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Testimony of
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Before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Thursday, February 4, 2010, 8:45 AM
State Capitol, Room 329

**H.B. 2976 RELATING TO THE INTERDEPARTMENTAL COUNCIL ON EARLY
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Brower, and members of the House Committee on Human Services:

The Administration **supports** House Bill 2976 **with amendments**. This bill extends the sunset date of the Interdepartmental Council on Early Childhood Education (Council) for an unspecified length of time.

The Council coordinates early childhood programs among key state agencies, such as the Department of Human Services, Department of Education, and Department of Health. Recently, the Council's work has expanded to include the preparation of Hawaii's application for approximately \$500,000 in federal stimulus funds for the improvement of early learning programs.

The Administration proposes amending this bill to extend the operating date of the Council from June 30, 2010 to June 30, 2013 so that it may complete the application for the federal stimulus funds due on August 1, 2010, as well as oversee the utilization of the funds during the three-year period of the funds' availability. This amendment will ensure that Hawaii is best positioned to access federal funding.

The Administration also recommends amending the bill by broadening the scope of the Council through the addition of four members from: 1) An institute of higher education located in the State; 2) A local provider of early childhood education and development services; 3) A Head Start provider agency located within the State; and 4) The State Director of the Head Start Collaboration.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.