



EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING

HONOLULU

GG WEISENFELD  
DIRECTOR

Testimony in **Support** of  
H.C.R. 222 / H.R. 174  
By GG Weisenfeld, Director

House Committee on Education  
March 17, 2014  
2:00 p.m., Room 309

Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon. I am GG Weisenfeld, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL).

EOEL is in support of House Concurrent Resolution 222 and House Resolution 174, which request the Legislative Reference Bureau to conduct a study on the cost of establishing public preschool under the Department of Education.

Such a study would provide valuable information about the costs involved in providing early learning opportunities to the estimated 17,000 four-year-old children statewide through DOE, to identify the potential costs to the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on these measures.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 03/17/2014

**Committee:** House Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Resolution:** HCR 222/HR 174 REQUESTING A STUDY ON THE COST OF ESTABLISHING PUBLIC PRESCHOOL UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Resolution:** Requests a study on the cost of establishing public preschools under the Department of Education.

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education defers to the wisdom of the Legislature on HC 222/HR 174 and stands ready to cooperate with the Legislative Reference Bureau, should this measure pass.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



March 16, 2014

TO: Chair Roy Takumi  
Vice-Chair Takashi Ohno  
Members of the House Committee on Education

FROM: Deborah Zysman  
Good Beginnings Alliance

RE: **Support for HCR222/HR174**

The Good Beginnings Alliance (GBA) **supports HCR222/HR174**, which requests the Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) to examine the total cost for a fully-funded, statewide, voluntary four-year-old preschool system under the Department of Education. GBA commends the Committee's willingness to examine the financial commitment of a statewide preschool program that is entirely run by the Department of Education. We would also encourage the Committee to consider adding language asking the LRB to examine the following:

- Include estimated cost savings to the state if community-based, private, preschool providers could be contracted with to provide services.

There is no debate that exposure to early learning opportunities, including preschool, can have long lasting positive influence on children. We know, for example, that over 85% of a child's brain is developed by the age of five. Moreover, we know that almost 50% of Hawaii's four-year-olds receive little or no formal school readiness experience before entering kindergarten. Despite positive advances over the past two year, Hawaii still remains one of less than a dozen states without a statewide early childhood education program. Ultimately, this means that our Department of Education (DOE) system must devote time and resources to bringing these children up to speed with their counterparts who have had some form of early learning experience. By investing in our four-year-olds early, we help save our DOE system, and teachers, time and money.

Hawaii is at the forefront of early learning policy as our state begins plans for a statewide preschool system that could, if the public passes a constitutional amendment in the upcoming general election, allow our DOE/EOEL to contract with community preschools to help deliver preschool/early learning services to our keiki. Recent polling by the Star Advertiser (2/18/14) reported that **62%** of Hawaii voters support amending the constitution to create a public/private preschool system.

GBA supports HCR222/HR174 with suggested amendments to provide further understanding of the costs of statewide preschool program for Hawaii's keiki.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah Zysman", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Deborah Zysman  
Executive Director  
Good Beginnings Alliance



Wednesday, March 17, 2014  
2:00 PM  
Conference Room 309

TESTIMONY TO  
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE  
ON EDUCATION

**RE: HCR 222/HR 174 – Requesting a study on the cost of establishing public preschool under the Department of Education**

Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Ohno, and members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Witt, Executive Director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 99 private and independent schools in Hawaii and educates over 33,000 students statewide.

**HAIS would like to provide comments on HCR 222/HR 174**, resolutions that would request a study on the cost of establishing public preschool under the Department of Education. Hawaii is one of only ten states that does not have an established statewide early learning program, which means that we are missing a very crucial window of opportunity in the neural brain development of our young children.

We are very much in support of proceeding with the development of a comprehensive early childhood system in the public sector. However, we also strongly believe that it will be necessary to use public-private partnerships to build upon already-existing high-quality non-profit child care providers through a mixed-delivery system. Due to limited resources and funds, it is imperative that the public and private sectors collaborate on this effort to ensure that all children have an equal opportunity for access to a quality early childhood education.

We already know that we do not have the capacity in the public sector alone to accommodate all of the children who are eligible for preschool. Many of our public schools are already overcrowded and will not be able to accommodate new preschool classrooms.

The discussion thus far has only been about the low-income 4-year-olds; we also humbly ask that the Legislature consider looking ahead to the need to provide the same services for children below the age of four.

Junior Kindergarten in the DOE was an example of an attempt at a purely public pre-K that did not have the proper curricular support and expertise within the public school system to educate preschool-aged children. The direct involvement of the Executive Office of Early Learning for their developmentally appropriate early childhood knowledge and partnering with already-existing high quality private providers will ensure that our next attempt at system building is a success.

As the association that represents the voices of the private and independent schools, we are eager and willing to support the state in its efforts and believe that families should have choices when it comes to the education of their children. There is no one-size-fits-all mode of delivery for that education, so it will be important to have the support of group child care centers, group child care homes and family-child interaction learning programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer commentary on these resolutions.

Sincerely,  
Robert M. Witt, M.Ed.  
Executive Director



Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi  
Acting Director

Research (808) 587-0666  
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LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU  
State of Hawaii  
State Capitol  
415 S. Beretania Street, Room 446  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Written Comments

## HCR222

### **REQUESTING A STUDY ON THE COST OF ESTABLISHING PUBLIC PRESCHOOL UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Comments by the Legislative Reference Bureau  
Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi, Acting Director

Presented to the House Committee on Education

Monday, March 17, 2014, 2:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 309

Chair Takumi and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon Chair Takumi and members of the Committee, thank you for providing the opportunity to submit written comments on H.C.R. No. 222, Requesting a Study on the Cost of Establishing Public Preschool Under the Department of Education.

The purpose of this measure is to request that the Legislative Reference Bureau:

- (1) Study the cost of establishing public preschool under the Department of Education; and
- (2) Submit a report of the study to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2015.

The measure also requests that the Department of Education to cooperate with the Legislative Reference Bureau and to provide whatever information, assistance, and support may be requested by the Bureau.

While the Legislative Reference Bureau takes no position on this measure, we submit the following comments for your consideration.

As written, the measure requests that the Bureau "study the cost of establishing public preschool under the Department of Education." While the Bureau is willing to conduct the study requested under the measure, it may be more appropriate and expeditious to directly request the Department of Education to conduct the cost study since it already possesses all the existing operational cost information and data for existing primary educational programs.

In all other respects, the Bureau believes that the services requested under this measure are manageable and that the Bureau will be able to provide the services in the time allotted; provided that the Bureau's interim workload is not adversely impacted by too many other studies or additional responsibilities, such as conducting, writing, or finalizing other reports, drafting legislation, or both, for other state agencies, task forces, or working groups that may be requested or required under other legislative measures.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide written comments.

**ohno2-Rexie**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 3:25 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Cc:** mghsmart@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HCR222 on Mar 17, 2014 14:00PM

**HCR222**

Submitted on: 3/16/2014

Testimony for EDN on Mar 17, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mary Smart	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Please vote AGAINST this bill and all other government funded public early childhood education (pre-school) initiatives. By now the legislature should be aware that there are no benefits from early childhood education. Please stop wasting taxpayer funds studying this issue. The Department of Health and Human Services has repeatedly reported that there are no long term benefits from their Head Start programs. These programs have proven that they waste funds and people's time and effort. Please put an end to the waste and harmful effects of these programs. [http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/early\\_years/2012/12/head\\_start\\_advantages\\_mostly\\_gone\\_by\\_third\\_grade\\_study\\_finds.html?cmp=ENL-EU-NEWS2](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/early_years/2012/12/head_start_advantages_mostly_gone_by_third_grade_study_finds.html?cmp=ENL-EU-NEWS2) Stop all legislation studying, implementing and/or funding early childhood education programs. <http://blog.heritage.org/2010/03/11/federal-preschool-programs-waste-taxpayers%E2%80%99-money-and-limit-school-choice/> Oppose this bill.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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