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STATE OF HAWAII
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ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY RODERICK K. BECKER
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 967

February 4, 2019
2:55 p.m.
Room 229

RELATING TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

Senate Bill No. 967 authorizes the State Public Charter School Commission (Commission) to establish and fund charter school prekindergarten classrooms and appropriates an undetermined amount in FY 20.

The Department of Budget and Finance notes that the measure does not provide details on the funding level for the classes or how the funding will be determined. Funding for K-12 classes are based on an equivalent per pupil funding amount provided to the Department of Education schools.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

To: Committee Chair Senator Michelle Kidani
Committee Vice Chair Senator Donna Mercado Kim
Committee on Education

Date: February 4 2019; Room 229

RE: **Support for SB 967; Authorizes the State Public Charter School Commission to establish and fund charter school prekindergarten classrooms and makes an appropriation.**

The Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide public-private collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS brings together government and non-governmental organizations to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki. We strongly support HB 996, which would appropriate funds to the state public charter school commission for the 2019-2020 school year to maintain eighteen existing charter school prekindergarten classrooms.

Research finds that Hawai'i's youngest children benefit tremendously from early learning programs. Keiki that attend preschool enjoy both short-term and long-term benefits, including improved academic and school readiness, higher graduation rates, and lower incarceration rates.

Currently, there are eighteen pre-kindergarten classrooms operating in eleven charter schools statewide. These classrooms have the capacity to service 360 4-year-olds. It's important to ensure our youngest keiki continue to have access to the benefits of early learning programs and appropriate \$4 million dollars to sustain these existing pre-kindergarten classrooms.

We urge the committee to pass SB 967 and maintain and continue the current charter school pre-kindergarten classrooms. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.



SB967

RELATING TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

Senate Committee on Education

February 4, 2019

2:55 p.m.

Room 229

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment Committee will recommend that the Board of Trustees **SUPPORT** SB967, which would amend the charter school law to expressly authorize the State Public Charter School Commission to establish and fund charter school prekindergarten classrooms, and appropriate funds to the Commission to support such classrooms in fiscal year 2019-2020. **This measure is necessary to ensure the continuation of a program that benefits young learners, and increases their likelihood of future academic success and positive overall development.**

In any given year, there are about 17,000 four-year-old children in Hawai‘i, approximately half of whom will enter kindergarten without having attended preschool. Not surprisingly, a significant majority of public school kindergarten teachers report that their new students are not ready for school. Encouraging greater preschool attendance may substantially increase our children’s readiness for school, and their chances of success in kindergarten and beyond: research shows that children are more likely to succeed in kindergarten, reach higher levels of educational attainment, and contribute meaningfully to society, among other positive outcomes, when provided with the opportunity for high-quality early childhood education.

In 2014, OHA wrote a letter to the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE), in support of the State’s successful application to the USDOE’s Preschool Development Grants Program. The State’s application proposed to improve kindergarten readiness with an ambitious yet achievable plan, to expand access to high-quality preschool classrooms in high-need communities through a charter school prekindergarten program. Eleven public charter schools, seven of which are Hawaiian culture-based or Hawaiian language immersion schools, currently support prekindergarten classrooms, with charter school directors reporting a significant difference in kindergarten readiness as a result. SB967 will ensure funding for the continuation of the charter school prekindergarten program, and allow preschool-aged children, including Native Hawaiian keiki, in our public charter schools to continue accessing the advantages of early childhood education.

OHA continues to be a strong supporter of Hawai‘i’s public charter schools, many of which provide a culturally-grounded education for Native Hawaiian and other children. 17 of the 37 public charter schools in Hawai‘i are Hawaiian culture-based or Hawaiian

language immersion schools, in which OHA has invested over \$18.6 million between FY 2005-2006 and FY 2016-2017. On October 19, 2017, the OHA Board of Trustees approved an additional \$3 million total to these charter schools for FY 2017-2018 and FY 2018-2019. OHA made this investment because research shows that Hawaiian students exposed to culturally-driven educational strategies have a stronger sense of socio-emotional well-being, deeper engagement with their schools, and a stronger commitment to civic activities in their community, factors which are directly tied to greater academic achievement.

Therefore, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** SB967. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
2759 South King Street
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

February 2, 2019

TO: Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Lauren Moriguchi, Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: Measure: S.B. No. 967 – RELATING TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION.
Hearing Date: February 4, 2019
Time: 2:55 p.m.
Location: Room 229

Bill Description: Authorizes the state public charter school commission to establish and fund charter school prekindergarten classrooms. Makes an appropriation.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support the Intent

Good afternoon. I am Lauren Moriguchi, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL supports the intent of S.B. 967.

We appreciate the Legislature's recognition of the need to increase access to high-quality early learning. We fully support the Commission's request for funding to sustain its 18 pre-K classrooms across the state. EOEL is statutorily responsible for the development of the State's early childhood system that shall a spectrum of high-quality development and learning opportunities for children throughout the state, from prenatal care until the time they enter kindergarten, with priority given to underserved or at-risk children. The charter pre-K classrooms are included in our proposal to increase access to prekindergarten for our keiki – they provide an important option that addresses family choice and provides opportunities in areas that do not have pre-K programs. If the Commission is not able to sustain their currently-operating classrooms, it will be to the detriment of the community.

In its implementation of the 18 pre-K classrooms, the Commission aligns curriculum and assessments to the Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards, and works toward achieving the quality standards of the National Institute for Early Education Research, as EOEL does for the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program. We believe the Commission is committed to working with EOEL toward ensuring a high-quality pre-K program for our keiki.

We defer to the Commission regarding the other merits of the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



JOHN S.S. KIM
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

FOR: SB 967 Relating to the State Public Charter School Commission
DATE: February 4, 2019
TIME: 2:55 P.M.
COMMITTEE: Committee on Education
ROOM: Conference Room 229
FROM: Sione Thompson, Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Kidani and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony to **SUPPORT THE INTENT OF SB 967**, which authorizes the Commission to establish and fund charter school prekindergarten classrooms.

The Commission is grateful for the support of public charter schools and early childhood education that this committee is providing through this measure. At this time, the Commission’s efforts are focused on sustaining the existing 18 pre-kindergarten classrooms currently funded through the Federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG), which sunsets June 30, 2019.

We look forward to continuing to collaborate with this committee, the Executive Office on Early Learning, and the Department of Education in sustaining the current classrooms and considering the expansion of early childhood education programs in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

To: Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Education

From: Robert G. Peters, Chair
Early Learning Board

Subject: **Measure:** S.B. No. 967 – Relating to the State Public Charter School Commission
Hearing Date: Feb. 4, 2019
Time: 2:55 pm
Location: Room 229

Description: Authorizes the state public charter school commission to establish and fund charter school prekindergarten classrooms. Makes an appropriation.

Early Learning Board Position: Support

I am Robert G. Peters, Chair of the Early Learning Board (ELB) which is the governing board for the Executive Office of Early Learning (EOEL). Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony in support HB 967 on behalf of the Early Learning Board.

The ELB supports the HB 967 appropriation request to continue the 18 charter school classrooms developed with funding from the Federal Preschool Development Grant, received by the Charter School Commission in 2015. 2019 marks the completion of the grant and this appropriation would sustain the quality early learning program opportunities for 360 children across our State.

Knowing the impact that quality learning experiences in pre-K have, particularly upon low income and at-risk children and their families, the ELB believes it is incumbent upon our State to continue the excellent work begun with the Federal start-up funds. The Charter School Commission reports gains on many fronts for the pre-K participants: cognitive, social emotional and physical development as well as language, literacy and math. These are the kinds of positive outcomes that pre-K experience offers our keiki and we don't wish to lose them.

As the governing board for the EOEL, we would like to affirm that charter pre-K classrooms are included in plans to increase access to families, particularly in areas lacking such opportunities, to ensure choice options. In addition, EOEL is committed to working with the Charter Commission to provide high-quality pre-K programs for Hawaii's keiki.

The ELB respectfully requests that the Committee move this bill forward. Thank you again for your consideration and the opportunity to offer testimony.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

LATE

Committee: Senate Education

Date: Monday, February 4, 2019

Time: 2:55 pm

Place: Conference Room 229

Testimony by: Dr. Wai‘ale‘ale Sarsona, Managing Director of Kūamahi Community Education

RE: SB 967 Relating to the State of Public Charter School Commission

E ka Luna Ho‘omalū Kidani, ka Hope Luna Ho‘omalū Kim, a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike
Ho‘ona‘auao o ka ‘Aha Kenekoa, aloha kākou!

Kamehameha Schools is in **support** of SB 967 which proposes to authorize the State Public Charter School Commission to establish and fund charter school pre-kindergarten classrooms.

In Hawai‘i, the greatest inequity in education occurs even before a keiki starts kindergarten with a shortage of availability and access to early learning opportunities. Research shows us that more than eighty-five percent of brain development occurs from the time of birth to the age of five. Quality early learning provides a strong foundation for keiki beyond academic benefits and has positive impacts on parents, caregivers, and all of Hawai‘i nei.

These eighteen public charter school prekindergarten classrooms serve a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students and continue to show positive growth in developmental and educational areas. Public prekindergarten provides an important opportunity for all of our keiki to enter kindergarten well prepared for their lifelong educational journey. This measure allows the State Charter Commission to continue to serve 360 four-year-olds across Hawai‘i.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an educational organization striving to restore our people through education and 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! **Please advance this measure.**

LATE

January 30, 2019

To: Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education

From: Laura Nevitt, Policy Director
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **S. B. 967– Relating to the State Public Charter School Commission
Capitol, Room 229, February 4, 2019 2:55 P<**

On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), I am writing in SUPPORT of S.B. 967, which authorizes the state public charter commission to establish and fund charter school prekindergarten classrooms.

We ask that you approve funding to continue the investment in our keiki. This bill would help to stabilize the public preschool programs in Hawaii's charter schools when the loss of current federal funding runs out at the end of this year.

The Charter School Pre-K Programs allow for 18 pre-k classrooms in Hawaii's charter schools, targets low and moderately-low income families in high-need areas, supports instruction of Hawaii's two official languages in early childhood settings and invests in our future as well as theirs.

Charter schools throughout Hawaii remain underfunded, resulting in students studying facilities that do not meet the needs of a high-quality education necessary for future economic success.

Additionally, charter schools provide an opportunity for educators to experiment with new methods and structures, allowing a diverse range of students to learn in the way that works best for them.

These schools remain a part of the public educational system. Despite this, charter schools receive only 57% of the per-student funding of traditional public schools. This results in students being housed in facilities that do not meet the minimum requirements of a modern, high-quality education. Research demonstrates that charter schools perform at similar —if not better—levels regarding return on investment and student performance. These schools form a critical part of the public education system. Hawaii's keiki deserve the opportunity to attend safe schools that are able to support their academic success.

For these reasons, HCAN asks that you pass S.B 967.

HCAN is committed to building a unified voice advocating for Hawaii's children by improving their safety, health, and education.