

March 19, 2018

To: Senator Michelle Kidnap, Chair  
Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair  
Committee on Education

From: Corinne Suwa Kalani  
Kurtistown, Hawaii Island

Subject: **Measure:** H.B. No.2170 – Relating to Early Education  
**Hearing Date:** March 19, 2018  
**Time:** 3:15 pm  
**Location:** Room 229

**Purpose of Bill:** Appropriates funds to the Executive Office on Early Learning for an online platform to facilitate professional learning for Executive Office on Early Learning public pre-kindergarten program educators.

As a Department of Education resource teacher residing on the big island of Hawaii, I strongly support H.B. No. 2170.

Part of the Executive Office on Early Learning's work is to increase access to high quality early learning for children throughout the state. An integral part of high quality education is having qualified teachers knowledgeable in child development and best practices.

Having an online platform to facilitate professional learning for our public pre-kindergarten program educators is a necessity since many of our teachers live and work in rural areas across the state. Many of our teachers who reside on Hawaii island have to drive over 5 hours roundtrip for our professional development. An online platform would enable us to offer professional development more frequently and allow easy access to our teachers.

More importantly, the online platform would allow an avenue for pre-kindergarten teachers to offer support to one another. Many teachers serve in remote parts of the neighbor islands to allow access to high quality early education to families residing in the area. Senator Kahele...EOEL serves families in your hometown of Miloli'i. The nearest public pre-kindergarten schools are in Naalehu and Hookena that require a 45 minute drive one way for the teachers to meet and plan together. An online platform would create opportunities for pairs and groups of teachers to learn, plan, share and implement practices that benefit our young children.

I have been a participant in a similar system of online learning through the University of Hawaii at Manoa Master's program in Curriculum Studies. It is only through the use of an online platform, I am able to work full-time to support my family and have accessibility to courses to support my professional growth. Despite living on the neighbor island, I receive the full

attention of my professor as well as the support of my classmates. I would like the teachers that I service to have the same equitable access to the needed professional development and collaboration with their peers and coaches that are key to implementing a high-quality pre-Kindergarten program. Our keiki deserve no less.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify on this bill.

Warmest regards,  
Corinne Suwa Kalani