

Date: 01/27/2010

Committee: House Education

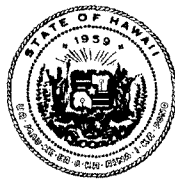
Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn Matayoshi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 2075 Relating to the Early Learning Council

Purpose of Bill: Allows the early learning council to conduct meetings by teleconference.
Sets out quorum requirements and public notice and participation requirements for teleconference meetings.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) is in full support of this bill as written. The early learning council has members on neighbor islands and in areas that do not permit active, regular participation. This bill will promote inclusion and serve to ensure that all voices are heard. The Department is poised to assist the council in the appropriate implementation of the provisions in the bill, with respect to quorum, public notice and participation requirements.



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

January 27, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Roy M. Takumi, Chair
Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 2075 – RELATING TO THE EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL**

Hearing: Wednesday, January 27, 2010; 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 309, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of H.B. 2075 is to allow the Early Learning Council to conduct meetings by teleconference, and sets out quorum requirements and public notice and participation requirements for teleconference meetings.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: As a member of the Early Learning Council (ELC), the Department of Human Services supports this bill as it creates a more cost effective and accessible method to allow for participation in council meetings for council members as well as the public who are located on the Neighbor Islands.

The Department also strongly supports Administration-sponsored bill, H.B. 2557, Relating to Board Meetings, which would expand the ability of any board or commission to facilitate public meetings through available interactive conferencing technology.

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



Hearing date:
Wednesday,
January 27,
2010, 1:00 p.m.
House Education
Committee
Room 309

To: Representative Roy Takumi, Chair
Representative Lyla Berg, Vice Chair
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

From: Elisabeth Chun, Executive Director
Good Beginnings Alliance

Date: Wednesday, January 27, 2010, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 309

Subject: **HB2075:** Allows the early learning council to conduct meetings by teleconference. Sets out quorum requirements and public notice and participation requirements for teleconference meetings.

The Good Beginnings Alliance is a nonprofit policy and advocacy organization focused on Hawaii's youngest children and their families. We strive to ensure a nurturing, safe and healthy development for all children from pre-birth to age eight. We believe all children deserve safe and supportive environments that meet their needs as they grow and develop.

We strongly support this bill. We have attended all of the Early Learning Council (ELC) meetings since the start in September 2008. Due to travel and work requirements, the participation of two members (Kaua'i County Representative and Family Child Care Provider Representative) have been noticeably infrequent. We are hopeful this bill will allow for full representation by all members of the ELC at monthly meetings.

Mahalo for your support. For more information contact: Good Beginnings Alliance; phone: 531-5502; lchun@goodbeginnings.org.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth Chun
Executive Director

TESTIMONY TO
THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON
EDUCATION, HIGHER EDUCATION,
and, LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

RE: HB 2075 – Relating to the Early Learning Council

January 27, 2010, Rm. 309 2:00 pm

Chairs Takumi, Chang and Rhoads; Vice chairs Berg, Nakashima and Yamashita; and Members of the Committees:

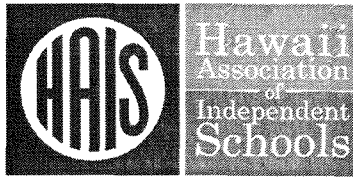
Thank you for this opportunity to testify. My name is Robert Peters and I currently serve as the Chair of the Early Learning Council established by Act 14 in 2008. The thirteen member council supports this bill as it would facilitate the Council's work and increase the opportunity for transparency of its meetings.

House Bill 2075 allowing the Council to meet by teleconference has three distinct advantages over the current set-up: first, it would allow those not able to be physically present at the Council's meetings to participate which has particularly positive implications for neighbor island members along with reducing travel costs; second, it enhances the possibility of achieving a quorum at all meetings since teleconference participation shall qualify as being "present" at the meeting wherever the location; and, third, it offers members of the public increased opportunities to participate since the teleconference locations will all be open to the public.

This bill offers a solution to the problems faced by some of our members who find it difficult to travel to one location and again opens the meetings to many more from the public by including alternative locations. While the cost reduction alone at this time might be justification enough for this bill, it is truly the increased transparency in which we may gain the most as the public is invited to be an on-going and increasing participant in our discussion of this vitally important topic, early childhood learning---the cornerstone of our state's future sustainability.

I strongly urge the House Committee on Education to pass this measure and in so doing both the efficacy and efficiency with which the Early Learning Council is able to carry on its most important work.

Thank you.



January 27, 2010
2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 309

TESTIMONY TO
THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON
EDUCATION, HIGHER EDUCATION,
and LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

RE: HB 2075 – Relating to the Early Learning Council

Chairs Takumi, Chang and Rhoads; Vice Chairs Berg, Nakashima and Yamashita; and Members of the Committees:

My name is Robert Witt and I am executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 99 private and independent schools in Hawaii and educates over 33,000 students statewide.

The Association is in **strong support of House Bill 2075** – Relating to the Early Learning Council, which allows the Early Learning Council to conduct meetings by teleconference, and sets out quorum requirements and public notice and participation requirements for teleconference meetings.

HAIS has worked collaboratively over the past few years with the leadership of the House Committee on Education to design, implement, and advance the work of the new Early Learning Council.

We understand there are presently some challenges related to the protocol for Early Learning Council meetings; this bill provides some specific remedies that will allow the Council to convene its meetings on a more cost effective basis, while simultaneously creating a more transparent and inclusive process for Council members for whom travel and time constraints make it difficult or impractical to attend meetings in person.

We strongly urge the Committees on Education, Higher Education, and Labor & Public Employment to pass this measure and, in so doing, increase the efficacy and efficiency of the work of the Council.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.