



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

March 28, 2022

**TO:** Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
Representative Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness

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

**SUBJECT:** **Measure:** HCR 69 / HR 12  
**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, March 29, 2022  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m.  
**Location:** Room 329 and videoconference

**Resolution Description:** Designating the month of September 2022 as child care provider appreciation month.

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING: Support**

Aloha. I am Coleen Momohara, Interim Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL supports HCR 69 / HR 62, which designates the month of September 2022 as child care provider appreciation month.

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.

High-quality early childhood programs help "build the foundations for stronger family lives that result in larger gains for their children" (Heckman, James, and Ganesh Karapukula, 2019). In addition, these programs enable more individuals, particularly women, to work or go to school and supports the economic security of working families. The backbone of these programs are child care providers.

Child care providers play an essential role in support children's cognitive and emotional development and deserve the respect befitting that role. Designating September 2022 as Child Care Provider Appreciation Month honors the people who uplift our children, families, and communities. We urge this committee to support the passage of this resolution and thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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

To: Representative Yamane, Chair  
Representative Tam, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness

Re: **HR 62/ HCR 69, Designating the month of September 2022 as child care provider appreciation month**  
10:00 AM, March 29, 2022

Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and committee members,

On behalf of HCAN Speaks!, thank you for the opportunity to **testify in strong support of HR 62/ HCR 69, Designating the month of September 2022 as Child Care Provider Appreciation month.**

Child care is the backbone of our communities. It is child care providers who have kept our hospitals, our emergency services, our government offices, and the other essential services open during the pandemic. But even before the pandemic, child care has held the unique position of being simultaneously absolutely essential and undervalued. Designating September 2022 as Child Care Provider Appreciation month is a small act of gratitude our state can show to those who have supported, loved, and educated the children in Hawai'i.

There are many bills focused on child care this session. The renewed focus on improving working conditions in child care, our state's understanding of the child care workforce, and improving accessibility for parents clearly demonstrates the desire to make major improvements in this sector. This resolution is a compliment to them all and honors those working tirelessly for the future of our state.

A 1973 report by the Legislative Reference Bureau on child care in Hawai'i found that the hourly wage of a private child care teacher was between \$1.80-\$2.00 an hour. When adjusted for inflation, that is between \$12.43-\$13.81, the same median wages of child care providers today.<sup>1</sup> Fifty years later, the statements in the report remain true, the low wages of workers makes retention difficult. The report also acknowledged how vital child care is to working families, families in lower income households, and to the state's economy as a whole.

The Friday before Mother's Day is celebrated as Child Care Provider Appreciation Day, but we feel a day is not enough. Designating September, the month where we honor workers in America, uplifts the profession as just that, a profession deserving of respect and fair compensation.

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

Thank you,

Kathleen Algire  
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy

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<sup>1</sup> Legislative Reference Bureau (1973) *Child care in Hawai'i: An overview*, [https://lrb.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/1973\\_ChildCareInHawaii.pdf](https://lrb.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/1973_ChildCareInHawaii.pdf)

Date: March 28, 2022

To: House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness  
Representative Ryan Yamane, Chair  
Representative Adrian Tam, Vice Chair

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: **Support for HCR69/HR62, Designating September 2022 Child Care Provider Appreciation Month**

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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 HCR69/HR62**, which would designate the month of September, 2022, as Child Care Provider Appreciation Month.

Over half of Hawai'i's children are in non-parental child care during the week, calling attention to the importance of quality child care services for all children and families in our communities.

High-quality child care nurtures development and provides children with vital learning opportunities that are critical for school readiness and leads to improved educational, economic, health and well-being outcomes for children, lasting into adulthood. Child care also makes a significant difference in the health and security of families, enabling parents/caregivers to work, as well as to get education and training that can be instrumental in improving families' economic stability.

Child care providers are an essential workforce that should be recognized for their contributions to children and families, as well to our local communities and our state's economy. Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, child care providers weathered tremendous hardship to meet the needs of families while risking their health and financial stability to remain open. And they continue to struggle to rebuild their businesses and restore services in the face of ongoing economic difficulties and uncertainty.

Our future depends on the quality of the early childhood experiences provided to young children and the support and security provided to families by the state's child care providers. Designating September 2022 as Child Care Provider Appreciation Month would honor the women and men who hold up our families and our communities.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of these measures.

**HR-62**

Submitted on: 3/27/2022 3:18:26 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/29/2022 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kanani Kai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

Kanani

**HR-62**

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:57:41 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/29/2022 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Justina Acevedo-Cross	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support designating September as Child Care Provider Appreciation Month. Sandra, Tom, Alison, Bill, Kiara, Taylor, Michelle--what do these names have in common? They are the unnoticed heroes of the Covid-19 pandemic, each the name of a child care provider who took care of my children in the critical early years of life. They are problem-solvers, ouchie-soothers, brain builders, and parent confidants.

Child care providers are so important to all of us--to children, to families, to Hawaii's businesses. Let's acknowledge them. Let's make a big deal of it and celebrate them for a whole month!

Please support this resolution.