly be a worthwhile investment.

Finally, we support the start-up of the three- and four-year-old program for our young children in at-risk communities and a strong commitment to expanding these services during the 2009 Legislative Session. Over 80 percent of our current public school kindergarten classes do not have most of their students displaying the necessary pre-literacy skills during their first month of kindergarten, and we need to make a stand now. Forty other states already have some type of publicly-funded early childhood education program in their states, and Hawaii must take this next step forward for the benefit of our young children, their families, our communities, and our state in the future.

Our children need and deserve the best start in life. I strongly urge you to support this bill for the good of all of Hawaii's children. We would very much appreciate your kokua!

FINTestimony

From: Drorbaugh M [mjdror@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 26, 2008 4:25 PM
To: FINTestimony
Subject: Testimony in Support of SB2878 SD2 HD1

Person submitting testimony: James E. Drorbaugh, M.D.
Measure: SB2878 SD2 HD1
Committee: Committee on Finance:
Chair, Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro
Vise Chair, Rep. Marilyn B. Lee
Day/Date: Thursday, March 27, 2008
Time: 3:00 p. m.
Location: Room 308

Testimony in Support of SB2878 SD2 HD1, Relating to Early Learning

The purpose of this bill is to establish an early learning system in the state, create the Early Learning Council to develop and administer the early learning system and establish the 3- and 4-year-old program.

In its policy statement, *Quality Early Education and Child Care from Birth to kindergarten*, the American Academy of Pediatrics makes the following statement:

"The real barrier to high-quality programs is a lack of infrastructure supporting quality, regardless of setting, and the necessary funding to make this happen. This infrastructure has to address, on a statewide or community level, high-quality standards, compensation and training of teachers, tracking of availability of services for parental referral, and a reliable financing system that makes these programs available (full day/full year, etc) and affordable in a coordinated way. This same systematic approach to the education and socio-emotional health of children who are cared for by stay-at-home parents is also necessary".

The bill will go a long way towards establishing the infrastructure we will need to provide a quality early education program. As a retired pediatrician, I have seen that knowledge provided to parents and participation in good programs by children results in life-long benefits for the family. I especially support the inclusion of the zero-to-three children in the overall plan.

I strongly support passage of SB2878 SD2 HD1, Relating to Early Education

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Drorbaugh, M.D., FAAP

FINTestimony

From: Roy Sakai [sakair002@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 25, 2008 2:45 PM
To: FINTestimony
Subject: 3/27/2008 SB2878 Agenda

Members of the committee:

As a substitute teacher for the last five years, I urge the members the committe to consider a raise for substitute teachers for the following reasons:

1. We have not received any raise in 3-4 years;
2. The cost of living in Hawaii has increased by two folds. The increase in fuel has affected our purchasing power for basic neccesities for goods and services, such as food, fuel, medication, etc.
3. For many of us, this is the only source of income without the benefit of retirement or a medical plan.

Under these circumstances, I urge you to considr these factors in reaching a fair resolution on this matter.

Mahalo,

Roy Sakai

FINTestimony

From: Rick Schonely [ricks@wave.hicv.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 25, 2008 8:44 AM
To: FINTestimony
Subject: 3/27/2008 SB2878 Agenda

Aloha, my name is Richard Schonely and i have been a subtitute teache here on Molokai for 24 years. I strongly support SB2878 as i believe that sub teachers are very important to the school system and the deserve pay like the regular teachers.

Please support SB2878 so sub teachers will get what they deserve.

mahalo,

Richard K. Schonely
HC 01 Box 400
Kaunakakai, Hi. 96748
808-558-8414

P.S. as a long time sub i also want the state to settle the back pay issue with subs that is currently under appeal....please settle this issue as we were not paid correctly for many years and we deserve to have this settled. malama, rick