

**To:** Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Ty J. K. Cullen, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee On Finance

**From:** Robert G. Peters, Chair  
Early Learning Board

**Subject:** **Measure:** HB No. 2094, H.D.1, Related to Early Learning  
**Hearing Date:** Friday, February 21, 2020  
**Time:** 11:00 A. M.  
**Location:** Conference Room 308

**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 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. 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 on this bill and for considering H.B. No. 2094, H.D. 1.



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

February 20, 2020

**TO:** Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Finance

**FROM:** Lauren Moriguchi, Director  
Executive Office on Early Learning

**SUBJECT:** **Measure:** H.B. No. 2094, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING  
**Hearing Date:** February 21, 2020  
**Time:** 11:00 a.m.  
**Location:** Room 308

**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 morning. 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.

**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 work to increase access to qualified early learning opportunities for our keiki, we must focus on addressing 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.** We must be sure this workforce is in place if we want new classrooms to have qualified teachers.

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 understand how we can find creative ways to increase our early learning workforce.

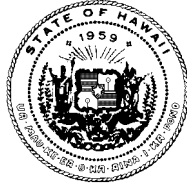
We greatly appreciate this vehicle to incentivize the development of a pool of highly qualified early childhood professionals for the state.

**H.B. No. 2094 offers the following benefits:**

- 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 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.

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

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

February 19, 2020

TO: The Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

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

Hearing: February 21, 2020, 11:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 308, 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 Proposed HD1 to provide all three- and four-year old children with access to child care and learning by 2030.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments 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: February 21, 2020  
TIME: 11:00 A.M.  
COMMITTEE: Committee on Finance  
ROOM: Conference Room 308  
FROM: Yvonne Lau, Interim Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, 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.

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.





## KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

House Committee on Finance

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Date: February 21, 2020

Where: State Capitol Room 308

### TESTIMONY

By Ka'ano'i Walk

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

E ka Luna Ho'omaluku Luke, ka Hope Luna Ho'omaluku Cullen, 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.**

Date: Thursday, February 20, 2020  
To: Chair Luke and members of the Committee on Finance  
RE: **Support for HB2094; Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program**

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS), a statewide public-private collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families, supports passage of HB2094.

A half century of careful research indicates that 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 report that "teachers with at least a bachelor's degree are more sensitive, less punitive, and more engaged." There 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).

In their earliest years, our children need the best teachers in order to set them on a trajectory to later kindergarten readiness and academic achievement. Unfortunately, Hawaii continues to struggle to develop, recruit and retain qualified early childhood educators

HB2094 responds to this critical need by offering the following benefits:

- This measure covers 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.
- Provide much-needed support for educators who are an undervalued and under-supported workforce, beyond the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program.
- Could accept private dollars.
- Builds upon 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 with stakeholders across Hawaii's early childhood field.
- Has the approval of the Early Learning Board, composed of public and private sector representatives with expertise and experience in early learning.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this vital measure.



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

FEBRUARY 21, 2020 · HOUSE FINANCE  
COMMITTEE · CHAIR REP. SYLVIA LUKE

**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.



AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

OFFICERS	DIRECTORS		MAILING ADDRESS
John Bickel, President	Melodie Aduja	Chuck Huxel	P.O. Box 23404 Honolulu Hawai'i 96823
Alan Burdick, Vice President	Juliet Begley	Jan Lubin	
Marsha Schweitzer, Treasurer	Ken Farm	Jenny Nomura	
Doug Pyle, Secretary	Stephanie Fitzpatrick	Dave Nagaji	

February 19, 2020

TO: Chair Luke and Members of Finance Committee

RE: HB 2094 HD1 Relating to Early Learning

Support for hearing on February 21

Americans for Democratic Action is an organization founded in the 1950s by leading supporters of the New Deal and led by Patsy Mink in the 1970s. We are devoted to the promotion of progressive public policies.

We support HB 2094 HD1 as it would establish an early childhood stipend program to address the shortage of qualified childhood educators in Hawaii. We will need more Early Childhood Education licensed teachers in order to expand early childhood education. We like that the 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 the requirement that they remain ECE teachers in our state in hard to fill areas for a certain amount of years after receiving their Early Childhood Education degree.

Thank you for your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,  
John Bickel, President





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: Representative Luke, Chair  
Representative Cullen, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Finance

Re: HB2094 HD1- Relating to early learning  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 308  
11AM, 2/21/2020

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, 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 Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the House Committee on Finance**

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

**DATE/LOCATION: February 21, 2020; 11:00 a.m., Conference Room 308**

**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.

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. 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.



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Committee on Finance  
 Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
 Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

Date: February 21, 2020  
 Time: 11:00 A.M.  
 Place: Conference Room 308

Testimony of 'Aha Pūnana Leo  
 A 501 ( c ) (3) Educational Organization  
 Dedicated for over 35 Years to the Revitalization of the Hawaiian Language

Aloha, Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and members of the Committee on Finance,

My name is Ka'iulani Laehā, CEO of 'Aha Pūnana Leo, Inc.

The 'Aha Pūnana Leo **SUPPORTS HB2094** HD1 that 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.

The 'Aha Pūnana Leo was established in 1983 to revitalize and normalize 'ōlelo Hawai'i, Hawaiian language, through the Pūnana Leo preschool model of full Hawaiian language medium environments. Today there are 12 preschool program sites and 2 infant toddler program sites. The Pūnana Leo are located on Hawai'i, Maui, Moloka'i, O'ahu and Kaua'i.

Our kumu (teachers) are critical to the transmission of 'ōlelo Hawai'i in the Pūnana Leo early learning and care system. This bill encourages individuals especially those already working in the early childhood field to pursue a certificate, degree or license. HB2094 HD1 opens this opportunity for our kumu as Hawaiian medium language stipends becomes available to them.

Mahalo for giving me this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB2094 HD1.

Na Ka'iulani Laehā  
 Chief Executive Officer  
 'Aha Pūnana Leo, Inc.

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

PERSON TESTIFYING: Robyn S. B. Chun

DATE: Tuesday, February 21, 2020

TIME: 11:00 AM

LOCATION: State Capitol Conference Room 308

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

Honorable Chair, Luke; Vice Chair, Cullen; and Committee Members, Eli, Gates, Hashimoto, Holt, Kitagawa, Kobayashi, Matayoshi, Nakamura, Nishimoto, Todd, Wildberger, Yamashita & McDermott,

**I strongly support HB 2094**, 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. The coming together of lawmakers, business leaders and philanthropy interested in addressing the complicated and complex issue of building an early learning system in our state. The issues are thorny and complicated, but we already have a good start on 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.

**HB2094 is an essential component to expanding our early learning programs in a manner that reflects research at the national and state level.**

Along with facilities, the biggest barrier to expanding new programs is growing and sustaining a knowledgeable and skilled workforce. **HB 2094** is critical if we hope to grow the workforce we need to expand Hawai'i's programs for young children and their families. According to the National Institute of Early Education Research (2018), "Only high-quality preschool programs can be expected to produce the large and lasting gains in outcomes such as achievement, educational attainment, personal and social behavior (e.g. reductions in crime), and adult health and economic productivity" (p.13).

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 classrooms 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).

At the same time, early childhood programs have historically been chronically underfunded. The current system, which depends heavily on burdening families with the full cost of financing the programs, leads to inconsistent quality and instability, leaving young children vulnerable. 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 underinformed, 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).

I am concerned with the urgent need to develop the workforce and infrastructure needed to sustain the early learning programs that the public needs. Currently, less than 50% of the personnel in our state funded PreK have the specialized coursework in the field recommended by the IOM/NRC. The issue extends to the industry as a whole, where nationally, nearly 46% of practitioners in the private sector and Head Starts are on some form of public assistance and wages of practitioners are among the lowest in all occupations (Whitebook, McLean & Austin, 2016).

The most effective states invest in developing an infrastructure to build their workforce. States recognize tuition support is 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 building public funded PreK or have adopted broader vision to expand programs that serve the needs of diverse families and communities during the period from pregnancy through the first five years of a child’s life (National Academies of Sciences, 2019). States recognize that a majority of the people attracted to this occupation and currently in the workforce are women, mostly mothers from ethnic groups who are underrepresented in higher education, working long hours in some of the lowest paying jobs. Many are on some form of government aid (Executive Office of Early Learning, 2019; TEACH, 2010). At the same time, a large number of the people who find their way into the work through their children desire to pursue higher education, increase their earnings, and sustain a career in the field.

**HB2094** is structured to reflect lessons learned from a workforce development tuition stipend program that builds upon the success of an 18 month, \$289,000 tuition stipend pilot program funded by the US Preschool Development Grant between 2018 and 2019. The federally funded pilot was the first coordinated, systemic effort to invest public funds in early childhood workforce development. This is key because of the diverse entry points and educational aspirations of practitioners in the field and the need to develop the workforce at all levels, from entry level positions, to lead positions, to instructional supports to develop an infrastructure to support 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.
- 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.

Federal funding increasingly requires that states show evidence of movement towards comprehensive, integrated early learning systems consistent with the recommendations of the Institute of Medicine/National Research Council (2015) report, *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8*.

**Tuition support for practitioners who want to pursue a career in early childhood education is a very important first step** most states have already pursued. In many cases, this has also been coupled with wage supplements or incentives as students achieve benchmarks in their educational goals or broader initiatives to address the exceptionally low wages which leads to exceptionally high turnover in lower paying sectors of the industry. In our state, these jobs would be early childhood education settings outside of the public funded PreKs.

I respectfully ask lawmakers to consider that sustaining an early childhood workforce is an issue that requires a larger concerted effort. We also need to address pay parity, a major issue in this field. People who have earned certificates and degrees and want to work with young children leave for other occupations that will offer a living wage. We also need to address compensation disparities between public school PreK employees and those employed in DHS licensed child care and other settings with equivalent credentials and also need to invest in the work needed to create more coherent educational pathways in order to retain and grow the workforce needed to support program expansion.

For these reasons, I strongly **SUPPORT HB2094**, an important step in preparing an infrastructure that will enable us to expand early learning programs.

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

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 8:46:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

STATE OF HAWAII  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2020

COMMITTEE ON LOWER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

REP. JUSTIN H. WOODSON, Chair

Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair

Rep. Sean Quinlan, Vice Chair

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

Sunday, February 2, 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 a nui loa,

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>.



**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 7:49:44 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Leilani Au	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha!

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of this bill. I am the Director of a child care center and truly understand the need for more early childhood educators who will remain in the field. Low wages and expenses of getting an education can be prohibitive to recruiting and retaining qualified personnel. Our young children and their families deserve the very best.

Thank you

Leilani Au

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 8:01:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

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

## Comments:

Hello, my name is Dena Akiu. I'm a Master's student at University of Hawai'i at Manoa in the Early Childhood Education program. I support HB2094 and urge you to pass this measure. From my personal experience, the US 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. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 8:11:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ranelle Akau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 8:12:20 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 8:14:47 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 8:25:13 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Robert Godinez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 8:55:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kanoe Kanakaole	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha kākou Chairwoman Luke & House Committee on Finance Members,

My name is Patricia Kanoe Kanaka'ole and I support HB2094 HD1, because, it assists educators like myself to accomplish the necessary credentialing required by State law for early childhood professionals. I was fortunate to have received such support in the past through the federal Preschool Development Grant; this assistance helped me with tuition to complete my Indigenous teacher education graduate certificate through Kahuawaiola at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, which has launched me on my current Master's pathway. I am scheduled to receive my degree this May in Indigenous Language and Culture Education. None of this would have been possible without the stipends.

For many of my colleagues, financial support is often the biggest obstacle in pursuing basic credentials, such as a Bachelor's degree. Cost of living and the necessary personal investments teachers make to subsidize classroom supplies eat away at meager paychecks leaving nothing left to save towards finishing nor furthering one's education. I can also attest to the struggles that most quality, early education programs face when having to choose between keeping the lights "on" versus supplementing professional development budgets.

Hawai'i is in dire need of quality, credentialed early educators; please kākou by funding this important bill. We are Kumu of your children and future grandchildren and we have given unselfishly of ourselves to our communities and to the education profession. Mahalo nui.

Sincerely,

Patricia Kanoe Kanaka'ole

Teacher, Concerned Community Member

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 9:12:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:



**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 9:45:46 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Susan Adler	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As Professor of Early Childhood Education at UHWest Oahu, I am in support of this bill that will help my students fund their Bachelors Degree. It is vital funding for these hardworking practitioners statewide.

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 10:41:25 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Caroline Soga	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

I am an early childhood educator in higher education and work with students that are trying to become qualified teachers for our keiki.

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

If the state hopes to provide more access to young children we will need to ensure that we prepare a knowledgeable and skilled workforce. 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). Tuition support for practitioners who want to pursue a career in early childhood education is a very important first step most states have already pursued, to ensure that we are building a workforce of qualified early childhood educators that are able to implement high-quality early childhood education and care for our keiki.

Caroline Soga

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 10:44:47 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jennifer Kagiwada	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**PERSON TESTIFYING:** Jennifer Kagiwada

**DATE:** Tuesday, February 21, 2020

**TIME:** 11:00 AM

**LOCATION:** State Capitol Conference Room 308

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

Honorable Chair, Luke; Vice Chair, Cullen; and Committee Members, Eli, Gates, Hashimoto, Holt, Kitagawa, Kobayashi, Matayoshi, Nakamura, Nishimoto, Todd, Wildberger, Yamashita & McDermott,

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

Teachers are the backbone of Hawaii's public school system. The lack of qualified teachers in many of our classrooms is detrimental to our students. Teacher stipends are necessary to ensure all teachers and prospective teachers have the ability to get the education necessary to educate our keiki.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to SUPPORT HB2094.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Jennifer Kagiwada

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 11:35:28 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kaleimaile A. Robia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 1:38:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Martha Shim	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 1:44:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

## **TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

PERSON TESTIFYING: Brenda Watanabe

DATE: February 20, 2020

TIME: 11:00 AM

LOCATION: State Capitol Conference Room 308

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

Honorable Chair, Luke; Vice Chair, Cullen; and Committee Members, Eli, Gates, Hashimoto, Holt, Kitagawa, Kobayashi, Matayoshi, Nakamura, Nishimoto, Todd, Wildberger, Yamashita & McDermott,

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

As an instructor and co-coordinator for the Early Childhood Education program at Hawaii Community College, we recognize the critical importance to build a workforce of highly qualified early childhood educators to meet the rising demand for quality education and care of our most vulnerable population, our young keiki. Potential candidates seeking to become part of the highly qualified workforce are at times deterred when faced with the cost of college attendance while students who do enroll are more likely to continue their degree program if financial support is available.

For these reasons, I strongly **SUPPORT HB2094**.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Brenda Watanabe, M.Ed  
Early Childhood Education Instructor

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 2:15:33 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ryoko Yamamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 2:25:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kehaulani Shintani	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

KÄ• ko'o.

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 4:35:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sabrina Ongos	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**LATE**

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 6:53:15 PM  
Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

**LATE**

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 10:32:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mary A S Paglinawan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 20, 2020

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2094

I have been an early childhood educator for 14 years now and it wasn't until the 12th year teaching that I decided to obtain a master's degree in early childhood education. I taught Kindergarten and First Grade for the first 8 years of my career and when I began teaching PreK, I felt unqualified to teach this age group. This is why I decided to go back to school.

One of the biggest reasons that held me back from pursuing a graduate degree was the cost. I have 2 children and much of my time, energy, and finances go toward raising them. Thankfully, my academic advisor was able to point me towards getting my college courses financed through grants and scholarships. Because of her diligence in ensuring that my courses were paid for, I am able to go back to school almost fully funded.

Unfortunately, not everyone is or will be as lucky as I am. There are many educators out there who are apprehensive to go back to school because it would cost them too much. I believe that a stipend program like what the House Bill 2094 is proposing will help teachers like me achieve their goals of going back to school. Not only will this impact fellow educators, but it will also impact their students because their teachers will be considered highly qualified upon completing their program.

I am writing to testify how very important it is to have a stipend program to help educators reach their goal of acquiring either an early childhood education certificate, degree, or license. Financially supporting early childhood educators by providing a tuition stipend will help address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB2094.

Respectfully yours,  
Mary Annyvette Paglinawan  
MEd Early Childhood Education  
University of Hawaii at Manoa



**LATE**

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 10:55:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mei Arakaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It's no secret that early childhood educators are some of the most poorly compensated professionals there are. The amount of work they take home, the hours they spend building a curriculum or setting up their classroom just right, buying supplies for the children in their class with their own money -- they do so much out of love for the work and their children. They do so much every day with every child, building a solid foundation for what can lead to a lifetime of a love of learning.

I'd like to think that their work is worth being valued and praised and deeply appreciated. Children who receive quality care in their early years can carry that positive impact with them for the rest of their lives, not just in terms of academics, but who they become as people.

However, that can only happen if children can receive quality care. They cannot receive quality care if they do not have quality teachers and caregivers who are knowledgeable about developmentally appropriate practice and other specifics of what young children need.

Providing a stipend for early educators will not only serve as an incentive for educators wanting to pursue their passion in ECE, but may find it difficult to make ends meet for their family should they enroll in classes; it will also be immensely beneficial to teachers that would like to learn more about how they can better serve the children of their community.

I firmly believe that it is the teachers that are trying their hardest to be better teachers for the sake of their students that we should be supporting in any way that we can, because for all that early educators may be teased for "just babysitting," they do so much more.

"Good beginnings never end" is a saying that I hold dear to my heart when it comes to early education because of how true it is. If teachers have the means and are able to give children good, meaningful education, the goodness and meaningfulness will stay with that child for years and years to come.

**LATE**

**HB-2094-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2020 10:40:59 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kali Linder	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, I strongly support HB 2094 and believe that the passing of this bill will greatly support the much needed funding of early childhood education. I am a kindergarten teacher working in Honolulu and a graduate of the Early Childhood Education program at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. It is critical that we support the career pathways of those who want to pursue a career in early education so that Hawai'i's keiki can receive quality, early childhood education experiences. I strongly support HB 2094 and mahalo.