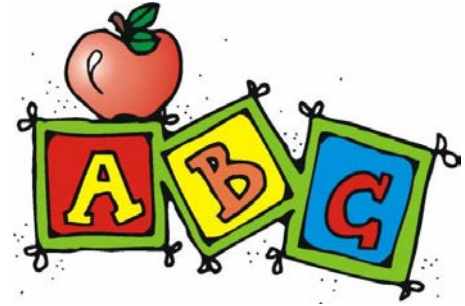


GM651



Measure Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Early Learning Advisory Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, M. NAMAOKALANI RAWLINS, for a term to expire 6-30-2016.

Report Title: Early Learning Advisory Board

Current Referral: EDU



GOV. MSG. NO. 651

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

March 27, 2014

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Senate President
and Members of the Senate
Twenty-Seventh State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senate President Kim and Members of the Senate,

In accordance with the provisions of Article V, Section 6, of the Hawaii State Constitution, I have the honor to submit herewith for your consideration and confirmation, the following nomination to the **Early Learning Advisory Board**:

EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY
BOARD

TERM TO EXPIRE

M. Nāmakaokalani Rawlins

6/30/2016

Sincerely,

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor, State of Hawaii

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senate Committee on Education
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

April 6, 2014

Aloha Senator Tokuda, Chair; Senator Kidani Vice Chair and members of the Senate Committee on Education,

Senator Tokuda, mahalo for your letter informing me of my reappointment by Governor Neil Abercrombie to the State of Hawai'i's Early Learning Advisory Board. I am pleased with the Governor's support.

Mahalo, also, for allowing me the opportunity to address the following questions posed of me as a reappointed member of the ELAB.

1. Why did you reapply to be a member of the Early Learning Advisory Board?

I reapplied to be a member of the Early Learning Advisory Board because I knew that my two-year term, as representative of Hawaiian medium early learning providers was far from complete. Continuity for advising the Executive Office on Early Learning on how best to meet the educational needs of children from prenatal care to entry to kindergarten is important and critical for timely responses and appropriate actions concerning early childhood education in the medium of Hawaiian. As the ELAB's sole Hawaiian language medium early learning representative, I bring to the advisory board the unique perspective of P-12 indigenous learning that I have been a part of for over 30 years. The Board of Directors of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo have pledged their full support of my continuing to serve on the ELAB as they recognize the importance and value of collaborative efforts towards a common goal. I believe I know intimately many of the early learning issues and I also believe I can continue to provide sound and data-driven advice on early learning concerns now facing our state.

2. How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the Early Learning Advisory Board, specifically as it relates to the Executive Office on Early Learning?

As a member of ELAB, my primary role would be to advise and recommend to the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) on how best to meet the educational needs of keiki and 'ohana who participate in the state's Early Learning Initiative.

In addition, as the designated representative for Hawaiian language medium early education, my role would be to provide information regarding the needs of parents, teachers, staff, and administrators in early education programs operated and administered through Hawaiian. This responsibility also includes providing information and support for bridging programs that feed into Hawaiian medium early education (e.g., the Hi'i Pēpē infant/toddler program) and programs into which students from Hawaiian language medium early education matriculate (e.g., standard public school and charter K-12 Hawaiian medium and Hawaiian immersion schools).

Also, my responsibilities would include working to coordinate state early childhood education efforts through Hawaiian with higher education efforts through Hawaiian tasked with researching and resourcing Hawaiian language medium education. This is a crucial area that needs to be coordinated because, unlike English medium early childhood education, there are no external sources beyond Hawai'i for this critical support.

Finally, I would have a unique role in serving as a bridge between the ELAB, and possibly also the EOEL, and other indigenous language medium early childhood education throughout the world. Of special importance in this regard would be working with American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Pacific Islander language medium education and the larger area of Native American education which includes Native Hawaiian education.

3. Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Early Learning Advisory Board, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, or knowledge that would aid in your decision-making ability as a member of the Early Learning Advisory Board.

I have been involved in the Pūnana Leo movement for 30 years, first as a student of the founders of the organization learning Hawaiian in college. I then volunteered for 5 years at the Pūnana Leo o Hilo as a (1) classroom teacher, (2) parent program teacher, and (3) site administrator. With the growth of Pūnana Leo sites throughout the state, I was hired as Executive Director and served in that capacity for nearly 20 years. During my tenure as Executive Director, we increased the number of centers and children and families being served from 24 keiki in 1985 to 260 annually. Today I continue to work for the 'Aha Pūnana Leo, serving as Director of Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations striving to address the needs of the 11 Pūnana Leo Family-Based sites on the five islands of Hawai'i, Maui, Moloka'i, O'ahu and Kaua'i. I am a team member in the 'Aha Pūnana Leo administrative office that manages a Kellogg Foundation grant project designed to strengthen Hawaiian language medium early childhood education as a national model for indigenous peoples. The Pūnana Leo program is conducted solely in Hawaiian, as is the administration of the organization. The Pūnana Leo program sees enrollment as enrollment of the entire family.

Hawaiian speaking parents are required to increase their knowledge of Hawaiian, while those who are unable to speak the language are encouraged to learn Hawaiian through the Pūnana Leo parent programs so that they can support and reinforce language learning at home. Although my own children were older than the Pūnana Leo entry age when we started, I now have my first grandchild in the program. My direct experience with Hawaiian language medium education, therefore, includes the full range of positions in the program as well as being part of a 'ohana that is receiving education through a Hawaiian language medium preschool.

I have additional qualifications relative to Native Hawaiian language and culture, as well as Native Hawaiian education gained outside the Pūnana Leo program. My personal life has been strongly grounded in the Native Hawaiian community. I was raised in the Keaukaha Hawaiian Homestead in a family of 11 siblings and currently reside on the Pana'ewa Hawaiian Homestead farm lots. I am a member of the Keaukaha Pana'ewa Farmers Association.

My formal education includes graduating from the Kamehameha Schools and a B.A. in Hawaiian Studies from the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. I served as chairperson of the Congressionally-established Native Hawaiian Education Council (NHEC) and continue to serve on the Executive Committee of the Council. I am also on the governing board of a Hawaiian focused/Hawaiian language charter school. In my capacity as a Hawaiian language revitalization and Native Hawaiian education expert, I have testified before the state Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the state Board of Education, the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents, the Hawai'i State Legislature, and the United States Congress. I was invited recently to sit at a Roundtable discussion with the U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan. I was asked to the Roundtable based on my expertise on the use of two official languages in education in Hawai'i.

The 'Aha Pūnana Leo does not see early childhood education as isolated from the larger life of the Hawaiian speaking community. I believe that my experiences through the 'Aha Pūnana Leo in connecting to other Native Hawaiian language and culture and Native Hawaiian education fields would allow me to strengthen the EOEL. Under my tenure as Executive Director of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo, we obtained grants to support the establishment of Hawaiian focused charter schools on three islands, began the first Hawaiian language television news program, established curriculum materials at a variety of levels for Hawaiian language schools, developed a scholarship program for college students, developed summer programs for students, developed healthy foods and gardening program, developed a voyaging program, and many other initiatives in support of families and students using the Hawaiian language.

On a national Native American level, I have made contacts with other Native American educators, language revitalization leaders, and university researchers through the work of Hawaiian language revitalization here in Hawai'i. I have co-

authored articles on Hawaiian language revitalization-oriented education published in academic journals. I was part of a group that sought inclusion of Native Hawaiians as voting members to the National Indian Education Association (NIEA). In 1999 by membership vote, Native Hawaiians received official membership. I was later elected to the NIEA board in 2007 and served for 3 years. I also am an original member of the National Coalition of Indigenous and Culture Based Education, a national initiative of Native American language medium/immersion schools convened and led by the late Dr. William Demmert (Tlingit/Lakota), who is also one of the founders of the NIEA. With that group we developed internal assessments of language arts and mathematics for Hawaiian, Navajo, Ojibwe, and Central Alaskan Yup'ik Eskimo that were evaluated to be "valid and reliable" by the Northwest Educational Laboratory (now Education Northwest) in Portland Oregon. In my present position, I am responsible for hosting the many American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native American Pacific Islander visitors to the Pūnana Leo programs and the follow-up model K-12 and 13-20 sites in Hilo that function as an integrated whole. I have already mentioned the work with the Kellogg Foundation to strengthen the 'Aha Pūnana Leo as a national model early childhood education program for Native Americans. My current position at the 'Aha Pūnana Leo has been funded in part for several years by the Lannan Foundation of Santa Fe, New Mexico to serve as a liaison with Native American communities and educators, among other functions. The USDE has recognized the unique role of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo as a model for Native American language based education, asking me to present at the Native American and Alaska Native children in school program held in Washington D.C., and also in a WEBINAR on best practices in serving native students through Native American language revitalization-oriented education.

I am also responsible for international visitors who come to see us from such diverse areas as Greenland, Australia, Canada, Latin America, and Scandinavia (Sami). I have been especially involved in maintaining the extensive contacts of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo with indigenous early childhood education program Kōhanga Reo in New Zealand. In 2009, the 'Aha Pūnana Leo was recognized by the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC) as an affiliate of the P-20 program of the state Hawaiian language college it had accredited with high accolades, resulting in the 'Aha Pūnana Leo receiving affiliation status. I was involved in the Pūnana Leo segment of WINHEC team accreditation visit, and have since been active in a new initiative that will bring WINHEC back to Hawai'i to pilot its new international indigenous early childhood education standards for accreditation.

4. Please identify one short-term and one long-term goal you have as a member of the Early Learning Advisory Board and explain how it relates to the state's overall school readiness and early learning initiatives.

My short-term goal is to assure that early childhood education through Hawaiian be provided linguistically and culturally appropriate standards and accreditation

processes.

My long-term goal is to institutionalize - for all Hawai'i's people - the choice of access to high quality early education through either of the official languages of our state.

These goals relate to the state's school readiness and early learning initiatives in either of Hawai'i's two official languages and the first steps toward distinctive Hawaiian language medium standards parallel to the HELDS began with my input during my first term. Also under my first term, initial steps were made toward Hawai'i's public and private early childhood education resourcing entities recognizing a distinctive accreditation pathway for Hawaiian medium early education programs. Both initial areas are related to President Obama's adoption in 2010 of the educational provisions of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the establishment of P-20 accreditation systems under the World Indigenous Peoples Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC)

5. What challenges and opportunities do you see Hawaii facing as it works to create its first ever publically funded early learning system, and what role should the ELAB play as we move forward?

This is Hawai'i's opportunity to create an integrated system built on the strengths of Hawai'i's unique position as a state with two official languages. We often look to national models of what a system should include, however, international models of educational excellence for political entities with two or more official languages exist and should be explored. Some of these countries with more than one official language are also models of high social equity and have had great educational outcomes for children and families. Finland, where Finnish, Swedish, and the local indigenous Sami language are official, is an excellent example. Canada and New Zealand are others.

The challenge for us is structuring a system for Hawai'i that integrates the strength of mainstream American early childhood education resources with the uniqueness of our community, including its special role as a model for indigenous education. Another strength of our larger Hawai'i community is that we have genealogical connections to much of the rest of the world, if not ourselves personally, then through our relatives, our neighbors, and the children in our schools. ELAB can serve as a means to connect the EOEL to those "on the ground" in the early learning community as well as to the families who are participating in those services to assure that it simply does not hire experts from mainstream American early childhood education who automatically follow trends in other states without both a more finely tuned understanding of the unique needs of Hawai'i and a broader understanding of international best practices in early childhood education that may hold models especially well suited to our communities.

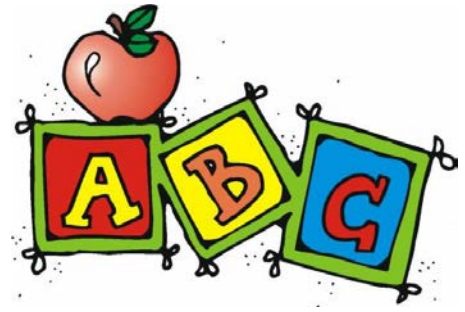
6. Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the ELAB? How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?

I do not foresee any conflicts of interests. However, should one arise, I will recuse myself from voting.

Senator Tokuda, mahalo, again, for allowing me the opportunity to share my thoughts on the questions above. I look forward to the hearing on Wednesday April 11, 2014 at 1:15p in conference room 414 for my reappointment to the Early Learning Advisory Board and to serving another term for all of Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui

GM651



TESTIMONY



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

April 8, 2014

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Committee on Education
Hawaii State Capitol Room 218
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: GM651 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Early Learning Advisory Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, M. NAMAOKALANI RAWLINS, for a term to expire 6-30-2016.

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

I highly recommend the appointment of nominee M. Namakaokalani Rawlins to the Early Learning Advisory Board.

Mrs. Rawlins is a passionate advocate for the revitalization of the Hawaiian Language through the establishment of early learning practices. She serves as the current director of Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration for Aha Punana Leo, an all-day preschool serving as "Language Nests" across our State in which the Hawaiian language is used exclusively with the children and between teachers and staff as a means to revitalize the indigenous language. She has previously served on the Hawaii Early Learning Advisory Board as a Hawaiian Language Medium Early Learning Provider Representative.

Namaka Rawlins possesses the desire and experience to guide early learning methods for children in Hawaii. Her perspective and dedication to this field will greatly benefit the Board as well as the preservation of the language and culture of Hawaiians for generations to come.

Sincerely,



CLIFT TSUJI

Representative Clift Tsuji
District 2- Keaukaha; parts of Hilo, Panaewa & Waiakea
State Capitol 415 S. Beretania St. Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: 586-8480 Toll-free from Hawaii Island 974-4000 ext. 68480
Fax: 586-8484
Email: reptsuji@capitol.hawaii.gov



EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING
HONOLULU

GG WEISENFELD
DIRECTOR

Testimony in **Support** of
Governor's Message No. 651
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Early Learning Advisory Board
Gubernatorial Nominee, M. Namakaokalani Rawlins
For a term to expire June 30, 2016
By GG Weisenfeld, Director

Senate Committee on Education
April 9, 2014
1:15 p.m., Room 414

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Governor's Message No. 651, nominating M. Namakaokalani Rawlins to the Early Learning Advisory Board. The Executive Office on Early Learning supports her nomination.

Ms. Rawlins is a graduate of the University of Hawaii at Hilo with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Hawaiian Studies, and is currently pursuing her Master of Arts Degree in Hawaiian Language and Literature at the University of Hawaii at Hilo. As a strong advocate and teacher of Hawaiian language, she has presented at numerous conferences nationally and abroad since 1987 to the present, traveling across the nation and also speaking in Canada and New Zealand to address the issues indigenous cultures encounter in perpetuating their native tongue and insuring standards are maintained in the classroom. As one of the founders and past Director of Aha Punana Leo, she has been an integral part of the Hawaiian immersion movement, and in her present position as the Aha Punana Leo Director of Strategic Partnerships & Collaborations, continues to manage and advocate for the program.

Ms. Rawlins is being recommended to serve on the Early Learning Advisory Board as its representative of Hawaiian medium early learning providers. Her knowledge in the Hawaiian language medium and Hawaiian culture brings an essential element to the Board necessary to guarantee the inclusion of the Hawaiian language and culture within the early learning system. Her insight and knowledge will make her an invaluable asset to the Board.



Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs

P. O. Box 1135
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96807

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**GM 651 SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND
CONFIRMATION TO THE EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY BOARD
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE M. NAMAKAOKALANI RAWLINS
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2016**

Wednesday, 4/09/14; 1:15 pm; Room 414

Aloha Madam Chair Tokuda, vice chair Kidani and members of the Senate Committee on Education. I am Soulee Stroud, president of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs pleased to support the gubernatorial nomination of M. Namakaokalani Rawlins to the Early Learning Advisory Board.

Members of the Hawaiian Civic Clubs know of Namaka Rawlins dedication to educating the children of Hawaii. We are also aware of her skill in using and teaching through the Hawaiian language. Ms. Rawlins is a talented and experienced teacher that will be an asset to the Early Learning Advisory Board. We urge confirmation of her nomination.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Contact: jalna.keala2@hawaiiantel.net

Senate Hearing
Wednesday April 9 2014
Conference Room 414
1:15p

Senate Committee on Education
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michele N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Re: GM 651 consideration and confirmation to the Early Learning Advisory Board,
Gubernatorial Nominee, M. NAMAOKALANI RAWLINS

Aloha Senator Tokuda, Chair, Senator Kidani, Vice Chair and members of the Senate Committee
on Education,

The 'Aha Pūnana Leo Board of Directors fully supports the appointment of Nāmaka Rawlins to
the Early Learning Advisory Board.

Established in 1983, the 'Aha Pūnana Leo is a non-profit Hawaiian Language Education
organization that operates 11 Hawaiian medium preschools across the state. Our organization is
the first in the United States to offer early childhood education through a native American
language and serves as a national model of educational excellence in this area. Nāmaka has led
our organization over these many years, first as its Chief Executive Officer and now as its
Director of Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations. We are pleased that she has reapplied to
serve on the Early Learning Advisory Board and that Governor Abercrombie supports her
reappointment.

We know that she will continue to be engaged and committed to Hawai'i's children and the
continued effort to establish a quality early learning system in both of Hawai'i's official
languages.

Me ka 'oia'i'o,
Kauanoë Kamanā, Ph.D.
President, Board of Directors
'Aha Pūnana Leo, Inc.

Good  Beginnings Alliance
Voices For Hawai'i's Children

April 7, 2014

To: Chair Jill Tokuda
Vice-Chair Michelle Kidani
Members of the Senate Committee on Education

From: Deborah Zysman
Executive Director
Good Beginnings Alliance

Re: **GM 651** – Supporting NĀMAKAOKALANI RAWLINS for consideration and confirmation to the Early Learning Advisory Board.

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee on Education,

The Good Beginnings Alliance (GBA) strongly supports the nomination of Nāmakaokalani Rawlins to serve on the Early Learning Advisory Board (ELAB) for a term to expire on June 30, 2016.

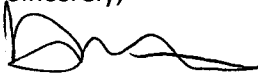
Nāmakaokalani Rawlins has been a recognized leader in early education for over thirty years in the state of Hawai'i. Seen as the "mother" of the Hawaiian language movement, Nāmaka worked to develop the first Hawaiian language immersion preschool program, 'Aha Pūnana Leo, based on her understanding of the Maori model of Kohanga Reo, or "Language Nest", essentially keeping Native Hawaiian language from vanishing by ensuring that it would thrive and perpetuate among our youth.

Nāmaka has steadfastly advocated for equitable funding and support of Hawaiian medium education at the state and federal levels, as a leader on the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) Board and as a liaison to the US Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. Her thoughtful leadership on the Early Learning Advisory Board has been invaluable and we strongly support her continued presence in the years to come.

On behalf of GBA, one of Hawai'i's foremost policy and advocacy organizations focused on children's health and education, we support the nomination of Nāmakaokalani Rawlins to serve on the Early Learning Advisory Board.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter of support.

Sincerely,



Deborah Zysman
Good Beginnings Alliance



Native Hawaiian Education Council

April 8, 2014

Date and Time: 04-9-2014 1:15PM

Conference Room: 414

GM651 Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the Early Learning Advisory Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, Maureen Nāmakaokalani Rawlins for a term to expire 6-30-2014

Senate Committee on Education

Aloha Senator Tokuda and members of the Senate Committee on Education,

We are honored to submit this letter of support for Ms. Nāmaka Rawlins who is nominated to the Governor's Early Learning Advisory Council as a representative of Hawaiian medium early learning providers.

Ms. Rawlins has spent the preponderance of her career in the employ of ʻĀhā Pūnana Leo, the only statewide provider since 1983 of pre-school education through the Hawaiian language. Throughout her career, Ms. Rawlins has been at the forefront of the Hawaiian language revitalization movement on many levels: teaching, coordinating programs statewide, and advocating for public policy that supports the preservation of indigenous language. Today she is ʻĀhā Pūnana Leo's Director of Strategic Collaboration.

Ms. Rawlins' dedication to early childhood education and language preservation is also demonstrated in her service on the Native Hawaiian Education Council (NHEC) since her appointment in 1997. The NHEC is a federally funded non-profit, the members of whom serve as volunteers to advise the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) in the implementation of the Native Hawaiian Education Act. NHEC has identified early childhood education and Hawaiian immersion schools as two of the six priority areas in which USDOE should concentrate its resources for Native Hawaiians. Ms. Rawlins has been an active and effective member of the NHEC, currently sitting on the Executive Council serving as Past Chair.

Given her experience, passion and commitment, we believe Ms. Rawlins would be a superb representative of Hawaiian medium early learning providers to sit on the Governor's Early Learning Advisory Council.

Mahalo nui,

Wendy Roylo Hee
Executive Director



From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: dkapua@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM651 on Apr 9, 2014 13:15PM
Date: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 8:52:05 AM

GM651

Submitted on: 4/8/2014

Testimony for EDU on Apr 9, 2014 13:15PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kapua Keliikoa-Kamai	Individual	Support	No

Comments: STRONG SUPPORT for Namakaokalani Rawlins. Our keiki o ka aina will benefit greatly with Namaka on this Early Learning Board. Mahalo nui for supporting her. Kapua

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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