



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

March 8, 2020

**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:** H.B. No. 2094, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING  
**Hearing Date:** March 9, 2020  
**Time:** 2:45 p.m.  
**Location:** Room 229

**Bill Description:** Establishes an early childhood educator stipend program to be administered by the executive office on early learning to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators in Hawaii. Appropriates funds. Takes effect on 7/1/2050.

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support**

Good afternoon. I am Lauren Moriguchi, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL is in strong support of H.B. 2094, H.D. 1.

We appreciate the Legislature's recognition of the critical need for qualified early childhood educators in Hawaii.

EOEL is statutorily responsible for the development of the State's early childhood system that shall ensure 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.

**An early learning program that is not high-quality is linked to inappropriate referrals to special education, which will increase, rather than save, the State more.**

**An early learning program that is not high-quality is linked to suspensions and expulsions of children, which increase the likelihood of adverse educational and life outcomes.**

However, the rate at which children are expelled from state-funded preschool across the nation is alarming – a rate more than three times that of their peers in kindergarten through grade 12. (We note that there have been no suspensions or expulsions in the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program to date.)

**When young children are placed in programs that are not high-quality, we risk setting them on a negative trajectory – opposite of the positive outcomes that research has shown are associated only with high-quality early learning programs.**

This is why one of our nation’s foremost experts on early learning says, **“Expansion of public pre-k is only a worthwhile public investment if children receive a high-quality education”** (W. Steven Barnett, Ph.D., Senior Co-Director, National Institute for Early Education Research).

**We want to help the Legislature realize its vision to improve our state’s future by creating an effective early childhood system. EOEL is committed to increasing access while building the infrastructure needed to make sure the State’s investment reaps the intended returns.**

**As we’ve worked over the years toward the goal of increasing access to early learning opportunities for our keiki, we realized the gravity of the need to address the severely limited workforce of qualified early childhood educators.**

**One of the things we’ve learned from our Program as well as our collaborative work across private and public partners in the field is that most if not all of us cannot find enough qualified staff to expand quickly.** Even as the EOEL Public Pre-K Program stands now with just over 40 classrooms across the state, we have difficulty recruiting and turnover is high. This can be attributed in part to the fact that over half of the teachers in the EOEL Public Pre-K Program have not completed coursework in early childhood education, and to assumptions about pre-K teaching that are inconsistent with the knowledge and competencies required of teachers in settings for preschool-aged children.

In our work to increase access to high-quality early learning, we have made workforce development one of our highest priorities. **We have been in discussions with legislators, and working with higher education and other stakeholders statewide to find creative ways to increase our early learning workforce.**

One of the most fundamental components of high-quality early learning is a qualified educator. The Institute of Medicine and National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education recognize that “(t)eachers with at least a bachelor’s degree are more likely to aptly approach instruction – they are more sensitive, less punitive, and more engaged.” This is key because “(t) here is general agreement among experts in the field of child development that the quality of classroom interactions between teacher and child contributes substantially to children’s learning and development.” (Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2001).

**It is precisely during the earliest years before brain development is largely complete (before kindergarten), and particularly for those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds (e.g., ALICE families) – the priority population for the EOEL Public Pre-K Program – that our children need qualified teachers. It is critical to promote equity.**

**Unqualified teaching staff do not have the requisite understanding to support the development of young children. Especially when vulnerable children encounter teachers who are unprepared to support their developmental needs, what may result are increased instances of stress-induced behavior problems, inappropriate referrals to special education, and suspensions or expulsions ... all of which may incur high costs to the State.**

We greatly appreciate this vehicle to incentivize the development of a pool of highly qualified early childhood professionals for the state.

**H.B. No. 2094, H.D. 1, offers the following benefits:**

- Is a result of discussions with stakeholders across Hawaii's early childhood field.
- Has the approval of our governing board, the Early Learning Board, which is composed of members across both the public and private sectors who have expertise and experience in various aspects of the early childhood field.
- Would cover 100% of the tuition and fees for each individual.
- Targets individuals already working in the early care and education field in Hawaii, so they are more likely to stay with us.
- Would provide much-needed support for educators who are an undervalued and under-supported workforce, beyond the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program.
- DHS is interested in utilizing the proposed program to see if there is greater utilization for recruitment and retention efforts of the early childhood workforce at DHS-licensed child care centers and promoting quality care. (DHS currently has a scholarship program that provides reimbursement after the early childhood practitioner completes the early childhood/child development college coursework.)
- Could accept private dollars.
- Is based on the strong foundation laid by the stipend program administered by UH and funded through the federal Preschool Development Legacy Grant that ended in 2019.
- Includes resources for student support and counseling, proven necessary through UH Manoa College of Education's experience and which further supports the broader workforce.
- Learning from experience and surveys of students, offers the structure needed to attract a broader audience and result in more qualified early childhood educators.

**We respectfully request that you consider this mechanism for workforce development as key to achieving the Legislature's goal of increasing access to early learning.**

Thank you for your consideration, and for the opportunity to testify on this bill. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

**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:** HB No. 2094, H.D.1, Relating to Early Learning  
**Hearing Date:** Monday, March 9, 2020  
**Time:** 2:45 P. M.  
**Location:** Conference Room 229

**Description:** Establishes an early childhood educator stipend program to be administered by the executive office on early learning to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators in Hawaii. Appropriates funds. Takes effect on 7/1/2050.

**Early Learning Board Position: Support**

I am Robert G. Peters, Chair of the Early Learning Board (ELB). Thank you for this opportunity to offer comments on this bill, HB No. 2094, H.D. 1, on behalf of the Early Learning Board.

Through Act 202, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017, ELB transitioned from an advisory to a governing board for the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) and is charged with formulating statewide policy relating to early learning. We are composed of members from across the early childhood field, in both the public and private sectors.

ELB's mission is to support children's academic and lifelong well-being by directing and supporting the EOEL for an effective, coordinated, high-quality early learning system from prenatal to kindergarten entry. We support efforts that promote the development of this system for our keiki and families.

The ELB has made workforce development one of its highest priorities to increase access to high-quality early learning for our keiki. Currently, private providers tell us they are grappling with a limited workforce of qualified early childhood educators. And, even within the EOEL Public Pre-K Program, now with just over 40 classrooms across the state, recruitment and retention are genuine challenges.

The Early Learning Board seeks to work with the Legislature and the broader community to identify and implement plans to expand the workforce to increase access to Hawaii's keiki and their families. It appreciates this bill's potential to build the preschool workforce by incentivizing many who can contribute to the profession and the achievement of the goals of expansion of preschool opportunities.

**The ELB respectfully requests your consideration of the following benefits of H.B. No. 2094:**

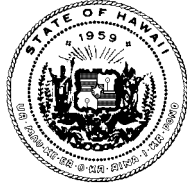
- Would cover 100% of the tuition and fees for each individual.
- Targets individuals already working in the early care and education field in Hawaii, so they are more likely to stay with us.
- Would provide much-needed support for educators who are an undervalued and under-supported workforce, beyond the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program.
- DHS is interested in utilizing the proposed program to see if there is greater utilization for recruitment and retention efforts of the early childhood workforce at DHS-licensed child care

centers and promoting quality care. (DHS currently has a scholarship program that provides reimbursement after the early childhood practitioner completes the early childhood/child development college coursework.)

- Could accept private dollars.
- Is based on the strong foundation laid by the stipend program administered by UH and funded through the federal Preschool Development Legacy Grant that ended in 2019.
- Includes resources for student support and counseling, proven necessary through UH Manoa College of Education's experience and which further supports the broader workforce.
- Is a result of discussions from stakeholders across Hawaii's early childhood field. • Has the approval of the EOEL governing board, the Early Learning Board, which is composed of members across both the public and private sectors who have expertise and experience in various aspects of the early childhood field.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill and for considering HB No. 2094, H.D. 1.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



PANKAJ BHANOT  
DIRECTOR

CATHY BETTS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

March 8, 2020

TO: The Honorable Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 2094 HD1 - RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**

Hearing: March 9, 2020, 2:45 p.m.  
Conference Room 229, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this bill to create the early childhood educator stipend program to support the early childhood workforce and provides comments. However, DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation not supplant budget priorities identified in the executive budget.

**PURPOSE:** This bill proposes to establish the Hawai'i early childhood educator stipend program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators in Hawai'i and appropriates funds.

The House Committee on Lower and Higher Education amended the measure by:

1. Changing the amount appropriated to be an unspecified amount; and
2. Changing the effective date to be July 1, 2050.

This bill's proposed stipend program would be available to the early childhood care and education workforce that includes those employed in the public prekindergarten programs, DHS licensed group child care centers (i.e. preschools and infant and toddler child care centers), including centers that teach solely in the Hawaiian language, and DHS registered family child care homes, as well as family child-interaction learning programs and home-based instruction

programs designed to promote early learning. The proposed stipend program also has work requirements for the stipend recipient post-completion of the certificate, degree, or licensed program at a University of Hawai`i (UH) campus or in a UH program.

DHS further notes that the those working at community-based DHS licensed child care centers or operators of registered family child care homes do not earn the same level of wages as those in the Department of Education and may often have difficulty paying for and completing post-secondary coursework and earning degrees without tuition assistance, such as tuition waivers, stipends, or scholarships. Therefore, this measure supports the broader early care and education workforce by providing increased access to continuing post-secondary education. For the State to achieve a high quality early child care and early childhood learning system, it must invest in developing all aspects of its early childhood workforce. The proposed bill would also support the goals of HB 2543 HD1 to provide all unserved three- and four-year old children with access to child care and early learning by 2030.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony 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

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FOR: HB 2094 HD1 Relating to Early Learning  
DATE: March 9, 2020  
TIME: 2:45 P.M.  
COMMITTEE: Committee on Education  
ROOM: Conference Room 229  
FROM: Yvonne Lau, Interim Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 2094 HD1** which establishes the early childhood educator stipend program to teachers and EAs that would help to offset the costs of textbooks, travel, child care, access to broadband, and other expenses associated with enrolling in higher education classes. The measure clarifies that individuals who receive the stipend are allowed to consider fulfilling their early care and education services at early learning settings in public charter schools.

In 2017, the Commission submitted a proposal to the U.S. DOE to supplement the Preschool Development Grant. Part of the supplemental proposal was to address the workforce issues as high quality pre-K programs were being implemented. In 2018, the Commission was fortunate to be awarded \$1,325,218 in supplemental funding.

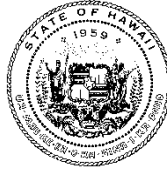
To foster the development of a strong statewide early childhood educator communities of practice, since 2018, the Commission partnered with the University of Hawai‘i and Chaminade University of Honolulu. This partnership was developed to provide teachers and educational assistants (EAs) currently in the workforce – in public and private settings – with access to free college-level coursework in early childhood education. A key strategy to further advance high-quality preschool practices includes building comprehensive, foundational knowledge for EAs, who comprise 50% of the adult to student ratio in our early education classrooms.



In this one-year pilot project, 174 early learning educators were served as over \$25,000 was provided in training stipends for the successful completion of early childhood education coursework and/or the success attainment of training certification.

The Commission believes that this is a step to recognize the importance of and Hawaii's commitment to the development of strong statewide early childhood educator workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
HAWAII TEACHER STANDARDS BOARD  
650 IWILEI ROAD, SUITE 201  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

March 9, 2020

**TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2094 HD1 , RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**

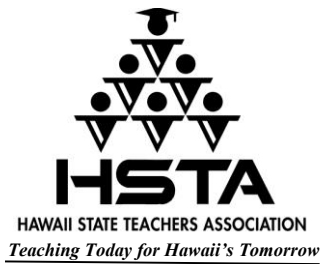
**SUBMITTED BY LYNN HAMMONDS FOR THE HAWAII TEACHER STANDARDS BOARD**

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Senate Committee on Education:

Hawaii Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) **supports** HB 2094 HD1 to establish an early childhood educator stipend program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators in Hawaii.

The HTSB thanks the Senate Committee on Education for hearing this bill to support early learning, Hawaii keiki, families, teachers, and ultimately all residents of our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Corey Rosenlee  
President  
Osa Tui, Jr.  
Vice President  
Logan Okita  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION

RE: HB 2094, HD1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING

MONDAY, MARCH 9, 2020

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Kidani and Committee members

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports HB 2094, HD1**, relating to early learning.

With the state's goal of expanding Early Childhood Education, including our public preschools, we will need more Early Childhood Education licensed teachers for this expansion, especially due to our current teacher shortage crisis. Students and teachers would benefit from the assistance that this bill would provide for them to pursue the path of becoming a fully licensed Early Childhood Education teachers. This bill would appropriate fund for stipends for students, or existing teachers, in other fields, to obtain the degree they need in Early Childhood Education. We also appreciate that in order to receive this tuition support, these individuals will need to agree to remain ECE teachers in our state in hard to fill areas for a certain amount of years after receiving their Early Childhood Education degree. We hope this assistance will also include and invite current Educational Assistants (EAs) already working at our public schools, including our public charter schools, in hard to fill areas, who are pursuing an education degree as well, and work at schools planning to expand public preschool on their campus. Thank you for consideration of our input.

Therefore the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.



## KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

### Senate Committee on Education

Time: 2:45 p.m.  
Date: March 9, 2020  
Where: State Capitol Room 229

#### TESTIMONY

By Ka'ano'i Walk

**RE: HB 2094, HD1, Relating to Early Learning**

E ka Luna Ho'omaluku Kidani, ka Hope Luna Ho'omaluku Kim, a me nā Lālā o kēia Kōmike, aloha! My name is Ka'ano'i Walk, the Senior Policy Analyst for Kamehameha Schools.

As an educational institution, Kamehameha Schools recognizes and stands in support of the collaborative efforts for early childhood education that are being pushed forward by our Governor, Hawai'i's Senate President, the House Speaker and business leaders throughout Hawai'i. Strategies to recruit, retain and support our teachers are critical for creating the infrastructure necessary to build out public preschools for all keiki.

Kamehameha Schools is in **support** of HB 2094, HD1, which establishes an early childhood educator stipend program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators in Hawai'i. This measure also appropriates funds.

With the growing gap in teacher shortages across our state, we commend the creativity and determination of the legislature in assisting to recruit and support the development of future educators in early childhood education. Over the past twenty years, preschool teachers have recorded the greatest decline in the field of early childhood care and education (Preschool Administrators, Preschool Teachers, Childcare Workers). According to a recent Bureau of Labor Statistics report, the number of preschool teachers tumbled from 66% in 1999 to 43% in 2018. This measure will provide early childhood educators, both current and aspiring, access to a certificate, degree, or license in early childhood education in either of Hawai'i's official language pathways and also ensure their services in direct early care and education delivery.

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.**



## **HOUSE BILL 2094, HD1, RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**

MARCH 9, 2020 · SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
· CHAIR SEN. MICHELLE N. KIDANI

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus supports HB 2094, HD1, relating to early learning, which establishes an early childhood educator stipend program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators in Hawai'i.

As noted by an MIT working group on the topic, investments in early childhood education pay dividends for the formal preparation of children as learners and future citizens, while also benefiting taxpayers and boosting economic vitality. Research on the benefits of quality pre-kindergarten programs indicates that for every dollar invested in such opportunities, society saves four to eight dollars on remedial classes, special education, welfare programs, and criminal justice costs. Roughly 85 percent of a child's brain develops from birth to age five, according to modern neuroscience, emphasizing the importance of providing a quality learning environment during these formative years. Preschool brings an approximately \$4.20 return on investment for every dollar spent on quality early childhood services, especially in terms of long-term life skills. At the national level, every dollar spent on early childhood education saves taxpayers up to \$13.00 in future costs, including lowered healthcare costs, reduced rates of educational remediation and prison incarceration, and higher productivity. Access to quality pre-kindergarten programs not only

helps working parents fulfill their child rearing responsibilities, but is essential for building a 21<sup>st</sup> century labor force.

Early childhood education is especially important for at-risk students. According to the High Scopes/Perry Preschool longitudinal study, at-risk children with access to quality early learning programs were 20 percent more likely to graduate from high school, 14 percent more likely to be employed, and 24 percent less likely to have been incarcerated by age 40 than peers without such access. It is imperative that we do all we can to ensure our children are “classroom ready,” meaning that they are prepared to receive basic instruction and effectively socialize with peers upon entering elementary school, placing both our keiki and their teachers on the path to success.

Currently, early childhood education programs operated by the Executive Office on Early Learning are experiencing a chronic teacher shortage, with a majority of EOEL’s classrooms lacking a teacher certified in early childhood education (private early learning programs are experiencing a similar shortage, it should be noted). We believe that this measure is a positive step forward in ensuring that our keiki are given quality instruction during the most formative years of their childhood development.



Hawaii  
**Children's Action Network Speaks!**  
Building a unified voice for Hawaii's children

*Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.*

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

Re: HB2094 HD1- Relating to early learning  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 229  
2:45 PM, 3/9/2020

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and committee members,

**On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network Speaks!, we are writing to support in support HB 2094 HD1-relating to early learning.**

A program, like the one proposed in HB 2094, is needed because the cost of the degree is far greater than the income the teacher would make. According to Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, a preschool teacher's median wage was \$17.94/hour. That is also the identified lowest wage a single person could make to meet their basic needs, as identified by Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism's Self-Sufficiency Standard: Estimates for Hawaii 2018<sup>1</sup>. That is not enough to encourage people to pursue careers in early education and it will not encourage the needed growth of the profession. HB 2094 is a good enticement to bring people into early education.

**For these reasons, HCAN Speaks! respectfully requests the Committee to support this measure.**

Thank you,

Kathleen Algire  
Director, Public Policy and Research

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<sup>1</sup> [http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/reports/self-sufficiency/self-sufficiency\\_2018.pdf](http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/reports/self-sufficiency/self-sufficiency_2018.pdf)



**TO: Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Senate Committee on Education**

**FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO of Parents And Children Together (PACT)**

**DATE/LOCATION: March 9, 2020; 2:45 p.m., Conference Room 229**

**RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2094 HD 1 WITH COMMENTS– RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**

**We ask you to support HB 2094 which seeks to establish an early childhood educator stipend program to be administered by the executive office on early learning to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators in Hawaii.** Given the legislature's and community's current priority of expanding access to high-quality early care and learning programs, we must expand the number of qualified educators in the field. We believe that it is critically important to make early learning an attractive career and to support our early learning workforce so that we can continue to build an interested, dedicated and highly-qualified pipeline of educators who will help us to reach the 64% of keiki under the age of 6 who need access to early learning programs in our State.

We thank the legislature for recognizing the need and respectfully request that any appropriations for this stipend program not supplant any of the budget priorities currently in the executive budget or the critical appropriations that will be set aside for HB 2543, which will increase access to early learning for 3- and 4-year-olds. The teacher stipend program is an important piece of the puzzle and we hope that state policy will work towards putting all the critical pieces together for effective systems change and the long-term benefit of our keiki and community.

As a provider of Head Start and Early Head Start programs on Oahu and Hawaii Island we understand the importance of having teachers who are grounded in educational best practices and specifically early childhood. We can also tell you that the workforce shortage is real. On any given day we have on average 10 early learning positions open and these jobs typically remain open for 20+ days due to the lack of qualified applicants. Data shows that high-quality care and education during the earliest stages of a child's development provides a critical foundation for later educational and life success. Early childhood is a particularly critical time in a child's development and focused efforts need to be placed on building a strong pipeline of teachers who



can deliver age-appropriate curriculum, structures and strategies that address the needs of our youngest learners. The early educator stipend program would encourage those interested in or already in the field to pursue a certificate, degree, or license in early childhood education and fill the critical need for qualified educators across the early learning system in our state.

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 15,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 18 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of HB 2094 HD 1**, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or [rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org](mailto:rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org) if you have any questions.

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

PERSONS TESTIFYING: Kaulanakilohana (members of the consortium of early childhood education higher education faculty in Hawai'i)

DATE: Monday, March 9, 2020

TIME: 2:45 PM

LOCATION: State Capitol Conference Room 229

TITLE OF BILL: HB 2094 HD 1 RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR STIPEND PROGRAM

Honorable Chair, Kidani; Vice Chair, Mercado Kim; and Committee Members, Dela Cruz, Fevella, and Mamo Kanuha,

We, members of Kaulanakilohana, the early childhood education higher education faculty, **strongly support HB 2094 HD1.**

This is such an extraordinary time in our state's history with lawmakers, business and philanthropy exerting collective interest in investments to address the complicated and complex issue of building an early learning in our state. The issues are daunting, but we have a strong foundation to build on. The Executive Office of Early Learning offers the state leadership to spearhead early learning system building efforts across the various agencies and stakeholders and to ensure steady progress towards increasing access and maintaining quality as we expand services and programs for young children. Stakeholders recently finalized a strategic implementation plan based on the Governor's Early Childhood State Plan (2019-2024) and the University has worked diligently to obtain HTSB approval and pilot new license pathways for early educators in light of the need for licensed teachers in state funded PreKs. As well, thanks to the Samuel N. and Mary Castle Foundation, the early childhood higher education programs and our partners just submitted a grant application which aims to improve the alignment and stacking of degrees and certificates and increase access for neighbor island and underserved students in the workforce. All of these efforts lay a foundation where financial support for students is a critical next step that will enable us to build a workforce with the knowledge and competencies necessary to support young children and their families.

**HB2094 is an essential component to expanding early learning programs: DHS licensed child care settings, public PreKs, home visiting programs, and Native Hawaiian serving programs such as the Family Child Interactive Learning Programs and Hawaiian language medium early childhood education programs. We need to invest in the early childhood workforce in order to grow and sustain all these programs.**

Along with facilities, the greatest barrier to expanding new programs is growing and sustaining a knowledgeable and skilled workforce. **HB 2094 HD1** is critical if we hope to grow the practitioners needed to expand programs for young children and their families.

There is broad consensus that **early childhood education is a specialized field of education** which requires "educators who are prepared to create engaging, inclusive, and developmentally grounded learning environments and who can effectively reach and teach diverse learners" (Gardner, Melnick, Meloy & Barajas, 2020, p. 1). Nationwide, minimum standards benchmarks to ensure quality in **state funded PreK** require that teachers

possess a baccalaureate degree with specialized coursework in early childhood education and assistant teachers or educational aides, complete entry level preparation consistent with an industry recognized entry level certificate or CDA (National Institute of Early Education Research, 2018).

Likewise, **federal funding streams for programs serving young children** (Child Care Development Block Grants, Headstart, IDEA Part B and C funding) **increasingly require states to show progress in establishing comprehensive and coherent workforce development systems that bridge across sectors and agencies**. It is no longer adequate to train practitioners to meet minimum care and safety standards. Criteria for continued federal funding asks states to move towards more robust systems that develop a well-prepared workforce consistent with the recommendations of *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unified Foundation* (Institutes of Medicine and National Research Council, 2015).

Problems sustaining a well-prepared workforce negatively impact children from our most vulnerable families, those living in poverty or Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed (ALICE) families who have difficulty affording early childhood education settings and must depend on assistance in order to obtain services (Aloha United Way, 2018). The Institutes of Medicine and National Research Council (2015) warn that the failure to support early educators with the preparation they need and seek hurts society by perpetuating systems where “adults who are under informed, underprepared, or subject to chronic stress themselves may contribute to children’s experiences of adversity and stress and undermine their development and learning” (p. 493).

**Tuition stipends and other forms of support are essential for early childhood educators who are among the lowest paid workers.** A majority of the people currently in the workforce are women, a high percentage are mothers from ethnic groups who are underrepresented in higher education, working long hours in some of the lowest paying jobs in the state. Despite being employed in an early childhood job, they often still depend on some form of government aid (Executive Office of Early Learning, 2019; TEACH, 2010). In Hawai‘i, our workforce, particularly outside of the public PreKs, is composed of a large percentage of Native Hawaiian, Filipino and Pacific Islander women. It is typical for workers in this sector to discover a love for this work after experiencing an early childhood setting through their children. Many want to be employed in their neighborhoods and desire to pursue college, increase their earnings, and sustain a living as an early childhood educator. However, they often come from a student population that differs from the typical K-12 pre-service student and find it difficult to meet criteria for financial assistance or loan forgiveness programs available to other educators. Tuition assistance programs for the early childhood workforce must be designed with the flexibility and support that reflects the diversity of the our student-practitioners (TEACH, 2018).

Many states currently offer targeted financial assistance programs in order to stimulate the expansion of their early learning workforce in order to encourage degree attainment despite the dimly low wages in the field (National Academies of Sciences, 2019). HB 2094 provides the opportunity to implement a tuition support program already piloted and refined between 2018-2019.

**The tuition stipend program designed in HB2094 is structured to reflect lessons learned from an 18 month, \$289,000 workforce development tuition stipend program funded through a US Preschool Development Grant.** The federally funded pilot was the

first coordinated, systemic effort to disseminate public funds to practitioners statewide who were enrolled as early childhood education students across the UH system. A key to the program's success was addressing the diverse entry points and educational aspirations of practitioners in the field and intentionally funding certificates and degrees at all levels, from entry level positions, to lead teachers in classrooms, to the instructional positions essential to growing an infrastructure necessary to support the pre-service and in-service needs of practitioners as we expand programs in the state. The stipend program:

- Provided 87 partial stipends statewide serving 11% of the working students in the UH system ECE preparation programs. 78% of the students resided on neighbor islands or in rural communities where the need is greatest.
- Funded preparation of students pursuing degrees along the full-continuum of positions, from entry level assistants, to lead teachers in classrooms, to instructional leaders.
- The stipends included students being prepared for teaching and leadership positions in Hawaiian language medium and Hawaiian culture based early childhood education programs.
- Included specialized advising and wrap around supports to encourage recruitment, retention and persistence in college courses (90% course completion rate).
- Gathered evaluation data to assess the short term impact of the program across the campuses.

**Tuition support for practitioners who want to pursue a career in early childhood education are just a first step.** Wisconsin, Arizona, Delaware, North Carolina and other states have coupled tuition support with wage supplements or incentives as students achieve benchmarks in their educational goals. States have also launched broader initiatives to address the exceptionally low wages in the field which result in high turnover rates in the lowest paying jobs of the industry such as positions in licensed child care. We respectfully ask lawmakers to consider future measures to:

- address compensation disparities between early educators in public PreKs and those with equivalent credentials who are employed in child care or other settings;
- support work to improve our current ECE workforce preparation system so it reflects current national trends towards more uniform, stacked and aligned certificates and degrees; and,
- fund pre-service and in-service positions necessary to ensure an adequate infrastructure to successfully prepare and support on-going professional learning in the workforce we require to meet the ambitious goals for early childhood program expansion in Hawai'i.

Often, the first thing potential students ask when they are thinking about earning a degree in this field is if we can help them pay for school. The number one reason they cannot pursue an education or will leave the field after completing a degree is that they cannot afford to pursue the calling they love. Early educators are often ALICE. They cannot afford to go school, but want to learn. Please invest in their livelihood and capacity to support children and families. Empower them with the knowledge and tools to build their communities for many years to come. We hope you will also continue to think beyond tuition stipends. Improved compensation must be a part of the conversation in order to retain a well prepared workforce as we expand early childhood programs in the state.

**We strongly support HB 2094 HD1.** The stipend program designed is a critical step towards realizing the Legislature and Governor's aspirations for a more robust early learning system.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**Kaulanakilohana (Early childhood education higher education faculty in Hawai'i)**

**Chaminade University** - Elizabeth Park, PhD and Yan Yan Imamura, MEd  
**Hawai'i Community College** - Janet Smith, MA; and Brenda Watanabe, MEd  
**Honolulu Community College** - Ann Abeshima, EdD; Elizabeth Hartline, MA; Janina Martin, MSW; Eva Moravcik, MEd; Iris Saito, MEd; Caroline Soga, ABD; LaurieAnn Takeno, EdM; and Cyndi Uyehara, MEd

**Kaua'i Community College** - Antonia Fujimoto, MA

**University of Hawai'i at Hilo Ka Haka 'Uka O Ke'elikōlani** - Noelani Iokepa-Guerrero, PhD

**University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu** – Susan Adler, PhD

**University of Hawai'i at Mānoa** – Christopher Au, PhD, Robyn Chun, MEd; Jane Dickson Iijima, MS; Richard Johnson, EdD; Theresa Lock, EdD; Leah Muccio, PhD

**University of Hawai'i Maui College** – Julie Powers, MA; Gemma Medina, MEd

STATE OF HAWAII  
THE THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2020

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
SEN. MICHELLE KIDANI, CHAIR  
SEN. DONNA MERCADO KIM, VICE CHAIR  
SENATOR DONOVAN DELA CRUZ  
SEN. DRU MAMO KANUHA  
SEN. KURT FEVELLA

Charis-Ann Sole  
[Charis.Sole@gmail.com](mailto:Charis.Sole@gmail.com)

Sunday, March 8, 2020

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 2094**

Aloha. My name is Charis-Ann Sole, I am a current graduate student in a Master's program at University of Hawaii at Manoa in Early Childhood Education (ECE). I have worked in the ECE field in various positions and capacities for a little over a decade. I am providing my personal testimony in **support of HB 2094**.

“Transforming the Workforce” (2015), is a pivotal report which “explores the science of child development and its implications for professionals who work with young children” (Katz & Loewenberg, 2019, p. 5).

Transforming the Workforce (2015), Recommendation 2 states that comprehensive pathways should be developed and implemented at the individual, institutional, and policy levels for transitioning a workforce in the ECE setting to a minimum bachelor's degree qualification requirement, with specialized knowledge and competencies, for all lead educators working with children birth through age 8 (p. 6-8).

HB 2094 recognizes this need for a more highly educated ECE workforce and seeks to financially support that workforce in achieving higher educational goals whether in a certificate, degree, or a licensure program. HB 2094 will help support the ECE workforce in the State of Hawaii to be able to move closer to achieving Recommendation 2 in the Transforming the Workforce document.

The document “Putting Degrees Within Reach: Strategies for Financing Early Educator Degrees” (2019) from the New America Foundation offers other things to consider when thinking about scholarship programs, such as:

1. Assistance to early educators earning college degrees **must occur simultaneously with a push for better compensation** for the ECE workforce and
2. **Scholarship programs should provide more than tuition support.** The cost of books, fees, transportation, and childcare for parents can prevent higher education from being financially feasible for early educators.

But, one thing at a time.

It is no secret that the workers in the ECE field are paid notoriously low wages, even for highly educated, talented, and motivated people. Educational barriers, including expenses can be formidable. My own story echoes the need for financial support. I would not have been able to further my studies or enroll in UHM's Master's program without the stipend program funded through the federal preschool development grant (USPDG) that ended in 2019, upon which this bill is similarly structured. My ability to pursue an education in the ECE field is solely due to the monies I received in order to fund my education; through the USPDG and some scholarship awards. They have allowed me to be able to continue my schooling without taking on more debt, which I am thankful for.

My story is not an isolated one. Many people cannot afford to work in the ECE field without taking on second and third jobs. I am one of them. Furthering educational endeavors are often seen as out-of-reach. This bill will relieve some of the financial burden associated with pursuing an education in the early education field.

Due to this, I stand in **support of** and I strongly urge the committee to **pass HB 2094**.

**Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.**

Charis-Ann Sole

References:

Katz, A. & Loewenberg, A. (2019). Putting degrees within reach: Strategies for financing early educator degrees. Washington, DC: New America. Retrieved from [newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/putting-degrees-within-reach/](https://newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/putting-degrees-within-reach/)

National Research Council. (2015). Transforming the workforce for children birth through age 8: A unifying foundation. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17226/19401>.

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

PERSON TESTIFYING: Robyn S. B. Chun

DATE: Monday, March 6, 2020

TIME: 2:45 PM

LOCATION: State Capitol Conference Room 229

TITLE OF BILL: HB 2094 HD 1 RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR STIPEND PROGRAM

Honorable Chair, Kidani; Vice Chair, Mercado Kim; and Committee Members, Dela Cruz, Fevella, and Mamo Kanuha,

**I strongly support HB 2094 HD1**, which proposes an early childhood education tuition stipend program for early childhood educators to be administered by the Executive Office of Early Learning.

This is such an extraordinary time in our state's history with unprecedented interest on the part of lawmakers, business leaders and philanthropy to invest in solutions to address the complicated and complex issue of building an early learning in our state. The issues are thorny and complicated, but we already have a strong foundation. The creation of the Executive Office of Early Learning provided the state with a knowledgeable agency to spearhead early learning system building efforts across the various agencies and stakeholders and to ensure steady progress towards increasing access and maintaining quality as we expand services and programs for young children. We recently completed a strategic plan to guide systemic implementation based on Governor Ige's Early Childhood State Plan (2019). As well, the early childhood higher education programs and multiple stakeholders just submitted a grant application aimed at aligning and stacking early childhood preparation programs and increasing access for neighbor island and underserved students in the workforce. We have also worked hard to obtain approval and pilot new license pathways for early educators. All of these efforts depend on funding so that practitioners can be supported in acquiring the knowledge and competencies necessary to support young children and their families.

**HB2094 is an essential component to expanding early learning programs in the private sector, including DHS licensed child care settings, public sector PreKs, and in other types of settings that are part of our early learning system including home visiting programs and Native Hawaiian serving programs such as the family child interactive learning programs.**

**We will need to invest in the early childhood workforce in order to grow and sustain programs.** Along with facilities, the biggest barrier to expanding new programs is growing and sustaining a knowledgeable and skilled workforce. **HB 2094 HD1** is critical if we hope to grow the practitioners we need to expand Hawai'i's programs for young children and their families.

There is broad consensus that **early childhood education is a specialized field of education** which requires "educators who are prepared to create engaging, inclusive, and developmentally grounded learning environments and who can effectively reach and teach diverse learners" (Gardner, Melnyk, Meloy & Barajas, 2020, p. 1). Nationwide, minimum standards benchmarks



to ensure quality in **state funded PreK** require that teachers to possess a baccalaureate degree with specialized coursework in early childhood education and assistant teachers or aides, complete entry level preparation consistent with an industry recognized entry level certificate or CDA (National Institute of Early Education Research, 2018).

Likewise, the **federal funding streams for programs serving young children** (Child Care Development Block Grants, Headstart, IDEA Part B and C funding) **increasingly recognize the need for states to develop a coherent workforce development system**. Funding criteria increasingly asks for continuous program improvements. It is no longer adequate to provide basic care and safety. Criteria for continued federal funding asks states to move towards more robust systems to develop a well-prepared workforce consistent with the recommendations of *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unified Foundation* (Institutes of Medicine and National Research Council, 2015).

Problems sustaining a well-prepared workforce negatively impact young children from the most vulnerable families, those living in poverty and the working poor. The Institutes of Medicine and National Research Council (2015) warn that failure to support early educators with the preparation they need and seek hurts society by perpetuating systems where “adults who are under informed, underprepared, or subject to chronic stress themselves may contribute to children’s experiences of adversity and stress and undermine their development and learning” (p. 493).

**Tuition stipends and other forms of support are essential because practitioners in the field are among the lowest paid workers and often pursue an education after starting in a job.** A majority of the people currently in the workforce are women, a high percentage are mothers from ethnic groups who are underrepresented in higher education, working long hours in some of the lowest paying jobs in the state. Many are on some form of government aid (Executive Office of Early Learning, 2019; TEACH, 2010). In Hawai‘i, our workforce, particularly outside of the public PreKs, is composed of a large percentage of Native Hawaiian, Filipino and Pacific Island women. It is typical for students in this sector to discover a love for this work after experiencing an early childhood setting with their children. Many desire to pursue higher education, increase their earnings, and sustain a living in the field. Because they often come from a very different student population than the typical K-12 pre-service teacher, tuition assistance must be designed to reflect their needs and support the responsibilities they are balancing.

Many states employ tuition support as an important component to effectively expanding their early learning systems because of the dismally low wages in the field. This is the case whether they are expanding public funded PreK or have adopted broader vision to expand programs through the first five years of a child’s life (National Academies of Sciences, 2019).

**The tuition stipend program designed in HB2094 is structured to reflect lessons learned from an 18 month, \$289,000 workforce development tuition stipend program funded by the US Preschool Development Grant between 2018 and 2019.** The federally funded pilot was the first coordinated, systemic effort within the UH system to invest public funds in early childhood workforce development. A key to the program’s success was addressing the diverse entry points and educational aspirations of practitioners in the field and intentionally funding the development of the workforce at all levels, from entry level positions, to lead teachers in

classrooms, to instructional positions essential to growing an infrastructure to support the pre-service and in-service needs of practitioners staffing programs for young children. The program:

- Provided 87 partial stipends statewide to 11% of the working students in the UH system ECE preparation program. 78% of the student residing on neighbor islands or in rural communities where the need is greatest.
- Funded preparation of students pursuing degrees along the full-continuum of positions, from entry level, to lead teacher, to instructional leaders including students being prepared for teaching and leadership positions in Hawaiian language medium programs for young children.
- Included specialized advising and wrap around supports necessary to recruitment, retention and persistence (90% course completion rate).
- Gathered evaluation data to assess the short term impact of the program across the campuses.

**Tuition support for practitioners who want to pursue a career in early childhood education is a very important first step.** Please consider that other states have already pursued tuition support to grow their workforce and coupled this with wage supplements or other incentives as students achieve benchmarks in their educational goals. States have also launched broader initiatives to address the exceptionally low wages in the field which result in high turnover rates in the lowest paying jobs of the industry such as positions in licensed child care. Please consider other measures as well to:

- address compensation disparities between early educators in public PreKs and child care or other settings who earn equivalent credentials;
- support work to revise our current ECE workforce preparation system so it reflects the current national trends towards more uniform, stacked and aligned certificates and degrees; and,
- fund positions necessary to ensure an adequate infrastructure (pre-service and in-service) to successfully prepare and support the workforce needed to meet the ambitious goals for early childhood program expansion in the state.

The first thing a potential student asks when inquiring about a degree, no matter at what level of education, is if we can help them pay for school. The number one reason they cannot pursue an education or leave the field after completing a degree is they cannot afford to pursue the calling they love. Every time this happens it breaks my heart for the student and all the keiki and 'ohana they could serve for many years to come.

**I strongly support HB 2094 HD1.** The stipend program proposed is a critical step towards realizing the Legislature and Governor's aspirations for a more robust early learning system.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



Robyn S. B. Chun, M.Ed.  
Director, Graduate Early Childhood Education Programs  
College of Education, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

**TO:** Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Representative Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair  
Representative Sean Quinlan, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**FROM:** Mia Sado-Magbual, student, parent, Resident of Maui County

**SUBJECT: Measure:** HB2094 HD1 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING

**Hearing:** March 9, 2020

**Time:** 2:45pm

**Location:** Room 229

**Bill Description:** Establishes an early childhood educator stipend program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators in Hawai'i. Appropriates funds.

**My Position:** SUPPORT

Aloha kakou, my name is Mia Sado-Magbual and I represent myself as a current student and concerned parent.

I appreciate the Legislature's recognition of the need for qualified early childhood educators in Hawai'i.

I am in support of Bill HB2094 Relating to Early Learning to appropriate funds for early childhood educator stipends to qualified early childhood educators. I am testifying in favor of Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators in Hawai'i.

As a parent, I know how important it is to have quality care for our children. As an educator, recognizing the supply of educators is not enough to fulfill the demand for care.

In closing, I am in support of Bill HB2094 to encourage future early childhood educators to initiate and complete the requirements to become a qualified early childhood educator.

Thank you for the opportunity to give testimony for Bill HB2094 HD1.

Mia Sado-Magbual

(808) 357-3633

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/8/2020 6:28:49 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/9/2020 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alana Ducroix-Miyamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 5:40:49 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/9/2020 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dena Akiu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Dena Akiu. I'm a Master's student at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa in the Early Childhood Education program, and I'm a preschool teacher. I support HB2094 and urge you to pass this measure. From my personal experience, the U.S. Preschool Development Grant, which this bill is modeled on, was instrumental in allowing me to continue my education. I view it as essential in growing the workforce and educating people in this field so that we can provide much needed support for young children and families, and build strong communities. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 5:41:38 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/9/2020 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ed Akiu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



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

Date: March 9, 2020 at 2:45pm Conference Room 229

RE: **Support for HB 2094; Relating to Early Learning**

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. 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 partners are working to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki. ECAS supports HB 2094.

A fundamental component of a high-quality early learning program is a qualified workforce and as such, it is critical to support teachers and providers across the field. We know across the entire field, regardless of whether the program is a public or privately-operated program, a shortage of qualified staffing is a significant issue. In addition, providers working in community-based licensed programs often do not make wages comparable to those working in public pre-k facilities and may have greater difficulty accessing, paying for, and completing higher education coursework and advanced degrees.

For the state to achieve a high-quality early learning system, we must develop its early learning workforce. This bill would strengthen the support for the early learning workforce by covering 100% of tuition and fees for each individual in the program, target support for individuals already working in the early learning field, and provide support to providers in both the public and private sector, including registered home-based care providers and those in Family Child Interaction Learning Programs.

We respectfully urge the committee to support HB 2094 and to further incentivize the development of a high-quality early learning workforce. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.