

LATE

Representative Luke and members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

I, Akira Yamamoto, Professor Emeritus of University of Kansas, am testifying in support of the inclusion of the Punana Leo sponsored amendments to SB 1093 relating to school readiness and SB 1095 relating to early childhood education.

I have known the Punana Leo and Hawaiian language college at UH-Hilo for over two decades through two official reviews of the UH-Hilo's Language College and its programs and numerous visits to its language programs and events.


The amendments before you will be groundbreaking for Native American education in recognizing that a distinct pathway for teacher training, standards, and assessments are needed for early childhood education provided through our endangered Native American languages.

Furthermore, the inclusion of a "safe harbor" in the form of participation in the laboratory school program of the state Hawaiian language college is crucial to allow good faith participation in current best practices relative to Native American language early education, while the distinctive pathways, teacher training programs, standards, and assessments are being developed.

Hawaii is indeed fortunate that it has an indigenous language college with a laboratory school system that has built early education and K-12 education through Hawaiian to the nationally recognized position that it currently occupies.

Again, please include the Punana Leo amendments and continue to break ground in Native American language medium education that can be used to help our communities move forward with similar legislation and programing.

Sincerely,



Akira Yamamoto

E-mail: akira@ku.edu