

February 12, 2013

To: Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Sharon Har, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

From: The staff of Wailuku-Hongwanji Preschool (Maui)

Re: HB 864 HD1 RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Honorable Chair & Committee Members:

I support HB864 HD1, which, upon amending Article X, Section 1, of the Hawaii State Constitution, establishes a statewide early childhood education program geared towards establishing a solid foundation for children's future educational and career success. HB864 HD1 is important to me because a statewide early childhood education program would not only prepare children for school, but it would also foster exceptional physical and emotional development.

Studies have proven that high-quality early childhood education programs have both short-term and long-term benefits for children, individuals, and society as a whole. HB864 is the foundation to provide parents with more access to these essential programs and also has the potential to alleviate financial burdens associated with early childhood education costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB864 HD1.

As teachers of 3 and 4 year old children (62) we support HB 864 HD1. Our children deserve a statewide early childhood education program for a bright future.

Thank you for caring,
Staff: Karen Yoshida

Amy Nishiwa

Dawn Nishiwa

Joy Fukushima

Lourelle Palpatoc

Pua Perry

Linda Nishida

Evelyn Nitahara

LoveAnn Vaitohi

Kawehi Barrows

Meihalo

February 12, 2013

To: Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Sharon Har, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Judiciary



From:

Re: HB 864 HD1 RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Honorable Chair & Committee Members:

I wholeheartedly support HB864 HD1, which, upon amending Article X, Section 1, of the Hawaii State Constitution, establishes a statewide early childhood education program. For the past 40 years I have served and observed the early childhood community here in Hawai'i as preschool teacher, a Headstart administrator, and presently, a professor here at the Honolulu Community College's Early Childhood Education program. It has been a joy watching the field emerge and establish itself as a worthy service to the community. I am also the grandparent of three preschool children born "late" and awaiting entry into the public school system as kindergarteners. I have witnessed the need and benefits of preschool and have made it a life and career mission to support families and practitioners in the building of the important developmental foundations children need for their futures.

The key is access and quality for our families. HB864 is an important step in that direction. It is a crucial time to act. I ask your support in passing this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB864 HD1.

Sincerely,

Miles P. Nakanishi, Ph.D.
Professor, CC
Honolulu Community College
Early Childhood Education Department

February 12, 2013

To: Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Sharon Har, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Judiciary



From: Jamie Simpson Steele

Re: HB 864 HD1 RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Honorable Chair & Committee Members:

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As a mother of twin 4-year olds, I believe children at this age are poised to learn. My children are currently in a preschool setting where they can explore, exercise, learn basic literacy and numeracy, and practice social skills. With teachers who are professionally prepared to offer young learners structured play and evidence-based practices in education, my children soar. I value this education so much that I sign a check for over \$1500 to that preschool every month at a significant sacrifice. By the time our children are ready to enter the public school system, we will have completely spent our life savings, and will likely be in debt. We are privileged to be in this position - there are so many families that have less, especially in a state where the cost of living is so high. I see no reason to penalize children who are born into working-class families who struggle to put food on the table and pay the bills. Although this initiative will not pass in time for my own children to benefit, I am personally willing to pay the price for all of Hawaii's children to benefit from a head start in education.

Studies have proven that high-quality early childhood education programs have both short-term and long-term benefits for children, individuals, and society as a whole. HB864 is the foundation to provide parents with more access to these essential programs and also has the potential to alleviate financial burdens associated with early childhood education costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB864 HD1.

February 12, 2013

To: Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Sharon Har, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Judiciary



From: Maria Uyeunten

Re: HB 864 HD1 RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Honorable Chair & Committee Members:

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Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB864 HD1.

TO: HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
FROM: RENEE ING (Verbal testimony given February 12, 2013)
REGARDING: UNIVERSAL EARLY CHILDHOOD BILLS HB 853 and HB 864

LATE

As a private citizen, I am in favor of Universal Early Childhood Education (ECE) in the State of Hawaii. However, as Early Childhood is currently structured, there is the grave concern that simply providing early childhood education (as the studies of the effect of Head Start have shown) just having ECE doesn't bring children from deprived, impoverished environments up to the median achievement of children from more enhanced, middle class environments.

The benefits of ECE to children---especially from deprived environments---HAS BEEN SHOWN TO FADE AFTER THEY ENTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. And if you look at our DOE stats, 40% to 50% of the DOE children come from impoverished families.

We have such a great opportunity in Hawaii to have education that creates an even playing field for children---making it possible for all children to have a brighter future!

To "do it right"---using the SAME teachers, classes, schools that Universal ECE will have--the program called "PK to 3" has shown (in the words of Dr. Edward Ziegler, one of the principle architects of Head Start) , to have unprecedented results. A study of the National Head Start-Public School Early Childhood Demonstration Project from 1991 to 1998 of thousands of children in PK to 3 programs in 450 schools in 30 states were eye popping. It showed, in Dr. Ziegler's words, "The achievement gap was gone. I would challenge anybody to show me some other place where poor kids looked as good as middle-class kids by the end of third grade."

In PK to 3 programs, the children move WITH THEIR CLASSMATES AND TEACHERS from one grade to the next, becoming close with teachers and classmates. PK to 3 curriculum is standards-based, teachers integrating it so that each year, fundamental skills are solidified and are built upon the next year. Parents and families get involved in their children's education. And by the third grade, at age 8 years old, deprived children can read well and do math as well as middle class kids from enhanced environments.

Using the same teachers, classrooms, schools, and spending the same money, we can do this. The Union School District in New Jersey that implemented PK to 3 in 30 poor areas and saw Language Arts improve from 45%(in 1999) to an 87% success rate in 2005. Math capability improved from 48% to 93% in 2005.

We want this for Hawaii. It's possible and would be shameful if we don't create it