



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 29, 2017

TO: The Honorable Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 498 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**

Hearing: Wednesday, March 29, 2017, 1:40 p.m.
Conference Room 211, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) offers comments and provides proposed amendments to Section 11 related to the Department’s Preschool Open Doors program. DHS defers to the Executive Office on Early Learning regarding the other sections of this measure.

PURPOSE: The purpose of HB 498 HD1 SD1 is to broaden the scope of the Early Learning Program to include early childhood development; expands the function of the Early Learning Board beyond an advisory capacity and mends the composition and powers of the some board members; and allows the Early Learning Board to appoint the director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL).

The House Committee on Education amended the measure by:

(1) making adjustments to the thresholds at which children are considered “at-risk” or “underserved” when family income is at or below 300 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL);

(2) requiring the Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning to have taken major coursework in early childhood education and child development and preferably hold an academic degree in early childhood education and child development;

(3) modifying the membership of the Early Learning Board and making conforming amendments;

(4) specifying that priority for the Executive Office on Early Learning Public Prekindergarten Program will be extended to four-year-old children who are underserved or at-risk and whose family income is at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level; and

(5) defecting the effective date.

The Senate Committee on Education amended the measure by:

(1) removing language prioritizing public pre-kindergarten placement in specific schools for children whose family income is at or below two hundred fifty percent of the federal poverty level); and

(2) adding language prioritizing children whose family income is at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) for participation in the Preschool Open Doors program.

DHS appreciates the amendments that clarified the priority for those children participating in the Department's Preschool Open Doors (POD) program whose families are at or below 250 percent of the FPL. DHS suggests amendments to HB 498 HD1 SD1 similar to our proposed amendments to HB 499 HD1 SD1

DHS respectfully requests that the legislature provide the definitions of "at-risk children" and "underserved children" directly in section 346-181, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), rather than referring to definitions contained in section 302L-1, and change page 23 lines 8 through 11, 346-181(b)(2), HRS, as follows:

(2) Underserved or at-risk children[-], **as defined by rules adopted by the department; provided that priority shall be given to children whose family income is at or below two hundred fifty per cent of the federal poverty level.**

For the committee's reference, DHS has established priority for "underserved" and "at-risk" children that differs from the public Prekindergarten program definition under section 302L-1, HRS. The public Prekindergarten program is administered by EOEL. For clarity and to ensure that the Department's Preschool Open Doors program is in compliance with the

established Chapter 17-799, Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR), and under the authority of DHS, the reference to section 302L-1, HRS, should be deleted.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.



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

March 24, 2017

TO: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Lauren Moriguchi, Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: HB 498, HD 1, SD 1 – Relating to Early Learning
Hearing Date: March 29, 2017
Time: 1:40 p.m.
Location: Conference Room 211

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, HD 1, SD 1 with recommendations for revisions.

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.

In order to make it clear that EOEL programs are separate and distinct from the Department of Human Services Child Care Program, Pre School Open Doors, EOEL respectfully offers the following suggestions for revisions:

- 1) Page 1, line 13 add, "Notwithstanding any other law to contrary prior to the definition of early learning."

- 2) Page 2, line 1 add, "Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary prior to the definition of early learning system."
- 3) Page 23, lines 8-9 remove, "as defined in section 302-L-1."

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)

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TO: Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

SUBJECT: HB 498, HD1, SD 1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING
Hearing Date: March 29, 2017
Time: 1:40 p.m.
Location: Conference Room 211

Purpose of Bill: Broadens the scope of the early learning program to include early childhood development. Expands the function of the Early Learning Board beyond an advisory capacity and amends the composition and powers of some board members. Allows the Early Learning 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, HD 1, SD 1** – 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.

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz,, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 498, HD 1, SD 1, Relating to Early Learning --
Hearing March 29, 2017, 1:40 PM, Conference Room 211

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz 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, HD1, SD 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 ELAB supports this bill and the recommendations offered by the Executive Office on Early Learning.

Thank you 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



LATE

KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Time: 1:40 p.m.

Date: March 29, 2017

Where: State Capitol Room 211

TESTIMONY

By Ka'ano'i Walk

Kamehameha Schools

To: Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee

RE: **HB 498, HD1, SD1, Relating to Early Learning**

E ka Luna Ho'omalua Tokuda, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalua Dela Cruz, a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike o nā Loa'a a me nā Ho'olilo o ka 'Aha Kenekoa, 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, SD1**, 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, especially Native Hawaiians, prior to entering kindergarten.

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

March 27, 2017

To: Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

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

Re: **HB 498 HD 1 SD 1– Relating to Early Learning**
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 211, March 29, 2017, 1:40 PM

On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), we are writing to Support HB 498 HD 1 SD 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 SD 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 SD 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 reduce 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 SD 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.

For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that the committee pass this bill.

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>.