

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 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

DATE: January 31, 2019

TIME: 2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309

FROM: Sione Thompson, Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

The Hawai‘i State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996**.

**HB 996** will allow the Hawai‘i State Public Charter School Commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2019-2020.

The State Public Charter School Commission will ensure that quality measures will continue to align with those of Hawai‘i’s public pre-K programs using national quality standards.

Upon the inception of this grant beginning in 2015, the State Public Charter School Commission has been working closely with the legislature by providing annual informational briefings and public testimony. The intent of the Preschool Development Grant was to provide federal start-up funds to begin new pre-K programs. Thereafter, states were to sustain the programs following the completion of the grant.

The Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission has been seeking alternate funding through the Keiki Funders group, other philanthropic organizations and other funding sources. All agree though, that base funding should be provided by the State.

Currently, the Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission is in fourth and final year of the four-year grant, implementing 18 prekindergarten programs in 11 charter schools statewide.

Providing the funding to sustain this high quality prekindergarten program means that potentially 360 children and families across the State of Hawai'i will benefit from high quality preschool experiences. This nearly doubles the number of children enrolled in public pre-K programs in Hawaii.

Another important aspect of **HB 996** is its expanded support to working families by expanding the eligibility criteria. This change will increase access to high quality prekindergarten programs for children and families, particularly those who may be living in remote, rural areas of our state.

Testimony from a mother of a student currently attending the Kualapu'u Public Charter School prekindergarten program urges support for this program: "Please keep our pre-K program. It's an excellent program, excellent teacher and an administrator who is behind it 100% and with a community that needs it. We are a small community, and we don't have many options. So, please, please, please continue to fund the pre-K. We are very invested."

Another mom from our prekindergarten program at Na Wai Ola Public charter in Mountain View, Hawai'i shared: "It's amazing! She's gone from shy, timid and very enclosed to just free-spirited. She talks to people and makes friends. For me personally as a mom, to see your child bloom... she used to keep to herself. Now, she's goes out and she wants to learn. She wants to go to school. To see her just share what she learned throughout the school day and bring it home and say, 'I want to show you (be)cause this is what I learned in class.' The whole family is a part of her learning. It's something special."

For these reasons, the Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission respectfully requests that the committee pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

To: Committee Chair Representative Justin H. Woodson  
Committee Vice Chair Representative Mark J. Hashem  
Committee Vice Chair Amy A. Perruso  
Committee on Lower and Higher Education

Date: January 31, 2019; Room 309

RE: **Support for HB 996; Making an appropriation to the state public charter school commission to maintain and continue the current federally funded charter school pre-k classrooms.**

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

Research finds that Hawai'i's youngest children benefit tremendously from early learning programs. Keiki that attend preschool enjoy both short-term and long-term benefits, including improved academic and school readiness, higher graduation rates, and lower incarceration rates. Currently, there are eighteen pre-kindergarten classrooms operating in eleven charter schools statewide, including Native Hawaiian Immersion classrooms.

These classrooms can service 920 children over the span of 4 years. It's important to ensure our youngest keiki continue to have access to the benefits of early learning programs by sustaining these existing pre-kindergarten classrooms. We urge the committee to pass HB 996 and maintain and continue the current charter school pre-kindergarten classrooms. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.



## Hawaii Chapter

January 30, 2019

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on HB 996, making appropriation to the State Public Charter School Commission to maintain and continue funding the Charter School Prekindergarten Classrooms.

On behalf of the Hawaii Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, I am writing in support of HB 996. Pediatricians know how important early childhood education is for raising productive members of society. In the last four years, Hawaii and the federal government have worked together to develop a network of high quality public charter school preschool classrooms. These classrooms provide vital community resources for children who may not be able to attend private preschool programs. They serve as models for innovation within our community. However, these high-quality programs are in jeopardy of closing without ongoing funding. We believe that the State of Hawaii has benefited from these classrooms serving our keiki and we ask that these classrooms be funded to continue their mission in service of our state.

The Hawaii Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of over 300 pediatricians and pediatric specialists. Our mission is to attain optimal physical, mental and social health and well-being for infants, children, adolescents and young adults. We humbly request that your committee vote to advance HB 996.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mae S. I. Kyono".

Mae Kyono, MD FAAP  
American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawaii Chapter  
President

### AAP - Hawaii Chapter

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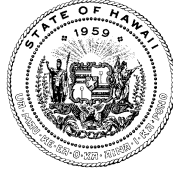
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**STATE OF HAWAII  
Kualapu'u School  
Public Conversion Charter**

P O Box 260  
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Phone: (808) 567-6900, Fax: (808) 567-6906

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FOR: HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE  
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN  
AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED  
CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

DATE: January 31, 2019

TIME: 2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309

FROM: Lydia Trinidad, Principal 

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the  
Committee:

**Kualapuu Public Conversion Charter School on the island of Molokai appreciates  
the opportunity to submit this testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996.**

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

Research shows that children who attend preschool are better prepared for school and in life. Long-term studies suggest that preschool positively impacts important societal outcomes such as high school graduation, completed years of education, earnings, and reduced crime and teen pregnancy.

Sustaining high quality prekindergarten programs means that our school will continue to support 19 children to have FREE access to an early education, especially in a rural area that has high poverty. Many of our children need an early start to learning to give them an early start and edge out of poverty.

Thank you for your support and consideration of HB 996.



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FOR: HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

DATE: January 31, 2019

TIME: 2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309

FROM: Dara Makaiwi, Educational Assistant  
Kualapu'u School

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

Kualapu'u School appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996**.

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

Aloha, I am submitting my testimony as an educator at Kualapu'u School and as a past parent of the prekindergarten program my daughter attended at Na Wai Ola PCS. When the Preschool Development Grant was granted to schools in Hawaii four years ago, I was working as a Registrar at Na Wai Ola PCS on the Big Island; it was during this time that I learned how much families desire to have their children attend a prekindergarten program. I was one of those parents. Also, as the Registrar I noticed that the 20 spots were filled quickly, and a waitlist had been started after enrollment had just begun. As an educator and a parent, I believe that early childhood education is important because this is where the foundation of our children's education is started; in this specific prekindergarten program our children are offered a free high-quality education from the age of 4, learning through play and interactions with peers, and family bonding through family engagement activities. I am sure that the enrollment and assessment data collected, over the past four years of this grant, will show the need for this program in our communities. I strongly believe that it is in the best interest of our communities that this prekindergarten program continues as it will benefit the future of our keiki by better preparing them for school and in life! Mahalo for taking the time to hear my testimony and for considering the importance of continuing programs like this in our communities.





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FOR: HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

DATE: January 31, 2019

TIME: 2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309

FROM: Keiko Williams, Educational Assistant  
Kamaile Academy Public Charter School

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

Kamaile Academy Public Charter School, appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996.**

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

I feel truly honored to work with Pre-K program at Kamaile Academy PCS as an educational assistant for school year 2017-2018, 2018-2019. I have been living in this community ( Makaha) since 2014 and

working in education as long. I have known there were other pre-kindergartens in our community but I truly believe our pre-kindergarten classes are special and very community oriented. Our school is the only Pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade public charter school here and we build a strong sense of community by sending and accepting our keiki through their whole school life right here at home. We provide quality education to our keiki and as well as we have family engagement programs to enrich our relationship with our parents and other community members.

Lots of Pre-K students have a hard time coming to school at the beginning, unfamiliar place and faces and away from their family are kind of scary experiences for them. But coming to Kamaile as Pre-K to kindergarten and beyond, they know their school, their teachers and friends and they can focus and learn to succeed. I have one of my parents from previous year who decided to keep her daughter in Kamaile after considering letting her go to their district. She had such a hard time at drop off and took a long time to get used to us. Now she loves school and her family feels better that we are here continue to care for her even she is in kindergarten. And I love that as staff and family, we can sense our commitment to our students together.

I sincerely hope we will be able to continue to provide quality education through our Pre-K classes at Kamaile in coming years. I have my grandson who is 3 and half years old and ready to start his first ever school this fall. He loves to join our class while my daughter volunteers to help in class. She can't afford to put him in daycare just like so many parents and family in this community. We have parents who are looking forward to sending their younger children to our Pre-K and it is very crucial to provide quality and free education to our keiki in this community.

Sincerely,

Keiko Williams, Pre-K Educational Assistant at Kamaile Academy PCS





Na Wai Ola Public Charter School

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FOR: HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC  
CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE  
THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL  
PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

DATE: January 31, 2019

TIME: 2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309

FROM: Caitlin Kryss, Pre-K Educational Assistant, Na Wai Ola PCS

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

Na Wai Ola PCS appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996.**

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

I have had the pleasure to work at Na Wai Ola's pre-k program, and have been extremely impressed by the quality of education provided to young children and their families at our school. The interest from families to continue our pre-k program is overwhelming, and families are very grateful for the education provided to their 4- and 5-year olds. I am a parent of two young children and can personally attest to the difficulty of finding high quality preschool that is affordable in our area of Mountain View, Hawaii.

Na Wai Ola PCS provides unique culturally based, high quality education, rich in social emotional, cognitive and physical development support. As a title 1 school, we serve a

community largely of lower socioeconomic status. According to the US Census Bureau's 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, over 30% of Mountain View residents live below the federal poverty level. Lower socioeconomic status has great impact on achievement gaps, and without educational support that starts early, in preschool, these achievement gaps will widen. Mountain View is too far from any Head Start preschool program, and without Na Wai Ola's pre-k program, many of our families will be deprived of the freedom to choose a high quality pre-k charter school education that does not financially impact them. Finding child care is costly, and many of our families can't afford to do so. Free, high quality pre-k education has the potential to positively support our community as we try to lift ourselves out of poverty and contribute to society. These families deserve to be able to choose charter school education. Choice is a freedom, and it attracts invested, dedicated parents who care about giving their children the best educational opportunities, and educational success has been linked to having a strong base in early educational experiences.

Please approve HB 996 and allow our Na Wai Ola PCS pre-k program to continue to positively support the educational needs and experiences of our Mountain View community.

Mahalo,

Caitlin Kryss

Na Wai Ola Public Charter School

Home address:           P.O. Box 711687  
                                  Mountain View, HI. 96771  
                                  (808) 968-0874



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FOR: HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

DATE: January 31, 2019

TIME: 2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309

FROM: KĀHELE NAHALE-A, Director  
LAUPĀHOEHOE COMMUNITY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

LAUPĀHOEHOE COMMUNITY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996.**

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

Continued funding assistance and support from the State Public Charter School Commission for our GenEd preschool is critical to our school providing a safe, nurturing early learning environment for our community. There are no other formal PreK programs within a 40 mile radius of our school and community. We are the only option for little ones in our area to prepare and be ready for kindergarten. Additionally, the very diverse socio-economic status of our target population either excludes families from low-income opportunities for preschool assistance or makes it impossible for families to pay the “market rate” for preschool tuition that would be necessary to financially sustain a program with high-quality teaching staff. We have worked hard over the last 4 years to build a great PreK program here at Laupāhoehoe. It would be so disheartening for us to have to turn families away for next school year. Please appropriate adequate funds that will allow us to continue what we have built and welcome 20 young minds through our doors next school year. Mahalo.



**Ho'okāko'o**  
Corporation

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair  
Rep. Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair

**Testimony In Support of H.B. 996**

Making An Appropriation To The State Public Charter School Commission  
To Maintain And Continue The Current Federally Funded  
Charter School Prekindergarten Classrooms  
Thursday, January 31, 2019, 2:15 PM  
Conference Room 309, Hawai'i State Capitol

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso and Members of the Committee:

Ho'okako'o Corporation is in **STRONG SUPPORT of H.B. 996**, which appropriates moneys for school year 2019-2020 to the State Public Charter School Commission to maintain and continue the current federally funded eighteen existing charter school prekindergarten classrooms that were provided for by the federal Preschool Development Grant of 2015.

Two of our charter schools, Kualapu'u School on Moloka'i and Kamaile Academy in Wai'anae, are participating in the Preschool Development Grant program. Early reports indicate that their prekindergarten students demonstrate increased readiness for Kindergarten and stronger academic performance than students who did not attend prekindergarten. Prekindergarten parents are also demonstrating increased involvement in the education of their children.

Our children, all of whom are from low income families, deserve every opportunity that helps them succeed in school and in life.

Ho'okako'o strongly supports H.B. 996 and the free access to early education for Hawai'i's children. We respectfully request the House Committee on Lower and Higher Education's support of H.B. 996.

Thank you,

David Y. Gibson, Executive Director  
Ho'okāko'o Corporation  
(808) 983-3835



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FOR: HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

DATE: January 31, 2019

TIME: 2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309

FROM: Debbralee Hi'ilani Shibata, Kumu  
Ke Kula 'o S.M. Kamakau

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996.**

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

The opportunity to support early education for all will have a positive effect on our communities statewide because it will allow children ages 3-5 opportunities to develop their social, emotional, and academic skills that would not be focused on at home or at a family member's house. Studies show that a child in this early stage of growth when exposed to numerous forms of education and experiences, increases their opportunities to success later in life. Brain studies also show that connections in the brain are forming at a rapid rate and early childhood education increases the amount of synapsis growth.

Mahalo for your support in success for our community through supporting early education for all and allowing for the 18 preschools to continue supporting our communities statewide.



**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 8:08:18 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Susan Osborne	Kua O Ka La NCPCS	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha

Kua O Ka La NCPCS is one of the 17 Charter Schools offering preschool. We all now understand how critical Preschool is in ensuring the long term success of the next generation. Kua O Ka La serves a highly 'at-risk' population and preschool is especially essential for our population. Our Preschool facility is outstanding and our program is well developed and excellent. It serves the population of Puna which is still recovering from the trauma of the Kilauea eruption. We need this stability of our program offering of preschool in Nanawale. The large upfront costs to establish the program have been supported by the Federal grant secured by the Commission and now we just need continuation funds. The Governor has clearly stated his support for preschools. Please support not only the expansion of preschools but ensuring that the existing preschools are funded.

Mahalo for this consideration.

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 9:39:36 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michael Ching, MD, MPH	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Representative Woodson:

I am writing in support of HB996. As a parent and a pediatrician, I have seen the benefits of quality early childhood education first hand. Hawaii and the federal government have already invested money in creating quality public charter school classrooms, and it would be a waste to let these classes disappear. I hope you and your committee members will vote to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Michael Ching, MD, MPH, FAAP

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 4:48:09 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Glenda Johnson-Fontes	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Pre-K helped my 5 year old daughter learn her abc's and numbers and the things that she has to know for kindergarten. She has learned her shapes and colors and has made many friends. I believe it has encouraged her to love learning and it has been a great opportunity for her. Other children will benefit from Pre-K!

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 7:29:47 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Shelley Steele	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My daughter attends the Wai'ala'e Early Learning Program, funded by the preschool grant. If funding is not provided to continue this fantastic preschool, Waialae's preschool will close at the end of this school year. We have been so happy with the education and care our daughter has received at Waialae and have been so relieved we were able to send our child to preschool despite financial hardships. We have benefitted from this wonderful program in so many ways. Our daughter is now ready for kindergarten, which she would not have been without this program, and I truly believe this experience will have a lifelong positive impact on her ability to learn and has set her up for future success by creating an early love of learning due to such positive experiences in this amazing program.

Please preserve this preschool program for future keiki for years to come. Thank you for your consideration of my letter of support to continue funding for this grant to provide quality early education for children that would not otherwise have access to preschool.

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 9:14:55 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
janet anderson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 9:16:07 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
loretta	Kualapuu Public Charter School	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 9:46:47 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Stephany Cecil	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

PreK education is crucial to Hawaii. Charter schools offer a wonderful educational choice to the citizens of Hawaii and need to be supported. There is a serious lack of quality prek options and this program can meet this urgent need. Mahalo!

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 9:47:25 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kawanalaaloha Leialoha Kawelo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha and thank you for allowing me to show my support for the continuation and funding of pre-K classes in all DOE schools. My children are direct beneficiaries of the pre-K programs that were implemented 4 years ago. My oldest child infact was a part of the first classes that were opened. With the change in age requirement for children to enter Kindergarten it was really hard to figure out what I was going to do with my children as they were late born, or born after the 6/30 deadline. Both my fiance and I are employed full time and daycare/preschool is out of our financial means. The pre-K programs were truly a blessing and took so much stress and anxiety out of our lives. I now have my second in a pre-K program and he sincerely loves it. My children are better prepared for the transition to big kids school and Kindergarten thanks to these programs. Please consider the many little ones you will ultimately find are the most appreciative. Aloha! -Lei Kawelo



**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 9:53:23 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Burgandy Singleton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My children have attended charter schools in Hawaii and they have always been the most positive experiences. Please continue to find preschool at charter schools, early development is crucial to our keiki.

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 9:59:02 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lisa Barnard	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Representatives,

Please support HB 996! In my community in Volcano, we have more than half of our Pre - K students below the poverty level. We need to give our keiki a strong start in order to have them ready and successful in school. This is especially true of our children from low-income families. Please consider that helping our children and youth is much more cost-effective and productive than trying to take care of them later when they fail due to any number of disadvantageous circumstances.

Please make this bill a priority for our children and families. We need this support!

Lisa Barnard

Volcano, HI

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 10:08:06 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Tristan Ellithorpe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My kids are in pre-k at volcano School. It is a great program for those of us that live in Volcano area. I believe it has given them a great head start on kindergarten. I think keeping this program should be a priority. Tristan Ellithorpe, thank you.

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 10:13:49 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sheena Shook	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Early childhood education funding specifically earmarked for low-income families is critical. Not only does this expose our children to an educational environment and get them ready for the transition that is the kindergarten classroom, it also enables parents to go back to work or school. This is a factor when we look at supporting socio-economic mobility. There is a connection between a lack of early childhood educational opportunities for low-income families and generational lack of opportunities for upward economic mobility. If any of our legislators are considering a NO vote on this bill, I would strongly encourage you to look at some of the studies done that demonstrate a causal connection between these notions. Hawaii in particular should pay close attention to this because we have one K-12 school district for the entire state and we provide substantial funding to University of Hawaii. More children in school, more young parents could go to college. IF these young parents are not inclined to attend college, then they could join the labor market, which is very tight in Hawaii. We must work to equalize opportunity/access to education and contribution to our communities through work.

This program specifically impacts children in the foster care system. It is shown that the trauma and disruption resulting when children are placed in care, can cause up to two years of developmental delays. Children in foster care automatically qualify for this program and are then able to attend school on the same campus as older siblings. This is important both for addressing any potential developmental delay but also in the sense of belonging and security that comes from keeping children in the foster care system together as much as possible. In homes and on school campuses, keeping children together matters.

I am in full support of HB 996 and I strongly encourage our legislators to continue with their support of education in the State of Hawaii by voting Yes on HB 996.

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 10:16:15 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
caleb houck	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hello. We live in the volcano area and have a son who needs pre k. Unfortunately there are no schools near us for him to go to. The day care schools are full and are located over 10 miles away. Also his older brother goes to volcano school and it would be nice to get him in the same one. I work in the national park as well as my wife so the location of the school is critical for logistics. We would be willing to pay for the pre k if needed. We support the pre k program and hope that you will fund it.

[INSERT YOUR SCHOOL LOGO HERE]

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FOR: HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

DATE: January 31, 2019

TIME: 2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309

FROM: [INSERT NAME HERE], Director  
[INSERT SCHOOL NAME],

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

[INSERT SCHOOL NAME HERE], appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996.**

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

[ADD TESTIMONY HERE]

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 10:47:25 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Megan Clowe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This program has given my daughter an amazing opportunity she otherwise wouldn't have been able to have. She absolutely loves preschool, and it has helped her grow both academically, as well as personally. It is vital for the children that this program remain available because it allows children of low income families the opportunity to go to preschool. Preschool is a great foundation for children to grow on as they continue through school. I hope this program remains open so that my infant daughter can also have an opportunity to attend preschool and learn how to thrive in an academic setting like her older sister has.

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 10:53:31 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kelly Campbell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a parent of students that attend Laupahoehoe Community Public Charter School it is crucial that we have our preschool continue to be funded. I have had two of my children attend the preschool program and it has benefited them greatly as they entered Kindergarten. We live in a low income area and other preschools are too far away for kids to be able to attend. We have a great teacher that is helping our little ones prepare for their education and we really need this program to help them be successful.

I am asking that the state please continue to fund our preschool so that we can raise our future generations to be successful contributors of our community, county and state.

Best Regards,

Kelly Campbell



**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 11:09:38 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Danielle Hewetson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have had two of my children attend the PREK program at Laupahoehoe Community Public Charter school and I could not be more in support of having this program in EVERY public school in the state. With so many of our keiki not being able to attend PREK due to cost, this would give the keiki of Hawai'i the best start in their life. From the academic to the social, a PREK program helps set a firm foundation for our keiki to become productive members of our communities in the future. I fully support HB996!

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 11:12:31 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kristin Wolfgang-Volcano School of Arts and Scien	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please vote to fund preschools and continue to fund existing preschools. As a public school teacher, I can attest to the need for early reading intervention before Kindergarten. Students in pre Kindergartens are learning letter names and sounds, how to spell their own names, early math skills like how to count and add and many much needed skills. How can we improve education in Hawaii? By funding early childhood education. We need Pre Kindergartens funded by the state so that standards are taught and children have a chance to learn the skills they need to be successful in school. Please vote to support continuation of the current federally funded Pre Kindergarten programs at schools across the state. Mahalo nui!

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 11:36:24 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kim I Miller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I want to voice my strong support for HB996, to provide funding to maintain the currently federally funded pre-K programs in public charter schools. I live in Volcano, where there have not been any pre-K or day care programs until the pre-K program at The Volcano School of Arts & Sciences (VSAS) which is now in it's 3rd year. There is both a demand and need for pre-K programs in our area and especially for quality programs that can introduce skills that support success in Kindergarten and on. In addition to school-readiness skills, pre-K supports essential social and emotional skills including strategies to calm down, using words to resolve problems, sharing and taking turns, and acceptance of others. Quality pre-K programs, such as the VSAS program and the others that have been developed under the current federal grant, set students up for success in school and in life in a way that truly makes a long-term difference. PLEASE CONTINUE FUNDING FOR THE EXCELLENT PRE-K PROGRAMS THAT HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED THROUGH THE FEDERAL GRANT THAT IS ENDING!!! It would be a huge loss to take away programs that are of such high quality and that do so much good.

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 11:37:41 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
autumn rodrigues	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Our Keiki are our future!! Please continue the funding to support their education!! My child attends a federally funded preschool and I have watched her grow so much this school year. it Shouldn't even be a question whether or not to continue funding to this program. Please continue funding so our children can get a proper education. This also takes care of children who cannot afford to eat at home. My heart breaks for them. If funding stops, so do their meals.

Thank you for your consideration

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 11:40:53 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
sonora mather	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha and good morning!

The preschool program offered at LCPCS is such a vital part of our community. We have families within the community who depend on the program to be able to work and provide for their children. Child care is really hard to secure, not only with availability but cost as well. If this program discontinues it will create huge hardship for many families within the community and have an impact on the individuals who are employed as teachers and aids. The program offers a safe and cost effective solution. Please please vote to continue the pre school program at LCPCS and give these families an opportunity to thrive in their work and education.

Mahalo Nui

Sonora Mather

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 11:46:44 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Shilla Sharifi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hello, I am a parent to a 4 year old that, hopefully, will be able to attend Laupahoehoe Public Charter School preschool this 2019-2020 school year if funding continues. She turns 5 years old in September and will miss the cutoff date for kindergarten. On the mainland, they have already imposed rules to allow those children after the cutoff date to attend public Pre-K so they do not fall behind their peers with earlier birthdays. Please continue to fund the Pre-K program but without income requirements so that all children in the community can benefit from this education. Even recently the Governor has announced plans for public preschool in Hawaii. The value of early education is essential & has been proven in studies to have huge benefits. Please continue the funding and let's be at the forefront of the Governor's plans to have public preschool/Pre-K for all kids of Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Shilla Sharifi

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 12:12:21 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
catherine metzler	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha mai,

I am submitting testimony in support of HB 996 in order to keep our Pre-K and other preschool classes open. I am a pre-K teacher at Laupahoehoe Charter School, we have been open since school year 2015-2016. This pre-K class has helped nearly 100 students. We are proud of our class this year, with 16 students, half of whom are Native Hawaiian; all learning counting, math, letters, reading skills, social emotional learning, Hawaiiana, yoga, and much more. Every week, we go to garden class, go to the library, and also have reading buddies with the 3rd grade class. These keiki will not only be ready to succeed in kindergarten, but are well equipped with the skills they need for life. We have lots of family engagement events here at our classroom and have been very encouraged by the good turnout from parents. This school year, there are at least 10 families who are continually asking me if there will be Pre-K next year and will be seeking to attend preschool here if we are able to open our doors and windows again next year. Please think of the families who will attend preschool next year when you are deciding.

Mahalo

Catherine Metzler Nagata, Pre-K Teacher Laupahoehoe Charter School

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 12:18:01 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
alicia lyons	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am very happy with the volcano school PreK class. I feel like it gave my kids an early start and advantage when they start kindergarten next year. The teachers have been great.

thank you,

Alicia Lyons



**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 12:23:55 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maiko Izon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

FOR: HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

DATE: January 31, 2019

TIME: 2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309

FROM: Maiko Izon, Parent  
Wai'alaie Public Charter School

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996.**

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

I am writing in support of funding for Wai'alaie Charter School's preschool program grant. It is an amazing preschool and has helped so many of our kids in need receive a quality education in a caring environment.

With two children, one in 2ndgrade and the other in preschool age, private pay preschool was definitely a financial burden for a single mother. I didn't want to compromise their learning or their social development by not sending them to school. This is why the federal grant for Wai'alaie Charter was such a blessing for my family.

My younger son is currently in Waialae's preschool this school year(2018-2019). The caring and loving teachers at our preschool have been great for my son's development socially and academically.

Without the preschool at Waialae, my family would not have been able to provide my children with a quality early education. We are so grateful for the grant, the teachers, and the loving environment the school provide for my kids. I humbly ask for your support in keeping the funding for the preschool.

Sincerely,

Maiko Izon, Parent of student at Waialae Charter Preschool

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 12:32:49 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Rachelle Castillo	volcano school of arts and science	Support	No

Comments:

Having the pre-K program has been invaluable to myself and my son. Without the program I would not have been able to work to support us. My son has developed reading and critical skills I would not have been able to spend time on helping him learn. His positive developmental experiences in the program have increased his vocabulary, he is able to follow directions, more confident, and has acquired skills socially, and Intellectually. He looks forward to going to school and is excited to go on to kindergarden. This program has instilled in him a sense of appreciation for schooling and community. These are experiences I would have been unable to accomplish on my own as a single, working mother. Please consider continuing this highly successful program. Thank you!

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 12:39:15 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Tiahti Fernandez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

I believe it is important to continue to have preschool in our community here in Volcano. This pre-kindergarten class is helping to prepare our young ones for the school, education future that is ahead of them, it's helped my daughter be prepared for kindergarten and what to expect when she goes to school without making her feel overwhelmed. Volcano school of arts and science is one of the best school we have on the island, teaching the kids that they can have fun while learning at a young age. Please, continue to fund our Pre kindergarten class here in Volcano so we can continue to send our young ones to school here.

Mahalo,

Tiahti F.

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 12:39:24 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Leiah Figueroa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing to share my experience with the Preschool my twins attended last year at the Volcano School of Arts. I am a mother of 6 with a 5th grader, second grader, and 2 kindergarteners. My two oldest children started out at a different school and after making a personal choice to move my older kids to Volcano School a few years ago; I was very happy that my twins would be able to attend their preschool.

As I previously mentioned, my older children attended different schools, and my husband and I quickly learned how much of a difference it makes when a school not only values its teachers and staff, but its students and parents as well, this school has done that for our family. As parents we do our best to provide our children with the resources they need from our parenting to giving them the best education we can give them. Coming from a small community we are often limited to what is available especially for our children. I drive my kids 20 minutes each way to Volcano school and back for drop offs and pick ups and I am very happy to do so because of the quality of education they receive there. When I compared the experience at a previous school and what my twins learned at the volcano school of arts, I was pleasantly surprised at how early my children were being introduced to and accomplishing the skills they would need for kindergarten. Preschool gave them a head start where they love to learn because it was instilled in them at early age and along with volcano school, my children are on the right track for thier future, not all schools can provide this.

As for my 3 year old and my newborn, I hope they will be able to have the priveledge of attending VSAS Preschool. If it is gone I will continue to do my best as a parent and provide them with the skills they need for kindergarten. But for other families living in this small community where they commute farther to and from work and are unable to bring their children to these resources, this for them will be a heavy loss for the family and more importantly the children.

Thank you for your time,

Leiah Figueroa

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 12:42:22 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kerstin Peppers	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My son is attending PreK at Volcano School of Arts and Sciences this year. He is thriving in the absolutely amazing program offered by VSAS. He is learning his letters, numbers, shapes and colors in a fun and stimulating environment. He is learning amazing social skills through new friendships and caring, strong, valuable teachers helping him work through relationships at school. They have a playground and safe environment that allows him to play and imagine. He is also learning Hawaiian language and culture through classroom integration. I have been able to participate in the classroom as a parent and see personally the smiles and joy on the children's faces in the classroom. This preschool is amazing and an absolute asset to the community. It NEEDS to be saved to serve the community just as the way it has served our family!! Many more families need this experience and that will only happen if you save the charter school PreK programs such as this one! Please do everything you possibly can to keep this program open!!

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 12:59:34 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Amanda Martin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**I am writing to express my STRONG support HB 996. As not only a preschool teacher, but also a teacher of students with special needs, I can attest to the importance, and substantial benefit of early education. I have been fortunate to provide my special needs students with opportunities to learn and play alongside their typically developing peers. Research has shown that these opportunities for inclusive learning are extremely beneficial to both special education and general education children. With the closure of the pre-kindergarten at Laupahoehoe Community Public Charter School, these opportunities and benefits go away, and it is our keiki who pay the price. Besides benefits of inclusive learning, research also suggests that children who attend preschool are more likely to succeed throughout their schooling. I urge the committee to put our keiki first and approve Bill HB 996.**

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:07:50 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
kayoko munnerlyn	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:



**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:18:24 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alfred Kent	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Continuing the preschool program is the most effective way to improve the education and futures of our keiki and society. Please support this bill.

FOR:HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC  
CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE  
THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL  
PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

DATE:January 31, 2019

TIME:2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE:Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM:Conference Room 309

FROM: Catherine and Danny Kim Parent  
Wai'alaie Public Charter School

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the  
Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996.**

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

To whom it may concern:

My child Chloe has been attending Waialae Charter school's preschool program and I am extremely satisfied with the program, teachers, facility overall. My daughter did attend a different preschool last year and I can say first hand the BIG difference coming to Waialae's program has done for her. It wasn't just a daycare, but it felt moreso a nurturing school environment. I was amazed. I feel so strongly about this program and even though she will be moving onto Kindergarten next year, I strongly hope that this program will continue to be available to other children.

Please consider my letter and testimony in supporting this bill.

Kindest Regards,

Catherine Kim

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:51:09 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jeffrey Mermel	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Legislators:

**I am in full SUPPORT of HB 996..**

I am a 42 year homeowner in Volcano Village on the Big Island and I VOTE.

Both of our children attended public school in Hilo and then went to to UH. This was before the creation of The Volcano School of Arts & Sciences (VSAS), now in its 18th year and fully re-accredited, with waiting lists for most classes.

Please FUND and SAVE the PRE-SCHOOL program there. I know it to be very popular & important to our community..It gives the children a head-start to their academic learning.

Without proper funding, our and other charter schools may be forced to close the preschool programs!

Now that the Federal funding is ending, WHERE will our keiki get this valuable jump to their education?

**Please vote to support SB996.**

Mahalo for your kind consideration..

Jeffrey Mermel

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:51:41 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aaron Steurer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

FOR:HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

DATE:January 31, 2019

TIME:2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE:Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM:Conference Room 309

FROM: Aaron Steurer, Parent  
Wai'alaie Public Charter School

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996.**

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter

schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

Our daughter has been able to grow both educationally and socially so much by being able to attend the preschool program at Wai'ala'e Public Charter School. I strongly support the public charter preschool programs and absolutely think it's crucial for developing our youth here in Hawaii. Thank you for your consideration.

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:54:53 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jean Mckeague	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am wholeheartedly in support of this bill. I have been teaching for 27 years 1-8th grade elementary students. I am teaching preK for the first time in my career. I have seen the incredible impact that we can have as educators of this age group. Helping kids get a solid foundation in math, literacy, science, social studies, art, health, and farm to table has been such a gift for our community. I live in lower Puna where many families were devastated by the recent lava flow. The teachers at Prek help the children have a solid, loving place to spend their days. Mahalo for your consideration of this matter.

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:56:07 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
John Hammerstrom	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Our local school is a federally funded charter school. I strongly support funding the prekindergarten program.

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:57:57 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Deanna wentworth	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, I am the lead Kumu at Kua O Ka La's Public Charter School. I have been working at Kua O Ka La since 2006 as their Kindergarten teacher first and since last year as the PreK lead teacher. Our school has been aspiring to have a preschool for many years and just got started last year thanks to the PDG grant!. I clearly met many kindergarten students from this area over the years, Native Hawaiians most of them, with no preschool experience and very literacy poor households. Having the preK program is a wonderful boon for this community. The class has been full and we seem to get more and more applicants. I already have 4 interest form for next school year and I have not even advertised. We also have invested a huge amount of money in the furniture and materials for our classrooms and what will happen to everything if we do not get the funding next year? Please consider funding our prek Charter school program.



**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 2:05:55 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Marshall Diane	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support preschool funding for all schools, including charter schools, because it prepares young minds and bodies for kindergarten by allowing them to ease into the educational structure. It teaches them how to learn and allows them to socialize with other children before the real learning begins in kindergarten and first grade.

While I don't have children, I have a sister who is 21 years younger. I watched how quickly she learned to learn in preschool and saw how ready she was for kindergarten. Preschool was her first experience away from her parents. It allowed her to ease into independence. She quickly learned how to share, how to sit and listen, and how to express herself with other children in a nonthreatening and nonstressful environment.

It also gave her the idea that learning was fun. She loved school and now, with her own child, she is excited about her child attending preschool as well.

Thank you for listening. Diane Marshall

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 2:06:36 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
P Sera	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a local resident and voter, I strongly support HB996 and urge you to fund the preschool program Volcano School of Arts & Sciences PCS. During the two years of Federal funding this program has provided invaluable assistance to the children and families of the area. Please keep it going.

Mahalo

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 2:08:02 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kathleen M Williamson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a long time early childhood educator in the Pahoia area, I implore our Legislators to continue funding the public preschools. In my experience I have seen the long term effects that preschool has on not only each child, but their families as well, and the community at large.

Especially in our Puna community, preschool can play a huge part in our recovery in the aftermath of the volcanic eruption. To think of the families who will be denied this experience breaks my heart. Preschool is the place where all children are made to feel loved, worthy and important. Our children deserve and need preschool to be able to fit in in this fast moving progressive world. For some, it is the only hope. Please do not get take this opportunity for our children to learn.

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 2:08:10 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Charlene Hoe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 2:09:39 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Star Carlin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support the continuation of the preschool program at the Volcano School of Arts and Sciences. This program is the only preschool program available in our local community. This is a critical service for the people of Volcano and does so much to prepare our keiki for school. The benefits of preschool programs are well established, please continue this service.

Mahalo for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

Star Carlin



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
HONOLULU

**LATE**

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

Testimony of **Ford Fuchigami**  
Administrative Director, Office of the Governor

Before the  
**House Committee on Lower & Higher Education**  
January 31, 2019  
2:15 p.m., Conference Room 309

In consideration of  
**House Bill No. 996**  
**RELATING TO MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER  
SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY  
FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS.**

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso and committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in Strong Support for **House Bill 996** which appropriates moneys for school year 2019-2020 to the State Public Charter School Commission to continue eighteen federally funded kindergarten classrooms that were created by the federal Preschool Development Grant of 2015.

In 2014, the state public charter school commission (Charter School Commission) was awarded a four-year federal preschool development grant to open prekindergarten classrooms. The Charter School Commission successfully opened eighteen classrooms in eleven charter schools on the islands of Kauai, Molokai, Oahu and Hawaii, many of which are located in remote rural areas. The last year of federal funding for this grant will end at the close of the current 2018-2019 school year. This bill seeks funding to allow the Charter School Commission to continue to serve the children, families and communities in those eighteen classrooms by providing early learning education opportunities.

Early education specialists tell us how important it is to prepare young children for a lifetime of learning. Research also tells us that early childhood education, such as preschool programs, are critical for brain development. What children experience in their early years will set the stage for how well they learn for the rest of their lives and is critical to their well-being in adulthood. Therefore, the Administration respectfully requests the committee's support of this bill to allow the Charter School Commission to continue operating its eighteen prekindergarten classrooms.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

HONOLULU

We appreciate your attention and will be available to answer your questions, should you have any at this time.





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



January 30, 2019

**TO:** Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Representative Mark J. Hashem, Vice-Chair, Lower Education  
Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice-Chair, Higher Education  
House Committee on Lower & Higher Education

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

**SUBJECT: Measure:** H.B. No. 996 – Relating to making an appropriation to the State Public Charter School Commission to maintain and continue the current federally funded charter school prekindergarten classrooms.  
**Hearing Date:** January 31, 2019  
**Time:** 2:15 p.m.  
**Location:** Room 309

**Bill Description:** Appropriates moneys for school year 2019-2020 to the State Public Charter School Commission to maintain and continue the current federally funded eighteen existing charter school prekindergarten classrooms that were provided for by the federal Preschool Development Grant of 2015.

**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 House Bill 996.

We appreciate the Legislature's recognition of the need to increase access to high-quality early learning.

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



In its implementation of the 18 pre-K classrooms, the Commission is working toward achieving the quality standards of the National Institute for Early Education Research, as we are. We believe the Commission is committed to working with EOEL toward ensuring a high-quality pre-K program for our keiki.

We respectfully request that the committee consider moving this bill forward, and defer to the Commission regarding the details of its request.

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



**LATE**

**HB996**  
**MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL**  
**COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED**  
**CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS**  
House Committee on Lower & Higher Education

January 31, 2019

2:15 p.m.

Room 309

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment Committee will recommend that the Board of Trustees **SUPPORT** HB996, which would provide funding to the State Public Charter School Commission to continue the federally funded prekindergarten program in public charter schools for school year 2019-2020. **This measure is necessary to ensure the continuation of a program that benefits young learners, and increases their likelihood of future academic success and positive overall development.**

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

In 2014, OHA wrote a letter to the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE), in support of the State’s successful application to the USDOE’s Preschool Development Grants Program. The State’s application proposed to improve kindergarten readiness with an ambitious yet achievable plan, to expand access to high-quality preschool classrooms in high-need communities through a charter school prekindergarten program. Eleven public charter schools, seven of which are Hawaiian culture-based or Hawaiian language immersion schools, currently support prekindergarten classrooms, with charter school directors reporting a significant difference in kindergarten readiness as a result. HB996 will ensure funding for the continuation of the charter school prekindergarten program, and allow preschool-aged children, including Native Hawaiian keiki, in our public charter schools to continue accessing the advantages of early childhood education.

OHA continues to be a strong supporter of Hawai‘i’s public charter schools, many of which provide a culturally-grounded education for Native Hawaiian and other children.

17 of the 37 public charter schools in Hawai‘i are Hawaiian culture-based or Hawaiian language immersion schools, in which OHA has invested over \$18.6 million between FY 2005-2006 and FY 2016-2017. On October 19, 2017, the OHA Board of Trustees approved an additional \$3 million total to these charter schools for FY 2017-2018 and FY 2018-2019. OHA made this investment because research shows that Hawaiian students exposed to culturally-driven educational strategies have a stronger sense of socio-emotional well-being, deeper engagement with their schools, and a stronger commitment to civic activities in their community, factors which are directly tied to greater academic achievement.

Therefore, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** HB996. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**LATE**

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FOR: HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

DATE: January 31, 2019

TIME: 2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309

FROM: Shantell M.C. Urbanozo  
Student Activity and Family Engagement Coordinator  
Parent/Community Member/ Alumnus  
LAUPĀHOEHOE COMMUNITY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

I/We appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996.**

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

Aloha my name is Shantell Urbanozo and I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 996. I have had the privilege of being able to work with preschool students here at Laupāhoehoe Community PCS for the past 4 years. Throughout these past year in working with students, families and teachers it has taught me so many things. Having a program like this has helped local families have students engaged into early learning. It expands their minds gives them skills that will help them in grade school. It also helps serve the families as parents are their child's first teacher. Having students being able to explore a classroom setting it helps them build skills that will support them throughout their learning as they go through school. Introducing them to SEL social emotional learning skills benefits them to understand feelings, and motor skills to speak and share their feelings with their peers and others around them. Socializing with peers helps them learn to share, and explain their feelings and etc. It also helps in behavior in setting good

examples in class and at home. Giving students literacy and motor skills helps students achieve in school. Engaging students at a early stage has its many ways to get students to be proactive in school and keep them curious in learning. This program also sets a standard for families who have concerns and anxieties of their child and there well being in a school setting. Giving parents the skills they need with support from school and teacher benefits them to strengthen family skills. I have been amazed with the growth of students who come to school on their first day, they are shy, isolated, afraid and very standoffish. But as they become more accustomed to the daily routine they become more accepting and out grow their fears they first have. Students excelled in being independent individuals that become creative and spontaneous. This program also gives families direct line of communicating and skills in support from teacher and school by having open door policies for parents to engage in their education. It also gives support to parents if needed when concerns arise both at home or in school. Setting students up for a rich future and opportunities to engage in education as they grow will help benefit their future. Family engagement is a key product of this program by giving skills and understanding of how important education is for students and keeping them actively involved in their child's education will have students strive for the best as the grow up. These are just some of the outcomes that benefits early childhood development with a preschool program. Thank you for your time and reading the importance and the strong support I have for HB 996. This program not only benefits our keikis but it also benefits our families in a sense of belonging and well being to be given opportunities that even in struggles a supportive team will stand besides them and help ensure the education their child and every child deserves.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Shantell Urbanozo



**LATE**

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FOR: HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

DATE: January 31, 2019

TIME: 2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309

FROM: Paula Dickey, Governing Board Faculty Member  
LAUPĀHOEHOE COMMUNITY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996.**

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

The Laupahoehoe Community Public Charter School (LCPCS) Governing Board sees the importance of Pre-k education for our students and strongly supports HB 996.

Students who attend preschool are better prepared and more successful in Kindergarten and throughout their elementary career. Benefits include increased skill levels in mathematics, reading, and social and emotional intelligence.

On the Hamakua Coast our resources for preschool options are limited. Tutu and Me, a traveling preschool program can be found in either Hilo or Honokaa, 25 miles in either direction. Parents or guardians must accompany their child at least 2 days a week for 2 hours a session to even be considered for enrollment. This makes it difficult for local families where both parents are working, to attend.

Laupahoehoe Community Public Charter School has offered the pre-k program for the last 4 years funded by the Preschool Development Grant (PDG). Our enrollment numbers have increased each year, making it one of the highest enrolled classes in our elementary school.

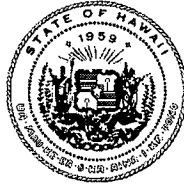
We currently have 362 students enrolled at LCPCS from Pre-K to grade 12. Sixty students have been identified as IDEA and 217 are of Low Socioeconomic Status, both are found to be characteristics of low performing students. A study at [Duke University](#) found that kids who attended a well-funded Pre-K program had higher reading and math abilities throughout their elementary and middle school career and were significantly less likely to have to repeat a grade. They were also, by the 8th grade, 30 percent less likely to need special education programming.

Students that graduated from the first 2015-16 Pre-k class are now in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Fifty percent of those students are in the High Achievement/High Growth range on their Winter Achievement Status & Growth Summary in the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessment program we use here at LCPCS to evaluate our students. One student in the class is identified with Special Education Services under IDEA. Our current 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class, that did not have the opportunity to attend the Pre-k Program, has only 30% of its students showing High Achievement/High Growth status and has 3 students identified with Special Education Services under IDEA.

We strongly recommend that the current federally funded Prekindergarten classroom program be continued. We believe it will reduce the number of low-performing students and effectively improve our educational system here at Laupahoehoe Community Public Charter School.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

DAVID Y. GIBSON  
HO'OKAKO'O  
CORPORATION  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Sione Thompson  
CHARTER SCHOOL  
COMMISSION  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Paul Kepka  
KAMAILE ACADEMY  
INTERIM PRINCIPAL

STATE OF HAWAII  
Kamaile Academy PCS  
85-180 Ala Akau Street  
Waianae, Hawaii 96792

**LATE**

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FOR: HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS


DATE: January 31, 2019

TIME: 2:15 P.M.

COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower & Higher Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309

FROM: Paul Kepka, Principal  
Kamaile Academy PCS



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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

Kamaile Academy Public Charter School appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996.**

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019. Pre K has made a positive impact on the lives for our Kamaile keiki of Wai'anae. .

Pre K at Kamaile Academy had made a positive impact on the lives for our keiki, 'ohana and school community. Sustaining the existing PK classrooms that are in place at will ensure that fifty (50) students per year will continue to have access to high quality learning. PK gives our keiki the step up that they need to have a strong foundation in education, while supporting the overall success of the P-12 learning continuum.

Thank you for your support and consideration of HB 996





**Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau**  
Laboratory Public Charter School

**LATE**

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46-500 Kūneki St. Kāne'ohe, Hawai'i 96744 \*Kelepona: 808.235.9175 \*Kelepa'i: 808.235.9173  
E mālama 'ia ana ka mauili ola o kākou mai kēlā hanauna a i kēia hanauna.

Before the House Committee on Lower and Higher Education, House Bill 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS.

January 31, 2019 2:15 pm, Rm 309

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem & Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau **strongly supports** HB 996, which makes an appropriation to the state public charter school commission to maintain and continue the current federally funded charter school prekindergarten classrooms.

Our families at Ke Kula 'o Samuel M Kamakau are current recipients of the charter school's federal prekindergarten grant, supporting 1.5 classrooms on site. As a Hawaiian medium Prek-12 school, we are extremely appreciative of the funding for us to provide quality early childhood education, which also increases access of our families to enroll their children in early learning at the public cost of education, free.

Since the development of our prekindergarten class, our data shows an increase in kindergarten readiness. Students are engaged in learning through the Hawaiian language and culture and are developing a genuine excitement for learning. These schools are preparing 4-5 year olds for success in kindergarten and beyond.

Once again, we are in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996** to appropriate funding to the charter school commission to maintain and continue the current federally funded charter school prekindergarten classrooms. In closing, we would like to thank the Committee on Lower and Higher Education for this opportunity to share our mana'o.

Me ke aloha,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "I Kelling Kahu".

I Kelling Kahu, Director



## KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

House Committee on Lower & Higher Education

Time: 2:15 p.m.

Date: January 31, 2019

Where: Conference Room 309

**LATE**

### TESTIMONY

By Ka'ano'i Walk  
Kamehameha Schools

#### RE: **HB 996, Relating to Charter Schools**

E ka Luna Ho'omalū Woodson, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalū Hashem, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalū Perruso, a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike Ho'ona'auao Ha'aha'a, Ki'eki'e, a me ke Kulanui o ka Hale o nā Lunamaka'āinana, aloha! My name is Ka'ano'i Walk, the Senior Policy Analyst for Kamehameha Schools.

HB 996, relating to charter schools, appropriates moneys for school year 2019-2020 to the State Public Charter School Commission to maintain and continue the current federally funded eighteen existing charter school prekindergarten classrooms that were provided for by the federal Preschool Development Grant of 2015. We are writing in **support** of this measure.

These eighteen public charter school prekindergarten classrooms serve a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students and continue to show positive growth in developmental and educational areas. Public prekindergarten provides an important opportunity for all of our keiki to enter kindergarten well prepared for their lifelong educational journey. Without these critical funds, 360 prekindergarten seats for four-year-olds across Hawai'i will cease to exist.

Research shows us that more than eighty-five percent of brain development occurs from the time of birth to the age of five. Enrollment in school readiness programs, like the operating eighteen public charter school prekindergarten classrooms, prepare all keiki to learn cognitively, linguistically, socially, emotionally, and physically.

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'ohē hana nui ke alu 'ia. No task is too large when we all work together! **Please advance this measure.**

**LATE**

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 2:34:19 PM  
Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kalima Cayir	Volcano School of Arts & Sciences	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha esteemed legislators,

This testimony is to urge you to vote in support of HB996 to provide sustainability funding for charter school preK programs. Preschool options in our community are extremely limited. The nearest Preschool other than our school's program is in Mt. View (30 minutes away), only accepts 6 students, and is expensive.

Our PreK program has been successful and effective. Our community is urging us to maintain the Prek. However, without sustainability funding from the state, we will be forced to close the program.

Thank you in advance for your support to keep our Preschool doors open!

Kalima Kinney

Principal

**LATE**

**HB-996**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 2:44:47 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michael Linnolt	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Honorable Representatives, I would like to offer my strong support for this Bill to continue funding for our Pre-K programs in our charter schools. Our children have benefited immensely from these programs, and I cannot imagine cuts to ANY education programs in our state! Education and Healthcare, medical research to cure diseases, are among the most critical things our society needs on a continuing basis.

Unfortunately, we find ourselves always fighting for the last dollar for education and research, while our bloated, warmongering Defense (aka. WAR) Dept. always gets essentially unlimited funding for developing new and more awful weapons of mass destruction, foreign military bases, vast ocean spanning aggressive navies, etc. For example, if we just closed our foreign soil military bases we could save over \$100 Billion annually, which could easily cover all our public education needs, and increase medical research by an order of magnitude to cure deadly diseases, like Cancer, which kills over half a million of us every year.

Can the WAR Dept. honestly say they save half a million of American lives every year, by spending this incredible amounts of our tax dollars? I'd like to see them prove that by actual statistics, rather than just fear mongering!

So, Dear Representatives, please look at the realities of our spending, and do your utmost to take the wasted money from excessive military spending, and redirect it to the social, education and medical research programs we so desperately need to maintain and improve! Thank you for passing this Bill.

Dr. Michael Linnolt

Volcano, HI

**LATE**

**To:** Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Representative Mark I. Hashem, Vice Chair  
Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Lower and Higher Education

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

**Subject:** **Measure:** HB 996 – MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS  
**Hearing Date:** Jan. 31, 2019  
**Time:** 2:15 pm  
**Location:** Room 309

**Description:** Appropriates moneys for school year 2019-2020 to the State Public Charter School Commission to maintain and continue the current federally funded eighteen existing charter school prekindergarten classrooms that were provided for by the federal Preschool Development Grant of 2015.

**Early Learning Board Position:** Support

I am Robert G. Peters, Chair of the Early Learning Board (ELB). Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony in support HB 996 on behalf of the Early Learning Board.

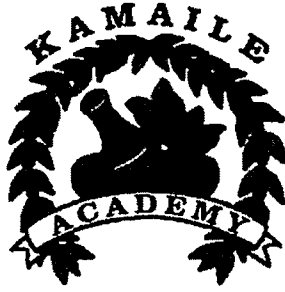
The ELB supports the HB 966 appropriation of funds to continue the 18 charter school classrooms developed with funding from the Federal Preschool Development Grant, received by the Charter School Commission in 2015. 2019 marks the completion of the grant and this appropriation would sustain the quality early learning program opportunities for 360 children across our State.

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

Another important aspect of **HB 996** is its enhanced support to working families by expanding the eligibility criteria. This change will increase access to high quality prekindergarten programs for children and families, particularly those who may be living in remote, rural areas of our State. Additionally, support of this bill will continue the emphasis upon culture-based programs in almost half of the 18 classrooms.

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

**LATE**



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**FOR:** HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

**DATE:** January 31, 2019

**TIME:** 2:15 P.M.

**COMMITTEE:** Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**ROOM:** Conference Room 309

**FROM:** Mrs. Banda, Parent of Preschooler  
Kamaile Academy Public Charter School

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

Kamaile Academy Public Charter School, appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 996.

HB 996 will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

Pre-K is important because it provides a stepping stone to kindergarten and that is one main reason why it is needed in our community. Pre-K helps my child in so many ways and access to Pre-K for children in this community helps prepare the students for the future. It helps them get used to a school environment and to be around other children and adults so please lets keep it.

**LATE**

Patricia A. Gooch, Professor (retired)

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**FOR:** HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

**DATE:** January 31, 2019

**TIME:** 2:15 P.M.

**COMMITTEE:** Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**ROOM:** Conference Room 309

**FROM:** Patricia A. Gooch, Professor (retired), Early Childhood Education

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

As a retired professor in early childhood education, I have served the children of Hawai'i in various capacities, e.g. preschool teacher, preschool director and teacher trainer. I fully understand the value of PreK and appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 996.

**HB 996** will allow the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) beginning school year 2018-2019. In the school year 2016-2017, a pilot project looked at the achievement levels for all kindergarteners at three schools served by the Preschool Development Grant. Students who attended the PDG PreK classes out performed their classmates in the areas of mathematics, literacy and social emotional development. The achievement levels of these children surpassed the summative achievement levels attained by the whole class. This program is intentional and focused on professional development of its staff to ensure high quality. Yes, I strongly support **HB 996**. Mahalo.



**LATE**

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**FOR:** HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

**DATE:** January 31, 2019

**TIME:** 2:15 P.M.

**COMMITTEE:** Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**ROOM:** Conference Room 309

**FROM:** Anela, parent of former preschooler

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 996.

PK is important because to the Waianae community because it provides children with the opportunity to have a sense of responsibility as well as pride. Children learn and grow with other children there age. PK provides an engaging educational environment that stimulates the childrens young mind to grow and explore things that they do not get at home. My son, had an opportunity to attend PK here at Kamaile and he learned so much. My son enjoyed being apart of his class and he currentlly has the social and educational skills that he has never had before. I feel PK should be mandatory for all children before entering K so they can get a head start in setting there educational foundation for there future. PK benefits the families as well as the community to grow and move forward.

**LATE**

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**FOR:** HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

**DATE:** January 31, 2019

**TIME:** 2:15 P.M.

**COMMITTEE:** Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**ROOM:** Conference Room 309

**FROM:** Ray Driscoll, preschool parent

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 996.

I love PK because my son Rhio has improved in his everyday learning skills with the help of his great knowledgeable teacher who cares about the student as if they are apart of their family. My son at age 4 is already reading and doing math. He loves school and always wants to do homework. Mahalo to Kamaile Academy for giving my son a great opportunity to learn advanced much needed learning skills.

**LATE**

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**FOR:** HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

**DATE:** January 31, 2019

**TIME:** 2:15 P.M.

**COMMITTEE:** Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**ROOM:** Conference Room 309

**FROM:** Mr. Edrado, grandparent of Kainoa Hanohano

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 996.

Preschool is very important because all the students in this community need it. Early childhood education should be mandatory. Students at age two should be able to go to school and learn because you can truly see much growth at an early age. I have much experience with sending kids to PK, my 6th and 4th grade student had access to Kapa Alana preschool and they are advanced because of it. If they close Kamaile Academy PK, students wont be ready for Kindergarten and they will struggle tremendously.

**LATE**

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**FOR:** HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

**DATE:** January 31, 2019

**TIME:** 2:15 P.M.

**COMMITTEE:** Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**ROOM:** Conference Room 309

**FROM:** Amy Freitas-Gilpa, parent of preschooler

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 996.

PK is the building block for keiki. Taking small steps in preparing for regular school. It has made my daughter enjoy being/engaging with other students. We have seen our child blossom. Many keiki would loose out on the benefits PK provides. For example, engaging with other keiki, creating daily routines, learning basic academics for school and expanding their imaginations.

**LATE**

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**FOR: HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS**

**DATE: January 31, 2019**

**TIME: 2:15 P.M.**

**COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower & Higher Education**

**ROOM: Conference Room 309**

**FROM: Sachiko Fukuda, Parent  
Wai'ala'e School**

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**Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:**

**I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 996.**

**HB 996 will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.**

I appreciate this high quality preschool at Waialae PCS. It has been a lot of helps ( or benefits ) to my child and my family.

First, thanks to the support of professional teachers Yuna has become less shy and get well along with others. She used to have difficulty with communicating with other people even with kids but now she talks in class and makes new friends. She is certainly acquiring her social skills. This is great and this is what I am most happy about.

Second, She has grown up academically as well. At this preschool she is able to not only have a fun time with friends but they also provide a great learning opportunity. Yuna found it that reading is so much fun and now that she enjoys reading a few books every day by herself. I am happy to see her enjoy reading. I am also glad that this helps Yuna learn how to speak English as well. I appreciate to Ms Koalani who helps a lot for my child to grow this way.

Finally, this program has been a great help to my family financially. If it were not for this program, I would not be able to send her to full-time preschool and Yuna would not have been able to experience a lot of things and shared her precious time with friends and teachers as much as she can now.

*Thanks to them, Yuna will have a good start at her Kindergarten.*

Again, I really appreciate this program and to the great teachers. I believe that if it were not for it, my child would not have grown up this much. I hope this school will continue and help other families.

Sachiko Fukuda

**LATE**

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**FOR:** HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

**DATE:** January 31, 2019

**TIME:** 2:15 P.M.

**COMMITTEE:** Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**ROOM:** Conference Room 309

**FROM:** Ms. Savannah Hoyos, parent of preschooler

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 996.

We are blessed to have PK because it helps my child to learn and grow before she enters kindergarten. I had no other option for my oldest kid and I am grateful PK at Kamaile exist for my baby girl.

**LATE**

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**FOR:** HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

**DATE:** January 31, 2019

**TIME:** 2:15 P.M.

**COMMITTEE:** Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**ROOM:** Conference Room 309

**FROM:** Mandie Kaneshiro

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 996.

I have been an Educational Assistant involved in the PDG from year one. I have been blessed to work for two different PDG schools, Na Wai Ola PCS and my current school, Kamaile Academy PCS. As a group of PreK programs working together towards the same goals, we have grown tremendously. Working with job coaches, different guest speakers throughout our communities and each other, we have been able to not just serve the children of our community, but serve them with **QUALITY**, high quality, practices. If not for our programs many of our families would not have been able to provide the same educational foundation that we have been able to provide them with that's to the Preschool Development Grant. This statement is just a tiny piece of what enormous works and ideas our educators and families have in our hearts. We have data to show what we have done for these past 3 1/2 years, but even better we have the children in our communities to prove that the education and love we've provided is priceless. I hope to continue to be able to offer our communities PreK programs free of charge so the children of our future will be able to start off with a solid foundation for their education.

Mahalo Nui Loa for your support of HB 996.



**LATE**

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**FOR:** HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

**DATE:** January 31, 2019

**TIME:** 2:15 P.M.

**COMMITTEE:** Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**ROOM:** Conference Room 309

**FROM:** Raisa Keawe, parent of preschooler

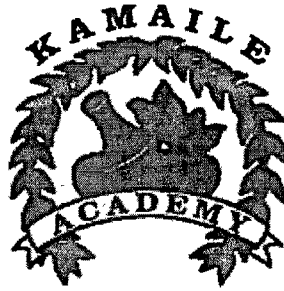
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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 996.

PK is the foundation to having access to early education to build there character. My child needs to continue to learn and I have many more kids that would like to attend Kamaile Academy Preschool so please do not cut funding.

**LATE**



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**FOR:** HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

**DATE:** January 31, 2019

**TIME:** 2:15 P.M.

**COMMITTEE:** Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**ROOM:** Conference Room 309

**FROM:** Mrs. Kong, Grandparent of a Pre-Kindergartner  
Kamaile Academy Public Charter School

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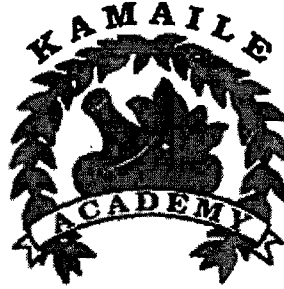
Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

Kamaile Academy Public Charter School, appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **HB 996**.

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

Pre-K is very important because it gives the children an upper hand prior to entering Kindergarten which is why I am thankful my grandchild can attend. Getting into routines and schedules especially at a young age is key for their later years, my child will be prepared for kindergarten because of the explicit exposure this Pre-K program provides to my child and I. The attention and learning skills that the students receive here at Kamaile Academy PCS preschool is priceless.

**LATE**



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**FOR:** HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

**DATE:** January 31, 2019

**TIME:** 2:15 P.M.

**COMMITTEE:** Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**ROOM:** Conference Room 309

**FROM:** Theresa Lando, Para Professional Tudor  
Kamaile Academy Public Charter School

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

Kamaile Academy Public Charter School, appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 996.

HB 996 will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

Pre-K in my community is very important for families and communities it helps prepare children for continuing education. My students love pre-k and I believe the parents really appreciate us having this class. I myself have learned so much from my Teachers and my children. Childcare is very expensive for these families so I believe not continuing Pre-K would be a burden on parents. I believe it helps children adjust to future classes and teaches them basics like respect. I think it would be a huge strain on parents due to high cost of childcare and they would probably have to quit their jobs.

**LATE**

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**FOR:** HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

**DATE:** January 31, 2019

**TIME:** 2:15 P.M.

**COMMITTEE:** Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**ROOM:** Conference Room 309

**FROM:** Mr. McClintick, parent

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

Na Wai Ola, appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 996.

**HB 996** will allow the executive office on early learning to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hawaii state public charter school commission to administer the charter school prekindergarten classrooms. This will sustain the 18 high quality prekindergarten programs in charter schools currently funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant beginning school year 2018-2019.

I am a single parent on the Big Island of Hawaii. My child Ayana McClintick attends Na Wai Ola in Mt. View. She was lucky enough to enroll into the pre-k program and is now in 1<sup>st</sup> grade at the same school. Being of low income and I single parent, the opportunity to get free early education for my child was beneficial in so many ways for her development. Exposure to other children. Working in the gardens, field trips, early education and the opportunity to join my daughter in the family engagements was priceless. I hope to see these programs continue to give the children and parents the opportunity of Pre-K education in Hawaii. Thank you very much!

**LATE**

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**FOR:** HB 996 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

**DATE:** January 31, 2019

**TIME:** 2:15 P.M.

**COMMITTEE:** Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**ROOM:** Conference Room 309

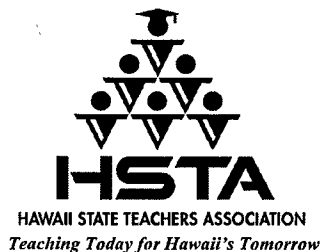
**FROM:** Justin Tomas, preschool parent

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 996.

Pre-K is important because it prepares them for schooling and it makes them feel important. Basically preschool is important because it introduces them to school, and without it students would not be able to get the gist of real schooling. It is really important for them to be prepared for K, so Kamaile does a great job preparing them to be school ready. The teachers at Kamaile are so loving and I really appreciate, that Mrs. Lupski says I love you to all children which makes them feel comfortable and loved.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819  
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## Late Testimony

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

### TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: HB 996 - MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE PUBLIC  
CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE THE  
CURRENT FEDERALLY FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOL  
PREKINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

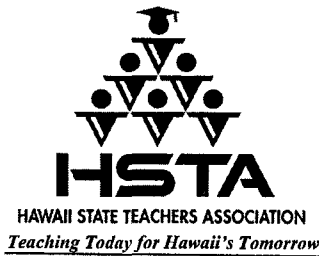
THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 2019

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Woodson and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports HB 996**, appropriates moneys for school year 2019-2020 to the State Public Charter School Commission to maintain and continue the current federally funded eighteen existing charter school prekindergarten classrooms that were provided for by the federal Preschool Development Grant of 2015.

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 responsibilities, but is essential for building a 21<sup>st</sup> century labor force. Early childhood education is especially



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Corey Rosenlee  
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Osa Tul Jr.  
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Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

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. As the Department of education continues to streamline educational accountability, particularly through the possible institution of merit pay and high-stakes evaluations for teachers and educational officers, 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.

Utilizing public school resources for the provision of early learning will place our children's futures in the hands of the state's most qualified education professionals, namely our certificated and licensed public-school teachers with additional certifications in early childhood education. Additionally, public early learning programs will not set a precedent for the future adoption of school voucher programs at the elementary and secondary school level. Finally, this proposal does not violate the U.S. Constitution's and Hawaii State Constitution's Establishment Clauses, which bar preferential governmental treatment for religious institutions, ensuring that the state will not become ensnared in costly litigation because of a misappropriation of funds to programs that promote theological viewpoints. Public early learning will, instead, include research-based, developmentally appropriate, secular practices that are associated with better educational outcomes for children. Public early learning programs currently exist in nineteen public schools, with only five programs on O‘ahu and only one on Maui and Lana‘i each. Since charter schools are public schools, funding public prekindergarten programming in the eighteen preschool classes currently offered in charter schools will expand access to children who may not be served by DOE preschool programs existing outside of their families’ geographic locations.

Because early childhood education is beneficial to lifetime learning, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** HB 996.



January 30, 2019

To: Representative Justin Woodson, Chair  
Representative Mark Hashem, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Lower and Higher Education

**Late  
Testimony**

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

Re: **H.B. 996– Making an appropriation to the state public Charter School Commission to maintain and continue the current federally funded Charter School prekindergarten classrooms**  
Capitol, Room 309, January 31, 2:15 PM

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**On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), I am writing in SUPPORT of H.B. 996, which would appropriate moneys for school year 2019-2020 to the State Public Charter School Commission to maintain and continue the current federally funded eighteen existing charter school prekindergarten classrooms that were provided for by the federal Preschool Development Grant of 2015.**

We ask that you approve the \$4 million in funding to continue the investment in our keiki. This bill would help to stabilize the public preschool programs in Hawaii's charter schools when the loss of current federal funding runs out at the end of this year.

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

Let's continue this great work. With your help, our keiki will be more prepared for kindergarten and life

**For these reasons, HCAN asks that you pass H.B. 996.**

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