



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

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NEIL ABERCROMBIE
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 2519 HD1
Relating to Education**

Governor Neil Abercrombie

**HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE
Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair
Representative Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair**

**February 27, 2012
3:00 PM Room 308**

Chair Oshiro, Vice-Chair Lee and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill (HB) 2519 HD 1, Relating to Education (Ed).

HB 2519 HD 1 supports one of Governor Abercrombie's more important priorities, early childhood education. Research has found that over 85 percent of a child's brain development, in response to the stimulation the child receives, happens by age five. With our youngest children, it is about establishing healthy attitudes towards learning and positive social behavior so children can be ready to succeed in kindergarten and in life.

In 2011, the Department of Education reported that state-wide about 42 per cent of Hawaii's public school kindergarten students did not attend preschool. Many of Hawaii's DOE elementary school principals and child advocates say kindergarteners without preschool experience are more likely to enter school far behind their peers.

Research has also shown that investing in high quality early childhood education programs produces significant returns later. In Hawaii, every \$1 spent in high quality early childhood education realizes a \$4.20 reduction in costs for future educational and social interventions.

The Administration's supplemental budget contains a request for \$500,000 for the early learning council and the governor's early childhood coordinator to further develop and implement our State's framework for a comprehensive early



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM
Legislative Testimony

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony presented before the
House Committee on Finance
February 27, 2012 at 3:00 p.m.
By Linda K. Johnsrud

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost, University of Hawai'i

HB 2519 HD1: RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING

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

The University of Hawai'i strongly supports HB 2519 HD1 that provides funding for the early learning council and the governor's early childhood coordinator.

Recognizing that a child's positive early learning experiences have significant benefit for individual lifelong learning capacity and to society, the University concurs that it is critical and urgent to support the work of the governor's early childhood coordinator. A systematic approach toward early care and learning has the potential of enhancing existing capacity of services and use of resources. As a member of the Early Learning Council, one of the areas of highest concern to the University is the access to and relevance of educational programs for the early childhood workforce. To meet the needs of this workforce requires a coordinated approach and understanding of needs across different sectors and regions of the state. The work of the early learning council and the governor's early childhood coordinator could create such a coordinated approach that would support our own review of academic and workforce programs at the University to meet the state's needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2519 HD 1.