

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Ty J. K. Cullen, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 498, HD 1, Relating to Early Learning -- Hearing
February 28, 2017, 3:00 PM, Conference Room 308

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert G. Peters and over the past 10 years, I have served as a Chair of the Early Learning Task Force, the Early Learning Council and currently as Chair of the Early Learning Advisory Board (ELAB). Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony on behalf of the ELAB in support of HB 498, HD 1, relating to early learning, which broadens the scope of the early learning program to include early childhood development, expands the function of the Early Learning Advisory Board, and allows the Board to appoint and evaluate the Executive Director of Early Learning.

Act 178 established the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) as an office of the Governor, created the ELAB and provided for the EOEL to become an attached agency to the Department of Education for administrative purposes beginning in 2015. The ELAB's function has been strictly an advisory one and the EOEL has lacked an oversight board. This legislation seeks to change the ELAB's role by giving it authority to appoint and evaluate the director of the Executive Office on Early Learning, set the Director's salary and the power, in accordance with the law, to formulate statewide policy relating to early learning.

The EOEL is charged with the development and administration of a high quality early learning system for Hawai'i's children from birth until they enter kindergarten. This legislation would provide the oversight and authority of a board to guide the strategic direction of that system development while supporting and holding the EOEL accountable for designing a high quality cohesive, comprehensive and sustainable system. It retains the diverse public/private membership to assist these efforts but reduces the number of voting members. In the end, this bill will address the one missing link in governance for the P-20 continuum, a board for early learning to complement the BOE and the Board of Regents.

This legislation proposes to redefine the definition of "at risk" to include children whose family income is no more than "three hundred fifty percent of the federal poverty level." ELAB supports the EOEL proposal that consideration be given to include children whose family income is no more than three hundred percent of the federal poverty level on page 3, lines 12-13. While this will allow EOEL to extend the Public Pre-Kindergarten Program to working class families, EOEL recommends that priority should be extended to those who may not otherwise be able to afford a high-quality pre-kindergarten program for their child. EOEL proposes that the language on page 19, lines 3-5 be revised to, "The program shall serve children in the year prior to the year of kindergarten eligibility, with priority extended to those whose family income is below two-hundred and fifty percent of the federal poverty level." The ELAB supports these changes recommended by EOEL.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the ELAB which strongly encourages the passage of this bill with recommended changes.

Sincerely,
Robert G. Peters, EdD
Early Learning Advisory Board, Chair



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
1390 Miller Street, Room 303
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 27, 2017

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty Cullen, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Lauren Moriguchi, Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: HB 498, HD 1 – Relating to Early Learning
Hearing Date: February 28, 2017
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Location: Conference Room 308

Purpose of Bill: Broadens the scope of the early learning program to include early childhood development. Expands the function of the early learning advisory board beyond an advisory capacity and amends the composition and powers of some board members. Allows the board to appoint the director of the executive office on early learning.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) strongly **supports** HB 498.

This legislation transforms the Early Learning Advisory Board (ELAB) into a governing board which will provide constancy in the position of the Executive Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning and will enable smooth functioning of the Office when there are changes in Administration.

This legislation also redefines the definition of "at risk" to include children whose family income is no more than three hundred percent of the federal poverty level. This will allow EOEL to extend the Public Pre-Kindergarten Program to working class families while prioritizing those whose family income is below two-hundred and fifty percent of the federal poverty level.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CATHERINE PAYNE
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
('AHA KULA HO'ĀMANA)

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>
1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Sione Thompson, Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

SUBJECT: HB 498, HD1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING
Hearing Date: February 28, 2017
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Location: Conference Room 309

Purpose of Bill: Broadens the scope of the early learning program to include early childhood development. Expands the function of the early learning advisory board beyond an advisory capacity and amends the composition and powers of some board members. Allows the board to appoint the director of the executive office on early learning.

STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION'S POSITION: The State Public Charter School Commission **supports HB 498** – Relating to Early Learning.

The State Public Charter School Commission recognizes the importance of broadening the scope of the early learning programs to include early childhood development to support a holistic approach for Hawaii's youngest keiki.

The State Public Charter School Commission **supports** the expansion of the early learning governance structure to support high quality early childhood programs in Hawaii. We support the measure and its amendments as it will assist the state in providing a multi-dimensional, cross-sector approach to address the needs of our keiki.

For these reason, the Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission respectfully requests that the committee pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



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

February 28, 2017

**Special Education
Advisory Council**

Ms. Martha Guinan, *Chair*
Ms. Dale Matsuura, *Vice Chair*
Dr. Patricia Sheehy, *Vice
Chair*
Ms. Ivalee Sinclair, *Vice Chair*

Ms. Brendelyn Ancheta
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Ms. Jasmine Williams
Ms. Susan Wood

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff
Susan Rocco, Staff

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Committee on Finance
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HB 498, HD 1 - Relating to Education

Dear Chair Luke and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii's State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), **supports** HB 498, HD 1 that broadens the scope of the early learning program, expands the function of the Early Learning Advisory Board, and allows the Board to appoint and evaluate the EOEL Director.


SEAC is particularly supportive of the following amendments to the bill that were made in the Committee on Education:

- increasing access to high quality early learning programs by expanding the income threshold for eligibility;
- requiring the Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning to have an educational background and expertise in early childhood education and child development; and
- giving the Board the power to develop statewide policies related to early learning.

SEAC believes that increasing the availability of quality early learning programs will create more opportunities for young children with disabilities to have their school readiness needs met in inclusive settings.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important legislation. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us.

Respectfully,


Martha Guinan
Chair


Ivalee Sinclair
Legislative Committee Chair



February 27, 2017

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

From: Karen Worthington, Project Coordinator
Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: HB498-HD1 – Relating to Early Learning
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 308, February 28, 2017, 3:00 PM

Position: Action Strategy supports HB498-HD1 Relating to Early Learning

Dear Representative Luke, Representative Cullen, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Hawaii's Early Childhood Action Strategy, a public private collaborative that recognizes the strength of communities and works across sectors to increase the number of young children in Hawaii who are born healthy, developing on track, ready for school when they enter kindergarten, and proficient learners by third grade.

Action Strategy supports the passage of HB498-HD1 because the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) and the Early Learning Advisory Board (ELAB) are critical components of an early childhood system in Hawaii that can lead to more children born healthy, developing on track and successful in school.

Action Strategy supports HB498-HD1 which seeks to change the role of ELAB by giving it the authority to appoint and evaluate the director of the Executive Office on Early Learning; allowing it to set the Director's salary; and providing it the power, in accordance with the law, to formulate statewide policy relating to early learning. The bill provides that ELAB retains its diverse public-private membership that is essential to

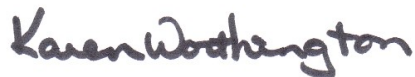
Action Strategy Testimony on HB498-HD1
February 27, 2017
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developing a high-quality, comprehensive, cohesive early childhood system while also keeping the membership number manageable for a board with this scope of responsibilities.

HB498-HD1 also amends the statutory definition of “at risk children” to include children whose family income is no more than “three hundred per cent of the federal poverty level” rather than the current statutory designation of “two hundred fifty percent.” This change will expand opportunities for many children to benefit from early learning programs. However, Action Strategy would like the original language in the bill, “three hundred per cent of the federal poverty level,” reinstated because of the high cost of living in Hawaii.

Action Strategy is committed to ensuring Hawaii’s young children are healthy, safe and ready to learn and HB498-HD1 supports that vision. Please feel free to contact me for additional information. I can be reached at 808-214-9336 or karen@clnhawaii.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Worthington". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Karen Worthington, JD



LATE

KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

House Committee on Finance

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Date: February 28, 2017

Where: Conference Room 308

TESTIMONY

By Ka'ano'i Walk

Kamehameha Schools

To: Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee

RE: **HB 498 HD1, Relating to Early Learning.**

E ka Luna Ho'omaluku Luke, ka Hope Luna Ho'omaluku Cullen a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike Waiwai o ka Hale o nā Lunamaka'āinana, aloha! My name is Ka'ano'i Walk and I serve as the Senior Policy Analyst of the Kūamahi Community Education Group of Kamehameha Schools.

We are writing to **support HB 498 HD1**, relating to early learning, and offer the following comments:

Early childhood education and parental support is the cornerstone of the Kamehameha Schools 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 Hawai'i's pre-kindergarten children, including broadening the scope of the early learning program to include early childhood development. By expanding the function of the early learning advisory board beyond an advisory capacity and amending the composition and powers of some board members, this measure allows the board to appoint the director of the executive office on early learning and is an important step to ensuring school readiness for Hawai'i's children prior to entering kindergarten, especially Native Hawaiians.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an organization striving to advance a thriving Lāhui where all Native Hawaiians are successful, grounded in traditional values, and leading in the local and global communities. We believe that community success is individual success, Hawaiian culture-based education leads to academic success and local leadership drives global leadership.

'A'ohē hana nui ke alu 'ia. No task is too large when we all work together! Mahalo nui.

LATE

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

PERSON TESTIFYING: Robyn S. B. Chun

DATE: Wednesday, February 28, 2017

TIME: 3:00 PM

LOCATION: State Capitol Conference Room 308

TITLE OF BILL: HB 498 HD 1 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING

Honorable Chair, Sylvia Luke, Vice Chair Ty Cullen and Committee Members

I strongly support HB 498 HD 1 Relating to Early Learning. I appreciate the forward thinking of our state lawmakers. Supporting early learning is a long-term investment in the well-being of our state.

HB 498 HD 1 makes needed amendments to Sec. 302L-1 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes that defines the scope of the Executive Office of Early Learning (EOEL) so that it is consistent with the focus of programs and services provided for young children (pre-natal-kindergarten) and their families. Early learning programs are concerned about health and well-being and support learning across all developmental domains so that each child can reach his or her developmental potential.

Revisions to the statute clarify the role and responsibilities of the board as well as the Board's relationship to the Executive Office of Early Learning. They provide constancy in the Director's position that will enable smooth functioning of the Office when there are changes in Administration.

Additionally, the requirement for principals and key personnel to participate in an induction program prior to opening public prekindergarten classrooms increases the likelihood that elementary schools are better informed about the developmental needs of preschoolers and are better prepared to select staff with coursework and qualifications in early childhood education and implement the programmatic differences necessary to support the learning and development of preschoolers. This is especially important since coursework or training in child development and early childhood education falls outside of the scope of teacher preparation programs for principals and a majority of the K-6 personnel.



LATE

February 26, 2017

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

From: Deborah Zysman, Executive Director
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: HB 498 HD 1 – Relating to Early Learning
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 308, February 28, 2017, 3:00 PM

On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), we are writing to provide comments on HB 498 HD 1 – Relating to Early Learning.

This bill will widen the scope of the early learning program to include early childhood development, expand the function of the Early Learning Advisory Board (ELAB), and allow the ELAB to appoint and evaluate the Executive Director of Early Learning.

The Executive Office on Early Learning's (EOEL) mission is to develop and administer a high-quality early learning system for Hawaii's children from birth until they enter kindergarten. In 2015, the EOEL shifted from being an office of the Governor to become an attached agency to the Department of Education. The same act that established EOEL also created the ELAB, whose role has been strictly advisory. HB 498 HD 1 seeks to change the ELAB's role by giving it the authority to appoint and evaluate the director of the Executive Office on Early Learning; allowing it to set the Director's salary; and providing it the power, in accordance with the law, to formulate statewide policy relating to early learning.

HB 498 HD 1 would provide the oversight and authority of a board to guide the strategic direction of the system development while supporting and holding the EOEL accountable for developing a high-quality, cohesive, comprehensive, and sustainable system. The ELAB would retain the diverse public/private membership but reduces the number of voting members. In the end, this bill will add a key aspect needed in governance for the P-20 continuum, a board for early learning to compliment the Board of Education and the Board of Regents.

Another important facet of HB 498 HD 1 is the amendment of the “at risk” definition to include children whose family income is no more than “three hundred percent of the federal poverty level” rather than current statute designation of “two hundred fifty percent.” This change will expand opportunities for families currently excluded to gain access to early learning programs. Providing many more children the opportunity to benefit from quality early learning experiences leading to school and life success.

However, there were substantial amendments to the initial HB 498 that we DO NOT agree with:

1. The current designation is for families at three hundred percent of the federal poverty level. The initial designation in HB 498 was for families at three hundred and fifty percent. This needs to be reinstated as the cost of living in Hawaii is so high with significantly low wages that many families need help at the 350% level.
2. Additional requirements for qualifications in HB 498 HD 1 for the executive director of the Executive Office of Early Learning were added to have the person have taken coursework in early childhood education and child development and preferably hold a degree in early childhood education or child development are unnecessary and will significantly reduce the pool of qualified candidates. The decision on the qualifications of the executive director should be up to the Early Learning Board, which will be responsible for hiring and evaluating the executive director, not in statute.

For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that the committee pass this bill while removing the above amendments.

HCAN is committed to building a unified voice advocating for Hawaii’s children by improving their safety, health, and education. Last fall, HCAN convened input in person and online from more than 50 organizations and individuals that came forward to support or express interest for a number of issues affecting children and families in our state that resulted in the compilation of 2017 Hawaii Children’s Policy Agenda, which can be accessed at <http://www.hawaii-can.org/2017policyagenda>.