



## **HAWAII DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER**

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### **THE SENATE THE TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2012**

#### **Committee on Ways and Means Testimony in Support of S.B. 2595, SD1 Relating to Early Intervention Services**

**Tuesday, February 28, 2012, 9:00 A.M.  
Conference Room 211**

Chair Ige and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Disability Rights Center testifies in support of this bill.

We particularly support the SD1 version because it goes further than the original bill and requires the Dept to maintain eligibility for Early Intervention Services at the current level. There is no doubt that early intervention services have been quite successful as well as cost effective. Addressing developmental delays at the earliest age clearly has a much better opportunity of ameliorating intellectual and behavioral difficulties. Additionally, early intervention prevents some of these children from requiring more expensive services from the Developmental Disabilities Division as they age.

For the past few years, the Department of Health has been attempting to impose more rigid eligibility standards for those who seek early intervention services. They sought to unilaterally impose these standards and would have, but for the fact that our office successfully convinced them that to do so would require that it be done via the rulemaking process. Since that time, they have been in the process of drafting rules to do just that. This bill would statutorily supersede such efforts and ensure that those very young children who require these services would be able to receive them.

This is an excellent proposal and we urge its passage. To the extent that the bill further creates the option of a sliding scale for those families who may be ineligible under Part C of the IDEA for any reason, or provides that families with greater financial means may be charged for early intervention services, we certainly feel that will provide additional protection to some families and is a reasonable way of allocating costs among those who may be in a better position to pay for those services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.



