



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

March 16, 2017

TO: Representative Justin Woodson, Chair
Representative Sharon Har, Vice Chair
House Committee on Education

FROM: Lauren Moriguchi, Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: SB 1189, SD 2 – RELATING TO THE PRESCHOOL OPEN DOORS PROGRAM

Hearing Date: March 17, 2017

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: Conference Room 309

Purpose of Bill: Repeals the priority given by the preschool open doors program to children who are not eligible to attend public school kindergarten in the calendar year in which they turn five years of age because their birth date occurs after the kindergarten eligibility date.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) **supports** SB 1189, SD 1.

The highest cost of raising a child is the cost of child care. In Hawaii, married parents with 2 children who live at the poverty line pay 107% of their income for child care. The cost of care for 2 children is nearly 2.5 times higher than the annual cost of college tuition at a four-year college. The Preschool Open Doors program has been instrumental in supporting families who are in need of child care.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



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

March 17, 2017

TO: The Honorable Representative Justin Woodson, Chair
House Committee on Education

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 1189 SD2 – RELATING TO THE PRESCHOOL OPEN DOORS PROGRAM**

Hearing: Friday, March 17, 2017, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 309, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent, in part, of this measure provided that passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities in the Executive Budget or existing operations, and offers comments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of SB 1189 SD2 is to clarify the definition of “underserved” or “at-risk” children as it relates to the priority given by the Preschool Open Doors (POD) program; provides that priority among under underserved or at-risk children shall be given to children whose family income is at or below 250 per cent of the federal poverty level.

The Senate Committee on Ways and Means (WAM) amended the measure by

- (1) Requiring that priority among underserved or at-risk children be given to children whose family income is at or below two hundred fifty per cent of the federal poverty level; and
- (2) Changing the effective date from upon approval to July 1, 2018.

WAM further expressed that that intent of the amendment (1) was to clarify,

"priority among underserved or at-risk children serve as a compromise between the amendments suggested by the Department of Human Services and the Executive Office on Early Learning."

Act 169, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2013, established the POD program as the statewide school readiness program. The POD program assists low and moderate income families who are least able to afford preschool. POD child care subsidies help families with assistance to pay for the cost of attending licensed group child care centers and group child care homes (i.e. preschools). Children benefit with the opportunity to attend preschool for up to one year to improve kindergarten readiness.

DHS appreciates the amendments by WAM and the July 1, 2018 effective date to give DHS sufficient time to make administrative and operational changes that may result if the measure passes.

However, DHS requests additional clarification as continued reference in (b) (2) to definitions of "at-risk children" and "underserved children" as defined by section 302L-1, Hawaii Revised Statute (HRS), creates an apparent conflict with (b) (1) that prioritizes children who are not eligible to attend public school kindergarten, as section 302L-1 includes in the definition of "at-risk children" children "who are eligible for special education services." If a child is eligible for special education services, the child would receive those services through the DOE pre-kindergarten classroom or special education classroom as provided by Part B, of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); and DOE does not charge families for public pre-kindergarten or special education services so families would not require subsidies.

DHS respectfully suggests, for further clarity, that the legislature provide the definitions of "at-risk children" and "underserved children" directly in section 346-181, HRS, rather than referring to definitions contained in section 302L-1, or change lines 10 through 13 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 §17-799-2, Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR), provides POD with the definition of "special populations referral" that includes a child that:

- (1) Has a physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional health condition that is outside of the normal range;

- (2) Meets the state department of health criteria for environmental risk as defined in HRS §321-351;
- (3) Resides in a Limited English Proficiency household; or
- (4) Is homeless.

Additionally, income eligibility requirements for the POD program are described in Chapter 799, Preschool Open Doors Program, §17-799, et seq., HAR.

If the Legislature also intends to allow four-year olds from families with a higher income limit, at or below 300 percent of the FPL, to be eligible for the POD program, DHS respectfully suggests that the amendment be reflected in the POD statute, section 346-181

(a), HRS, as follows:

- (a) There is established within the department a school readiness program to be known as the preschool open doors program within the department's child care assistance program. The program shall:
 - (1) Provide access to school readiness services that address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional development;
 - (2) Require each provider to conduct school readiness assessments;
 - (3) Give priority to children from low- and moderate-income families; ~~and~~
 - (4) Prepare children for school through either of the State's two official languages~~[-]~~; and
 - (5) Require that the family income is at or below three hundred per cent of the federal poverty level to receive services.**

Waiting lists for POD subsidies may be a potential impact with expanding those eligible based upon an increased FPL.

Regarding current program operations, POD is accepting applications until March 31, 2017 for services in the 2017-2018 POD year. If SB 1189 SD2 were to pass as drafted with the Legislature's expectation of implementation effective FY 2018, given the current program demands and compliance efforts for continued receipt of the federal Child Care Development Block Grant funds, and changes to administrative rules and operations, including

modifications to its IT system, which would be required in response to passage of the bill, DHS agrees with the amended effective date of July 1, 2018.

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



TO: Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Har, and Members of the House Committee on Education
FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO of Parents And Children Together (PACT)
DATE/LOCATION: March 17, 2017; 2:00 p.m., Conference Room 309

RE: TESTIMONY TO PROVIDE COMMENTS FOR SB 1189 SD2 – RELATING TO THE PRESCHOOL OPEN DOORS PROGRAM

We wanted to provide comments to the bill: SB 1189 SD2 – Relating to the Preschool Open Doors Program. We believe that the intent of this bill is to expand the access to the Preschool Open Doors Program to serve more underserved or at-risk children. There are other bills that address the expansion of the age eligibility being heard in this year's legislature. We do express some concern regarding the removal of the priority given to those keiki who are not eligible to attend kindergarten in the calendar in which they turn five years of age. Participation in early learning and development programs for school readiness have immediate and long-term benefits that include higher levels of educational achievement, reduced homelessness, reduced crime, reduced substance abuse, improved health, and overall better social and economic well being. The first 5 years of a child's life lays the foundation for future development. Access to programs at an early age, especially the year prior to kindergarten, will help prepare the child for future success.

There are approximately 8,000 keiki in Hawaii between the ages of 3-5 living in poverty. The majority of these keiki do not have the financial means to support opportunities that Preschool Open Doors would fund.

There are important secondary impacts with Preschool Open Doors. For example, these funds allow parents to have the time to find work and earn wages to support their family. It is a key component to our war on intergenerational poverty.

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 18,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 16 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify **with comments for SB 1189 SD2**, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

House Committee on Education

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Date: March 17, 2017

Where: State Capitol Room 309

TESTIMONY

By Ka'ano'i Walk
Kamehameha Schools

To: Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Har and Members of the Committee

RE: **SB 1189, SD2, Relating to the Preschool Open Doors Program**

E ka Luna Ho'omalū Woodson, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalū Har a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike Ho'ona'auao 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 SB 1189, SD2**, relating to the Preschool Open Doors Program, which clarifies the definition of “at-risk children” as it relates to the priority given by the preschool open doors program to undeserved or at-risk children who are not eligible to attend public school kindergarten in the calendar year in which they turn five years of age because their birth date occurs after the kindergarten eligibility date.

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 our 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.

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‘ohe hana nui ke alu ‘ia. No task is too large when we all work together! Mahalo nui.



March 15, 2017

To: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair
Representative Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair
Committee on Education

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

Re: **SB 1189 SD 2 – Relating to Preschool Open Doors Program**
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 309, March 17, 2017, 2:00 PM

On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), we are writing to provide comments on SB 1189 SD 2– Relating to Preschool Open Doors Program

HCAN strongly supports the intention to expand the Preschool Open Doors program to at-risk and underserved children by expanding the definition. **We respectfully request that the committee amend this bill to expand the scope of children served to include at-risk 3 AND 4 year olds and increase the appropriation for this critical program for families.**

When Preschool Open Doors started in 1990, this state-funded program served 3 & 4 year olds from qualifying low-income families. However, the program was significantly reduced in 2012 and 2013. Although services and funding for the program increased in the last year, the program has not been restored to the needed service levels.

Hawaii ranks second to last out of the most affordable states in the nation. Childcare is generally the second largest expense in family budgets after housing cost, averaging about \$8,040 per year. For children under two years that cost is generally much higher. The average POD subsidy was \$540/month to families with a median annual income of \$33,000 in 2015.

As of February 1, 2016, 2,213 applications were received for the Preschool Open Doors program, which provides subsidies for tuition assistance for families earning up to 142% over poverty line. As of the same date, only 1,156 children were being served. This is an opportunity to improve the chances for Hawaii's children to succeed by increasing the reach of the program.

By expanding the definition of at-risk and underserved, it will provide more low- to moderate-income parents, especially single parents, the opportunity to pursue higher education, training, or work as well as better prepare students to succeed in school. Preschool Open Doors promotes cognitive, social, and emotional development of young children and school readiness in our state, where only 14.5% of children display comprehensive readiness for kindergarten.

For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that the committee vote to pass this bill with 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>.

EDNtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2017 9:39 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: nishiom@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB1189 on Mar 17, 2017 14:00PM*

SB1189

Submitted on: 3/16/2017

Testimony for EDN on Mar 17, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Miya Nishio	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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