

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 19, 2022

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

The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 1999 HD1 – RELATING TO EDUCATION.**

Hearing: Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of the proposed bill as it provides the opportunity for school readiness to children in the year prior to their entry into kindergarten. DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation in this measure not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the executive budget.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill appropriates funds to the department of human services for the preschool open doors program. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD1) HD1 amended this measure by changing its effective date to July 1, 2050.

Section 346-181, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), codifies the school readiness program Preschool Open Doors (POD) to provide children from low to moderately-low income families the opportunity to attend a group child care setting for up to one year prior to their entry into kindergarten as a means of aiding their transition into a school setting.

During the 2021 legislative session, the POD budget was reduced by \$6,960,000 as part of the general fund reductions to balance the State's budget due to pandemic-related revenue

losses. The annual POD appropriation for child care subsidies went from \$11,600,000 to \$4,640,000 and resulted in a decrease of the number of children POD could serve from 1,100 to 587 starting July 2021.

To make sure families continued to have access to child care, DHS made federal child care subsidies available through its Child Care Connection Hawaii (CCCH) program. The main differences between the two child care programs are that state-funded POD is focused on the child's experience and does not require parents to be engaged in employment or school. The federal CCCH subsidy is for safe and affordable child care so parents or caregivers can maintain employment or pursue education.

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



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

Committee on Human Services
Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Vice Char

March 21, 2022

Dear Chairs Kidani and San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Mercado Kim and Ihara, and Members of the Committees,

We support HB 1999 HD1, which appropriates moneys to the Department of Human Services for the preschool open doors program.

We support all approaches to increase access to quality early learning seats in our system. We understand that Hawai'i has a mixed delivery of early learning opportunities and Preschool Open Doors is one of the mechanisms for access. Preschool Open Doors subsidies help families afford sending their children to quality early learning programs to help them prepare for school.

Hui for Excellence in Education, or "HE'E," promotes a child-centered and strength-based public education system in which families, communities and schools are valued and empowered to help every student succeed. HE'E works to bring diverse stakeholders together to harness collective energy, share resources, and identify opportunities for progressive action in education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Our support represents a 75% consensus or more of our voting membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director



Academy 21	Kaua'i Ho'okele Council
American Civil Liberties Union	Keiki to Career Kaua'i
Alliance for Place Based Learning	Kupu A'e
*Castle Complex Community Council	*Leaders for the Next Generation
Coalition for Children with Special Needs	Learning First
Education Institute of Hawai'i	McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
*Faith Action for Community Equity	Native Hawaiian Education Council
Fresh Leadership LLC	Our Public School
Girl Scouts Hawaii	*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation	*Parents and Children Together
*HawaiiKidsCAN	*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance	Special Education Provider Alliance
*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice	*Teach for America
*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists	The Learning Coalition
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars	US PACOM
*Hawai'i Children's Action Network	University of Hawai'i College of Education
Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition	<i>Voting Members (*) Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.</i>
Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice	
* Hawai'i State PTSA	
Hawai'i State Student Council	
Hawai'i State Teachers Association	
Hawai'i P-20	
Hawai'i 3Rs	
*Hawai'i Youth Service	
Head Start Collaboration Office	
It's All About Kids	
*INPEACE	
Joint Venture Education Forum	
Junior Achievement of Hawaii	
Kamehameha Schools	
Kanu Hawai'i	



Date: March 19, 2022

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

Senate Committee on Human Services
Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Vice Chair

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: **Support for HB1999 HD1, Relating to Education**

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide cross-sector collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS partners work to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki.

ECAS supports passage of HB1999 HD1, which would appropriate funds to the Department of Human Services (DHS) for the Preschool Open Doors (POD) program.

POD provides subsidies to low- and moderate-income families to support children's access to preschool/early learning opportunities. POD is an important, complementary alternative to the federally-funded child care subsidies provided through the Child Care Connection Hawaii (CCCH) program. In contrast to CCCH's purpose to provide parental work, education and training support, POD is designed to support children's school-readiness.

There is urgency to both restore and expand funding for POD:

- During the 2021 legislative session, POD's budget was reduced by 60%, resulting in a decrease in the number of children POD could serve from 1,100 to less than 600, and a waitlist for school year 2021-2022 of over 100 children. Additional funding is needed to redress significant lost capacity as we move into the next fiscal year.
- The enactment of Act 46 (2020) was a pivotal commitment by the State to providing access to quality early learning seats for all 3- and 4-year-olds in Hawaii. Appropriation of funding to POD is critical to moving forward with this intended expansion of access and meeting preliminary targets for additional children served.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony **in support of HB1999 HD1**.



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

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

Senator San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Ihara, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

Re: **HB 1999 HD1, relating to education**
3:00 PM, March 21, 2022

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and committee members,

On behalf of HCAN Speaks!, thank you for the opportunity to **testify in support of House bill 1999 HD1**, relating to education.

Preschool open doors (POD) is a child care subsidy provided through state general funds. It serves families who are ineligible for the federally funded Child Care Connection Hawai'i subsidy program. For the last five years, the funding for POD was around \$11.6M. In 2021, the funding for the program was cut to \$4.6M, drastically reducing the number of children who can be served.

I respectfully request the following amendment to the measure:

- The amount appropriated in section 1 be equal to the amount necessary to serve 25% of three- and four-year-olds eligible for the program, as described in Section 1 (5) Act 46, 2020, "unserved children who are three to four years of age, or will not be at least five years of age on or before July 31 of the current school year"

HCAN Speaks! respectfully requests the Committee to amend and support this measure.

Thank you,

Kathleen Algire
Director, Early Learning and Health Policy

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

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

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1999, H.D. 1

March 21, 2022
3:00 p.m.
Room 229 and Videoconference

RELATING TO EDUCATION

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill No. 1999, H.D. 1, appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds to the Department of Human Services in FY 23 for the Preschool Open Doors (POD) Program.

B&F notes that Cash Support for Child Care (HMS 305) has \$4,640,000 in general funds in its base budget for POD in FB 2021-23.

B&F also notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



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

March 19, 2022

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

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Coleen Momohara, Interim Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: Measure: H.B. No. 1999 H.D. 1 – RELATING TO EDUCATION
Hearing Date: Monday, March 21, 2022
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Location: Videoconference & Conference Room 229

Bill Description: Appropriates moneys to the Department of Human Services for the Preschool Open Doors program. Effective 7/1/2050 (HD 1.)

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Supports

Aloha. I am Coleen Momohara, Interim Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL supports this bill, which would appropriate funds to the Department of Human Services (DHS) for the Preschool Open Doors (POD) program, and defers to DHS.

EOEL is statutorily responsible for the development of the State's early childhood system that shall ensure a spectrum of high-quality development and learning opportunities for children throughout the state, from prenatal care until the time they enter kindergarten, with priority given to underserved or at-risk children. In addition, pursuant to Act 046, SLH 2020, EOEL is responsible for expanding access to early learning programs for all 3- and 4-year-olds.

It is during the earliest years when the environments, supports, and relationships experienced by children have profound effects on their developing brains and their trajectory for learning and development, making high-quality early care and education programs are a critical support for young children and their families. Although there is widespread recognition of the importance of high-quality early learning opportunities and increased investments to the sector, the cost of care can be unaffordable for many families in Hawaii. The POD program promotes school readiness by providing child care subsidies for eligible families, helping to alleviate the high cost of care.

EOEL recognizes the importance of programs such as POD that help increase access to early learning programs for Hawaii's youngest children and defers to the DHS. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

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

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair
Committee on Human Services

FROM: Robert G. Peters, Chair
Early Learning Board

SUBJECT: **Measure:** HB 1999, HD 1 – Relating to Education
Hearing Date: Monday, March 21, 2022
Time: 3:00 P.M.
Location: Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

Description: Appropriates funds to the department of human services for the preschool open doors program. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD1)

Early Learning Board Position: Support the Intent

Aloha. I am Robert G. Peters, Chair of the Early Learning Board, offering testimony in support of the intent of HB 1999, HD 1, which would appropriate funds to the Department of Human Services for the Preschool Open Doors program (POD).

As the governing board for EOEL, we thank the Legislature for its support of EOEL's work to increase access to high-quality early learning. EOEL is statutorily responsible for the development of the State's early childhood system that shall ensure a spectrum of high-quality development and learning opportunities for children throughout the state, from prenatal care until the time they enter kindergarten, with priority given to underserved or at-risk children.

Preschool Open Doors provides access for Hawaii's families to early learning care for their children. Without this funding, many find it challenging if not impossible to afford early learning care, which we know benefits children as they begin a journey through the educational continuum. It also affords families the opportunity to remain in the workforce. An investment in Preschool Open Doors pays dividends both now and in the future. Therefore, the ELB supports the intent of this bill.

Mahalo for this opportunity to offer testimony in support of the intent of HB 1999, HD 1.



TO: Chairs Kidani and San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Kim and Ihara and Members of the Senate Committees on Education and Human Services

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

DATE/LOCATION: March 21, 2022; 3:00 p.m., Conference Room 229/Videoconference

RE: TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 1999 – RELATING TO EDUCATION

We ask you to support HB 1999 which appropriates moneys to the Department of Human Services for the preschool open doors program. Given the legislature's and community's continued priority of creating access to high-quality early care and learning programs, we must continue to ensure that families can afford care. We believe that it is critically important for every child to have access to safe, high-quality care and the Preschool Open Doors (POD) subsidy program provides an important avenue for that to happen.

On top of consistent cuts to the program over time, POD funding was cut by almost \$7 million last year due to overall State budget constraints. The number of children served was nearly cut in half due to the significant budget cut. While funding was made available through the federal subsidy program, there is still currently a POD waitlist of over 150 families who qualify for and are still in need of childcare assistance. While there is also federal funding for childcare subsidies through another program, POD – the stated funded subsidy program – allows more flexibility and increases eligibility particularly for working families who work odd hours (i.e. hospitality, security and food industry workers to name a few). The federal subsidy program has tighter restrictions on the work requirement for families and therefore families who would not qualify under the federal eligibility, could still qualify for subsidy through the POD program.

As a provider of Early Head Start and Head Start classrooms on Oahu and Hawaii Island, we see firsthand the importance of POD subsidy for parents/caregivers. These subsidies often help families to enroll their child(ren) in and cover the cost of full-day (8hr) and/or extended day (10hr) programs, which allows parents/caregivers to be able to work full-time jobs. Many of our families benefit from the POD subsidy program and express their gratitude for the existence of the program.

Sadly, during the pandemic, others providers were forced to increase rates due to increased costs of supplies, increases in staffing needs to maintain adequate child to teacher ratios with physical distancing, and drops in overall enrollments which led to decreases in revenue, and those increased rates are likely to remain. Subsidies are essential to help parents afford the cost of care for their child(ren).

We thank the legislature for recognizing the need and respectfully request that any appropriations for this stipend program not supplant any of the budget priorities currently in the executive budget or the critical appropriations that should be set aside for increasing access to early learning for 3- and 4-year-olds. The POD subsidy program is an important piece of the puzzle and we hope that state policy will work towards putting all the critical pieces together for effective systems change and the long-term benefit of our keiki and community. Increased or, at minimum, maintained funding levels would greatly benefit families.

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to under-resourced families. Assisting more than 17,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 20 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community strengthening programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of HB 1999**, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.



Kamehameha Schools®

Senate Committee on Education
Senate Committee on Human Services

Time: 3:00 p.m.
Date: March 21, 2022
Where: Conference Room 229

TESTIMONY

By Dr. Wai‘ale‘ale Sarsona
Vice President, Hi‘ialo

RE: **HB 1999, HD1, Relating to Education**

E ka Luna Ho‘omalū Kidani, ka Luna Ho‘omalū San Buenaventura, ka Hope Luna Ho‘omalū Kim, ka Hope Luna Ho‘omalū Ihara, a me nā lālā o nā Kōmike, aloha kākou! My name is Dr. Wai‘ale‘ale Sarsona, Vice President of Hi‘ialo at Kamehameha Schools.

Kamehameha Schools **supports** HB 1999, HD1, which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services for the Preschool Open Doors program.

The enactment of Act 46 (2020) was a pivotal step forward and we must remain steadfast in our commitment to this future in Hawai‘i. Since the start of the pandemic, Hawai‘i has lost over 3,600 seats, at least 6 preschools and many more family childcare providers. Our keiki cannot afford to lose any more.

The cost of full-time childcare continues to be a great burden for so many families across Hawai‘i. The average annual cost of childcare in Hawai‘i for a 4-year-old is \$8,940, or \$745 each month. Continued funding and support of the Preschool Open Doors program will ensure that families in need can provide quality childcare to their 4-year-olds and prepare them for their educational journey. **Please advance this measure.**

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. Hānai i ke keiki; ola ka lāhui.

‘A‘ohe ‘ulu e loa‘a i ka pōkole o ka lou. There is no success without preparation.

Committees on Education and Human Services
The Hawaii State Senate
415 S Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

LATE

Re: HB1999 HD1 SUPPORT

January 27, 2022

Dear Chairs Kidani and Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Kim and Ihara, and esteemed members of the Education and Human Services Committees,

I am writing in SUPPORT of BILL HB1999 HD1 which seeks to provide funding for the Preschool Open Doors Program

My name is Erika Molyneux, and I am a resident of Kaneohe, a former middle and high school teacher, and a community college instructor with a child in public elementary school and another about to start preschool. Hawaii is the most expensive state in the country. Many families barely have enough money to pay their monthly bills, let alone additional expenses incurred by private child care and preschools. Children's minds are incredibly adept and efficient learning machines. According to [this article by Edutopia](#), the first significant period of brain development occurs between the ages of two and seven, and two-year olds have twice as many brain synapses as adults, meaning they are able to learn twice as quickly. This biological fact supports the notion that supporting early learning for all preschool-age children, regardless of income or background, can significantly benefit all learners, setting them up for later success and benefiting our community as a whole. Early access to preschool education helps children develop a love of learning, socialize, and learn to follow protocols, which ultimately will help set learners and their future teachers and classroom communities up for success, reducing wasted time spent on remedial lessons and discipline.

Let us continue to support our most vulnerable preschool children by helping their families afford learning-rich preschool

For all these reasons and more, I strongly support PASSING BILL HB1999 HD1. Mahalo nui!

Sincerely,



Erika Molyneux

HB-1999-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 4:58:23 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Press	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Michael Press. I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate in Ewa Beach on Oahu. I support this bill and I urge you to do the same. Thank you.