

SB2503

Date: 02/03/2010

Committee: Senate Education and Housing

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2503 Relating to Education

Purpose of Bill: Amends law to require that children who are at least 5 years of age on or before August 1 of the school year attend a public school kindergarten.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) does not support S.B. 2503. According to the current statute, all children who turn five-years-old during the calendar year have access to a public kindergarten program. Presently, approximately 90%, or 16,200 children, of the eligible population of five-year-olds annually enroll in a public kindergarten program.

Amending this bill does not change the continued quality early learning opportunities available to all children who turn five-years-old during the calendar year. The Department continues to establish a two-tier kindergarten program to support the range of developmental abilities of all children and to ready them for school success.

sakamoto2 - Erin

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 02, 2010 4:23 PM
To: EDH Testimony
Cc: threestars@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2503 on 2/3/2010 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDH 2/3/2010 1:15:00 PM SB2503

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Linda Elento
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone: 235-7610
E-mail: threestars@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/2/2010

Comments:

Dear Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the EDH committee:

I do not support this bill to make kindergarten attendance mandatory in Hawaii.

Please consider the following:

Families would no longer qualify for child care tax credits when their children are of kindergarten age.

Children who qualify for special education may need to be in preschool special education beyond the age of 4.

Families who plan to homeschool beginning at age 6/first grade would be forced to comply with state regulations and begin a year earlier. Families are our children's first teachers. They know what they are doing too.

Families who plan to send their child to a private school beginning 1st grade would abruptly have to change their children's existing program/lifestyle at kindergarten age.

We do not need more restrictions to limit parental choice. However I do suggest the state budget include funding for a pre-1st grade camp (such as mornings for 2 weeks prior to the first day of the new school year) at every school for students new to the school and all students who never attended a kindergarten. That's what my school did when I began first grade.