



LATE

KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

TO: Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Honorable Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Education

DATE: February 13, 2015

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 229
Hawai'i State Capitol

FROM: Kamehameha Schools

RE: SENATE BILL 844, RELATING TO PUBLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Harimoto, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on SB 844 relating to public early childhood education. Kamehameha Schools offers comments in support of establishing the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning and provided through Department of Education public schools and public charter schools.

Bernice Pauahi Bishop, whose mission is to improve the capability and well-being of Native Hawaiian children through education. We serve K-12 students through campus programs on O'ahu, Hawai'i and Maui, and three-and-four-year-olds at preschool sites statewide. In 2004, the Early Childhood Education division also began serving keiki from birth to three years old, as part of its Hi'ilani Early Childhood Collaborative program. We also provide scholarships to keiki attending other preschools and provide funding for child-family interaction programs that have filled a great need in rural communities.

Since its inception more than 20 years ago, the Kamehameha Schools Early Childhood Education Division has provided more than 11,000 keiki with their first preschool experience. Early childhood education and parental support is the cornerstone of the Education Strategic Plan adopted in 2005, which seeks to foster long-term intergenerational change in the way Native Hawaiian families approach learning. Research demonstrates that early education is a key factor in lifelong success for all children, and we strongly urge the legislature to promote, enhance and support the efforts of the State of Hawai'i to appropriately address the needs of Hawaii's pre-kindergarten children.

LATE



February 13, 2015

To: Sen. Michelle Kidani, Chair
Sen. Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Education

From: Deborah Zysman, Executive Director
Good Beginnings Alliance

RE: Support for SB 844 – Relating to Public Early Childhood Education
Support for SB 863 – Relating to Early Childhood Education

Good Beginnings Alliance (GBA) is in support of SB 844, Relating to Public Early Childhood Education, and in support of SB 863, Relating to Early Childhood Education, which would establish the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning and provided through Department of Education public schools and charter schools.

GBA is Hawaii's leading policy and advocacy non-profit organization on children's health, education and safety. We build a united voice to educate and advocate for Hawaii's children.

Hawaii is among the least affordable states for childcare, which is a significant financial hardship for many families. The average cost of childcare at \$8,172 in 2012 represents 9% of the median income for a family in Hawaii. According to the Hawaii State School Readiness Assessment for 2012-13, more than 40% of children entering kindergarten had not attended a pre-kindergarten program and more than 90% of students in DOE classrooms did not meet benchmarks in all dimensions of school readiness. This trend is alarming, but it can be reversed.

Brain research has proven that the first few years of life are a crucial time for brain development. Brains are built from the bottom up and continue to develop into adulthood. According to a Harvard study on child development, early experiences affect the development of brain architecture, which provides the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health. Just as a weak foundation compromises the quality and strength of a house, adverse experiences early in life can impair brain architecture, with negative effects lasting into adulthood.

The research is clear that when children are provided a high-quality early childhood education, they are more likely to succeed academically in school, reach higher levels of educational attainment, have a higher income and even live healthier lives. A study commissioned by GBA in 2008 found more than \$4 in return for every \$1 invested in early childhood education in Hawaii. Preparing our young children to be ready to learn and thrive before they reach kindergarten not only helps to improve their lives as individuals, it improves the lives of our communities.

Both SB 844 and SB 863 would make early education accessible for children and their parents, who may not otherwise be able to afford a high quality early education program. These bills would help build capacity to serve pre-kindergarten 4- and 5-year-old children and establish a high-level quality instruction program tied to educational outcomes.

While both bills generally would establish similar programs for pre-kindergarten 4- and 5-year-old children, we do prefer the prioritization of underserved or at-risk children, which is a provision in SB 844, Section 2. (b), given the current funding level for this program. Further, SB 844, also defines “underserved children,” which we recommend be tiered to families with incomes no more than 250% of the poverty level.

These measures are critical to insure that the Executive Office on Early Learning effectively continues its work to serve our youngest children.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge committee members to advance authorizing legislation to establish Executive Office on Early Learning Pre-kindergarten Program this session.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc:
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB844 on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM
Date: Friday, February 13, 2015 7:11:08 AM

SB844

Submitted on: 2/13/2015

Testimony for EDU on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Corinne Uehara	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: I am against the state funding preschool because it will exclude Christian and other religious schools. It takes away the parents' option to choose and puts schools that teach religion at an unfair disadvantage. I do think all children should be able to afford preschool & am not against the idea of the state funding it, but not at the expense of religious schools. Thank you for your time & consideration.

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To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc:
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB844 on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM
Date: Friday, February 13, 2015 8:24:05 AM

SB844

Submitted on: 2/13/2015

Testimony for EDU on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Julia	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am writing in support of state funded preschools. As a single mother of 3 boys I understand the high cost that preschools charge today. I fall into a range of income where I make too much money to qualify for any financial aid, but just enough money to make ends meet for my family. Having the cost of preschool eliminated would serve our state greatly.

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Cc:
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB844 on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM
Date: Friday, February 13, 2015 8:57:12 AM

SB844

Submitted on: 2/13/2015

Testimony for EDU on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kupono McPherson	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: I, Kupono McPherson, petition to whom it may concern, that Hawaii would strongly benefit from a free pre-K program! As a pre-k teacher, I see the affects and effects of early literacy intervention and their benefits! Mahalo!

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Cc:
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB844 on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM
Date: Thursday, February 12, 2015 7:22:52 PM

SB844

Submitted on: 2/12/2015

Testimony for EDU on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leona	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Families on Kauai work two or three jobs to make ends meet. All of our keiki need a safe and nurturing learning environment while their parents are making a living. Please support our families and keiki.

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Subject: Submitted testimony for SB844 on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM
Date: Friday, February 13, 2015 7:23:31 AM

SB844

Submitted on: 2/13/2015

Testimony for EDU on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lora	Individual	Support	No

Comments: As a mother with 2 children under the age of 5 the cost of daycare has been \$1200 which for me is a full paycheck and more making it very difficult to pay other bills Such as rent,electric and other basic needs. At this point I have been informed by several state agency that I should have more then enough income to pay for both children to attend day care while keeping up with basic house needs. At this point it is extremely difficult with the new law that a child must be 5 before entering kindergarten. This bill would help my family to make ends meet without having to resort to drastic measures.

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Subject: Submitted testimony for SB844 on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM
Date: Friday, February 13, 2015 9:10:55 AM

SB844

Submitted on: 2/13/2015

Testimony for EDU on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Natalia Perry	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: WE really need free DOE pre-K.

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Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB844 on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM*
Date: Thursday, February 12, 2015 9:24:31 PM

SB844

Submitted on: 2/12/2015

Testimony for EDU on Feb 13, 2015 13:30PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rexie K. Adlawan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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