



Randy Perreira
President

HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

320 Ward Avenue, Suite 209 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

LATE

Telephone: (808) 597-1441
Fax: (808) 593-2149

The Twenty-Seventh Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Ways and Means

Testimony by
Hawaii State AFL-CIO
February 19, 2014

S.B. 2768, SD1 - RELATING TO
KINDERGARTEN

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO supports S.B. 2768, SD1 which makes kindergarten mandatory for a child who will be at least five years of age on July 31 of the school year and requires the department of education, in collaboration with the executive office on early learning, to develop a statewide kindergarten readiness program and establish an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system.

Investments in education, especially early childhood education are important for our keiki's success. Making kindergarten mandatory is an investment that will payoff for future generations and help students succeed and perform well in school.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
President

LATE



February 18, 2014

TO: Chair David Ige
Vice-Chair Michelle Kidani
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Deborah Zysman
Executive Director
Good Beginnings Alliance

RE: **Testimony in support of SB2768 SD1: RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN.**

The Good Beginnings Alliance **supports SB2768 SD1**, which seeks to make kindergarten mandatory in Hawaii for a child who is at least five years old on July 31 of the school year. The measure also calls on the Department of Education and the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to collaborate on developing kindergarten readiness program and an individual readiness assessment system.

As the Hawaii state legislature continues to develop and invest in a comprehensive early childhood education system, the inclusion of mandatory Kindergarten makes sense. Kindergarten education provides Hawaii's children an unparalleled educational experience that ensures age appropriate reading and writing proficiency, as well important interpersonal skills. Currently, over 95% of Hawaii children attend kindergarten.

Importantly, SB2768 SD1 also provides for the development of a new individual student assessment system to replace the current Hawaii state school readiness assessment (HSSRA). GBA supports this effort as it is an invaluable tool to help measure the skills and abilities of children entering the DOE system, as well as the range of preschool and childcare experiences that a child may or may not have had. This information helps teachers and families better address an individual student's needs, and helps policymakers better address the needs of our overall education system.

SB2768 SD1 ensures that mandatory Kindergarten in our state comes with the quality oversight, investment in teacher training and resources, and protections for parents who choose not to take part in the proposed assessment system.

Thank you for allowing GBA to offer testimony in support

Sincerely,
Deborah Zysman
Executive Director

Good Beginnings Alliance



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council
919 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 101
Honolulu, HI 96814
Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129
email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov

LATE

February 19, 2014

**Special Education
Advisory Council**

Ms. Ivalee Sinclair, *Chair*
Ms. Martha Guinan, *Vice
Chair*

Ms. Brendelyn Ancheta
Dr. Tammy Bopp
Dr. Robert Campbell
Ms. Deborah Cheeseman
Ms. Annette Cooper
Ms. Shari Dela Cuadra-Larsen,
liaison to the Superintendent
Ms. Jenny Gong
Ms. Gabriele Finn
Ms. Tami Ho
Ms. Barbara Ioli
Ms. Valerie Johnson
Ms. Deborah Kobayakawa
Ms. Bernadette Lane
Ms. Shanelle Lum
Ms. Dale Matsuura
Ms. Stacey Oshio
Ms. Zaidarene Place
Mr. Kenneth Powell
Ms. Barbara Pretty
Ms. Kau'i Rezentes
Ms. Melissa Rosen
Dr. Patricia Sheehey
Mr. Tom Smith
Ms. Lani Solomona
Dr. Daniel Ulrich
Ms. Amy Weich
Ms. Cari White
Ms. Susan Wood

Jan Tateishi, Staff
Susan Rocco, Staff

Senator David Ige, Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: SB 2768, SD1 - RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN

Dear Chair Ige and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii's State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), appreciates the opportunity to provide **comments only** on SB 2768 SD 1 that makes kindergarten mandatory for a child who will be at least five years of age on July 31st and establishes an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system within DOE.

Language drafted in 1996 in the existing statute appears to exclude some students with disabilities. Section 302A-1132 lists exceptions to compulsory attendance including the following case: "(1) Where the child is physically or mentally unable to attend school (deafness and blindness excepted), of which fact the certificate of a duly licensed physician shall be sufficient evidence..."

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act guarantees a free appropriate public education to a child with a disability aged 3-22 whose disability impacts their ability to benefit from education, regardless of the severity of the disability. The continuum of placements available to the student, based on his or her individualized needs, includes home and hospital based services where appropriate. SEAC believes that ALL Kindergarten-aged students, with or without disabilities, should be covered by this legislation, regardless of where they receive their educational services.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comments. If you have any questions, I will be happy to answer them.

Respectfully,

Ivalee Sinclair, Chair



46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Legislative Director

TESTIMONY FOR SENATE BILL 2768, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Hon. David Y. Ige, Chair
Hon. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, February 19, 2014, 9:25 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211**

Honorable Chair Ige and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 175 local members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in support of Senate Bill 2768, SD1, relating to kindergarten.

Kindergarten is an essential part of early education, setting the stage for success in school and beyond. In all but 14 states, however, kindergarten is not mandatory for keiki, who can miss out on key introductions to reading, writing, mathematics, science, and peer socialization, all without repercussions redounding to parents. This has got to change. ~~A descriptor~~ an equal playing field, especially when it comes to educational achievement. The National Center for Education Statistics has states that over the course of a single year, kindergarten students can improve reading and math scores by 10 and 8 percentile points, respectively. Kindergarten offers long-term benefits to society as well. When coupled with quality early childhood education programs, mandatory kindergarten can enhance and accelerate crime reduction, decreased healthcare costs, and improved economic prospects. Between promoting academic success and advancing socioeconomic prosperity, kindergarten effectively defines success for future generations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Legislative Director



Mahalo Chair Ige and Vice Chair Kidani

I'm writing in opposition to SB 2768 as written. We all know the validity and importance Kindergarten brings to a student's life and their growth potential. As a High School teacher on the Island of Hawaii I see first hand the positive effects putting a student in Kindergarten does; however, this bill proposes to change the date of enrollment from December 31 to July 31 essentially cutting in half the amount of students able to be educated at a Kindergarten level. By doing so we would be releasing around 500 of my fellow teachers to have to shift around the already established inner workers of the schools they already work at.

The biggest group that would be disenfranchised if this bill were to pass would be those parents whose students do not reach the age threshold placed by this bill. If I may I would like to cite one example. I have a fellow teacher who has a daughter who is enrolled in Preschool currently. Her daughter does not turn 5 until after July 31 of this year. Under the proposed change in date her daughter would have to remain in Preschool and miss out on the opportunity to receive a furthering of her education. The Preschool has contacted my friend to ask what she will be doing with her daughter as the preschool does not have a curriculum that would be a benefit to her daughter. In a sense the student would be placed in a remedial program when they are a true GT (gifted and talented) student. Is this fair to force a student to stay back a full year just because they aren't at the correct age? Are we not in a sense causing educational neglect because we are not allowing for those who are ready to enter kindergarten the opportunity?

I ask all of the Senators to think about their children and if so, their children's children. What would you want for your son or daughter? The opportunity to learn and grow or be told that because you were not born at the right time, which is fully out of their control, that they will have to be punished and forced to stay in a program that are already done with? Please, let's be reasonable and make the right choice.
Vote no on SB 2768

Christopher N. Ho

High School Teacher

Hawaii Island