

‘O kēia ‘ōlelo hō’ike no ke
Komikina Kūlana Olakino o Nā Wāhine

Testimony on behalf of the
Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women

Prepared for the H. Committee on Finance

In Support of S.B. 2701 SD2, HD1
March 22, 2022

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Honorable Members:

The Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women writes in strong support of S.B. 2701 SD2, HD1, which establishes and makes an appropriation for an early child care worker subsidy pilot program. The measure also makes an appropriation to the Hawaii Early Childhood Educator Special Fund.

S.B. 2701 SD2, HD1 will tackle the worsening gender wage in Hawai‘i, disproportionate burden of the COVID-19 pandemic on women, and logistical nightmare of childcare in the State. This pilot compensation program is critical to stem high turnover and shortages in child care workers, who experience higher poverty rates than the general population. This will also provide knowledge on how to design long-term, sustainable childcare in the long-term.

Please pass S.B. 2701 SD2, HD1.

Sincerely,

Khara Jabola-Carolus
Executive Director

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 HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2701, S.D. 2, H.D. 1

April 1, 2022
3:00 p.m.
Room 308 and Videoconference

RELATING TO EARLY EDUCATION

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

Senate Bill No. 2701, S.D. 2, H.D. 1: 1) establishes a Child Care Worker Subsidy Pilot Program within the Department of Human Services (DHS) for a period of one year; 2) sets applicant eligibility and selection requirements, a target for the percentage of early childhood educators to be served, and reporting and other requirements for DHS; 3) appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds to DHS in FY 23 for the pilot program; and 4) appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds to the Executive Office on Early Learning in FY 23 for deposit into the Early Learning Special Fund and an unspecified amount out of the Early Learning Special Fund to support the Hawai'i Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program.

B&F 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 31, 2022

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

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

SUBJECT: **Measure:** S.B. No. 2701 S.D. 2, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO EARLY EDUCATION
Hearing Date: Friday, April 1, 2022
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Location: Videoconference & Conference Room 308

Bill Description: Establishes a one-year Early Child Care Worker Subsidy Pilot Program to assist in retaining the existing early child care workforce. Appropriates funds for the pilot program to be expended by the Department of Human Services. Appropriates funds for the Early Learning Special Fund to be expended by the Executive Office on Early Learning for the Hawaii Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program. The pilot program repeals on 7/1/2060. (HD1).

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support

Aloha. I am Coleen Momohara, Interim Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL supports S.B. 2701 S.D. 2, H.D. 1, which would establish an early child care worker subsidy pilot program and makes an appropriation to the Hawaii Early Childhood Educator Special fund and defers to the Department of Human Services (DHS) on other parts of the bill.

EOEL is committed to increasing access while building the infrastructure needed to make sure the State's investment reaps the intended returns. **One of the things we've learned from our Program, as well as our collaborative work across private and public partners in the field, is that most, if not all, of us cannot find enough qualified staff to expand quickly.** We must be sure this workforce is in place if we want new classrooms and programs to have qualified educators and for successful expansion.

Challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified staff are a significant barrier to sustaining the early learning workforce. Despite working in a specialized field with health, safety, and educational requirements and having higher levels of education than the average American worker (Whitebook et al., 1990), many early childhood care and education providers remain at the second or third percentile in the Bureau of Labor and Statistics rankings of occupation, making wages comparable to that of parking lot attendants, bartenders, and laundry service workers. The median wage of child care workers in Hawaii is \$12.43. Sixteen percent of child care workers are living in poverty, compared to the 10 percent of the general population in Hawaii (Early Childhood

Workforce Index, 2020). **EOEL recognizes that increasing compensation is an effective way to increase recruitment and retention of a qualified early learning workforce**, and we defer to the DHS regarding the components of the early child care worker subsidy pilot program and its implementation.

Act 210, SLH 2021, established the Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program. This program, administered by EOEL in partnership with the University of Hawaii, currently leverages private source funding that would provide upfront financial support, covering early childhood tuition and fees, to individuals in the early care and education system. **This program targets individuals already working in the sector and appropriations to the program would provide sustainability and much-needed support for educators and providers who are an undervalued and under-supported workforce.**

We have been in discussions with legislators and are working with higher education and other stakeholders statewide to understand how we can find creative ways to increase our early learning workforce to achieve the Legislature's vision. We look forward to continue working with the Legislature to expand access to high-quality early learning programs and services in the state and make its vision a reality.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee On Finance

From: Robert G. Peters, Chair
Early Learning Board

Subject: **Measure:** SB 2701 SD 2, HD 1, Relating to Early Education
Hearing Date: Friday, April 1, 2022
Time: 3:00 P.M.
Location: Conference Room 308 and Videoconference

Description: Establishes a one-year child care worker subsidy pilot program to assist in retaining the existing early child care workforce. Appropriates moneys for the pilot program to be expended by the Department of Human Services. Appropriates funds to be deposited into the the early learning special fund and expended by the Executive Office on Early Learning for the Hawaii Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program. Repeals the pilot program on 7/1/2023. Effective 7/1/2060. (HD 1)

Early Learning Board Position: Support

Aloha. I am Robert G. Peters, Chair of the Early Learning Board (ELB). Thank you for this opportunity to support SB 2701 SD 2, HD 1.

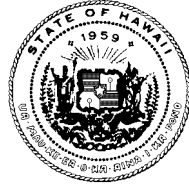
The Early Learning Board (ELB) appreciates the Legislature’s continued support of early learning, despite the challenges the State has had to face because of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are grateful for your continued efforts to increase access to early care and education and the recognition that the need for quality early child care and education far exceeds the current State’s capacity to deliver it. One of the critical capacity issues arises from the inadequacy of compensation for providers, who are challenged to afford Hawaii’s cost of living. The median wage for child care workers is well below the living wage of \$20.61/hr. calculated for a single adult in our State. This situation is a barrier to attracting and retaining quality providers and child care workers and accounts, in part, for the high early childhood educator turnover rate not only in Hawaii but across the nation.

This bill, SB 2701 SD 2, HD 1, aligns with the ELB annual priorities which include, “Supporting efforts to expand workforce capacity building” and the Board’s support of the University of Hawaii’s College of Education’s effort to conduct a compensation study with recommendations about achieving equity with sustainable living wages for early educators, a vital part of our State’s economic infrastructure.

Act 210, SLH 2021, established the Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program but without an appropriation. This program, administered by EOEL in partnership with the University of Hawaii, currently leverages private source funding that would provide upfront financial support, covering early childhood tuition and fees, to individuals in the early care and education system. One of the greatest barriers for early childhood professionals to pursue higher education is not having the money to pay for tuition; the appropriation in this bill would help to address this critical need and help to guarantee that our community workforce can be served with quality, much needed child care.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer this testimony supportive of SB 2701 SD 2, HD 1.

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 31, 2022

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

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2701 SD2 HD1 – RELATING TO EARLY EDUCATION.**

Hearing: Friday, April 1, 2022, 3:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the HD1 amendments, requests further amendments and clarification, and provides comments. DHS defers to the Executive Office on Early Learning for relevant parts. DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation not reduce or replace priorities identified in the executive budget.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to establish a one-year child care worker subsidy pilot program to assist in retaining the existing child care workforce. Appropriates moneys for the pilot program to be expended by the Department of Human Services. Appropriates moneys to be deposited into the early learning special fund and expended by the Executive Office on Early Learning for the Hawaii early childhood educator stipend program. Repeals the pilot program on 7/1/2023. Effective 7/1/2060. (HD1)

The SD1 amended the measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that the purpose of the one-year Early Child Care Worker Subsidy Pilot Program is to retain the existing early child care workforce;
- (2) Amending section 1 to reflect its clarified purpose;

- (3) Clarifying that the pilot program participants shall not be employed by the Department of Education, Executive Office on Early Learning, or public charter schools;
- (4) Making the recipient of the appropriations for the Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program the Early Learning Special Fund, established pursuant to section 302L-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes; and
- (5) Making technical, non substantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

The SD2 further amended the measure by:

- (1) Renaming the early child care worker subsidy pilot program the child care worker subsidy pilot program;
- (2) Clarifying that the scope of the pilot program is to serve child care workers;
- (3) Requiring the Department of Human Services to submit interim and final reports on the pilot program;
- (4) Changing the effective date to July 1, 2050, to facilitate further discussion on the measure; and
- (5) Making technical non substantive changes for purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

The HD1 further amended the measure by:

- (1) Limiting participation in the Child Care Worker Subsidy Pilot Program to child care workers working in licensed child care centers, licensed infant and toddler centers, registered family child care homes, and licensed group child care centers;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 2060, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency and style.

The Department respectfully offers the following recommendations:

A new child care subsidy worker program will take time to develop and implement. Therefore, we suggest deleting "one-year" from sections 1 and 2, which would establish a more extended period for planning and implementation of the child care worker subsidy program instead of a brief one-year period. The extended period would give DHS time to make program and system changes and develop administrative processes and rules that must be in place before the implementation of the program.

The proposed section 2, paragraph (b), requires the Department to develop minimum standards and qualifications for participation in the pilot program and identifies minimal

requirements. Accordingly, the Department respectfully requests the following amendments in section 2, paragraph (b), on lines 15-16 and 20-21, to read as follows

(b) The department of human services shall develop standards and qualifications for participation in the pilot program by child care workers, which at a minimum, shall meet the following requirements:

- (1) Participants shall not be employed by the department of education, executive office on early learning, or any public charter schools; and
- (2) Participants shall be limited to child care workers working in licensed group child care centers, licensed infant and toddler centers, and registered family child care homes.

The Department does not have subject matter expertise and purview regarding wages to address section 2, subsection (c). DHS suggests not specifying a payment amount and instead suggests setting a standard above the minimum wage base pay in section 2.

The Department recommends deleting section 2, subsection (d) in its entirety and allowing the Department to address program eligibility criteria through administrative rules.

The Department further suggests adding a provision in section 2 that the subsidies are to be provided subject to the availability of funding. Also, it will be challenging for DHS to determine how much will be expended without knowing the number of workers eligible and the expected amount of the subsidy.

For Section 3, the Department requests that subsection (a) be deleted in its entirety and subsection (b) delete the term "final" on page 3, line 17.

The Department's current program demands and efforts are focused on complying with provisions of the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant, which provides approximately \$30 million annually in federal Child Care and Development Fund grants. Additionally, DHS is in the process of distributing \$70 million in child care stabilization funds appropriated through the American Rescue Plan Act.

The requested amendments result from more analysis and discussion of the purpose of this measure. The Department suggests that a more detailed study be done to determine an optimal wage for recruiting and maintaining the child care workforce before implementing a wage subsidy program. However, should this measure move forward, DHS requests consideration of the requested amendments.

Lastly, we ask that any appropriation not supplant fiscal priorities identified in the Executive Budget.

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



To: House Committee on Finance
Hearing Date/Time: April 1, 2022 3PM
Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of SB2701 SD2 HD1

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and the Members of Committees,

Members of AAUW of Hawaii thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of SB2701 SD2 HD1 which would create a 1 year pilot wage subsidy program and appropriate funding into the Early Childhood Educator Stipend program to retain and recruit childcare educators.

In 2020, Hawaii had an estimated 59,000 children under 6 needing care and only 24,000 spaces in licensed & regulated programs. The median wage of childcare educators in Hawaii is \$12.43 and many leave for a better paying job. The living wage in Hawaii is \$19. We simply need to pay the childcare educators better. The childcare programs rely on tuition to stay open and that cost is already way too high for most of the families in Hawaii.

Women shoulder a disproportionate burden of child care responsibilities: about 27% of mothers stay at home (versus 7% fathers), three fourth of the mothers who stay at home do so to care for family (versus one fourth of the fathers) according to a 2018 survey from Pew Research. Being forced to leave the labor force to do unpaid care work limits women's advancement and corresponding pay increases, contributing to the gender pay gap. On average, women spend 12 years less in the workforce than men. The gender pay gap also continues into retirement, with the 2019 U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey showing a nearly 30% difference in total retirement income between men and women. There are serious and disproportionate financial barriers to seniors aging in place and avoiding institutionalization.

By increasing the number of childcare spaces by raising the wage of childcare educators while keeping the licensed child care programs affordable, SB2701 SD2 HD1 allows mothers to remain in the workforce. This measure allows mothers a chance for better pay for themselves and their family, and for better retirement income and savings.



The American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Hawaii is an all volunteer, statewide chapter of a national organization and is made up of six branches: Hilo, Honolulu, Kua'i, Kona, Maui, and Windward Oahu. UH Hilo, UH Manoa, UH Maui College, and Windward Community College are also AAUW partners. AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity for equal opportunities in education, at workplace and for economic security, and in leadership.

Please pass this important measure.

with Aloha,
Younghee Overly

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Y. Overly", is positioned below the typed name.

Public Policy Chair, AAUW of Hawaii
publicpolicy-hi@aauw.net

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 8:35:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Ching, MD, MPH	American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawaii Chapter	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair, Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawaii Chapter, supports SB2701, which would establish a one-year Early Child Care Worker Subsidy Pilot Program. High quality child care is a critically important mechanism for supporting our working families and the development of their children. This bill would improve the recruitment and retention of child care workers and, by increasing the workforce, would provide better access to high quality child care. It would have the added benefit of reducing poverty and food insecurity among child care workers. Thank you for your consideration on this bill.

Sincerely,

Michael S.L. Ching, MD, MPH, FAAP
President
American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawaii Chapter



Date: March 30, 2022

To: House Committee on Finance
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: **Support for SB2701 SD2 H1, Relating to Early 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 strongly supports passage of SB2701 SD2 H1, which would 1) establish and fund a child care worker subsidy pilot program and 2) make an appropriation to the Hawaii Early Childhood Educator Special Fund.

High-quality child care and early learning programs are fundamental to thriving children, flourishing families, and a robust economy. An effective, well-trained, early childhood workforce is the backbone of these programs. This workforce, however, suffers from chronically low wages and turnover.

According to the 2020 National Early Childhood Workforce Index (Center for the Study of Child Care Employment) there are an estimated 3,410 members of the early childhood teaching workforce providing services to Hawaii's children. The median hourly wage for child care workers in Hawaii is \$12.43 and the poverty rate for early educators in Hawaii is 16.3%, much higher than the poverty rate for Hawaii workers in general (6.1%) and 4.5 times as high as for K-8 teachers (3.6%). Studies nationally estimate annual turnover rates between 26-40% for early childhood educators in licensed child care facilities.

The pandemic has only exacerbated the problem, with the risks and burdens of COVID-19 making it all the more difficult to both retain child care professionals and replace those who leave. As of September, 2021, the child care industry, nationally, was down 126,700 workers, more than a 10% decline from pre-pandemic levels and was facing one of the most dire of hiring situations across employment sectors.

The wage supplements and education stipends supported by **SB2701 SD2 H1** are a critical measure designed to aid in the recruitment, education, and retention of the early care and learning workforce. Fifteen states and the District of Columbia have used child care compensation programs to address the high rates of turnover and critical shortage in the workforce, and increasing compensation has been cited as the #1 way to increase retention and recruitment for child care and early learning in Hawai'i.

In order for Hawai'i to rebuild from the pandemic and meet the education, employment, and economic needs of the state, the state must support and sustain the child care sector and improve families' access to child care and early learning programs by prioritizing strategies, such as those in **SB2701 SD2 H1**, to stabilize and expand the early childhood workforce.

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

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 12:34:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doris Segal Matsunaga	Save Medicaid Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Save Medicaid Hawaii supports SB 2701 SD2 HD1



TO:

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

FROM:

Brenda Watanabe, VP Public Policy, HiAEYC Board

SUBJECT: Measure: S.B. No. 2701 SD2 HD1 – RELATING TO EARLY EDUCATION

Hearing Date: Friday, April 1, 2022

Time: 3:00pm

The mission of the Hawai'i Association for the Education of Young Children (HiAEYC) is to promote, support, and expand quality and professionalism in early childhood programs and services for Hawai'i's young children (birth to age 8) and their families. HiAEYC is the Hawai'i affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Early Child Care Worker Subsidy Pilot Program: HB 2701 establishes and appropriates funds for an Early Child Care Worker Subsidy Pilot program. Early care and learning programs are the cornerstones of our communities. They support our youngest learners and our working families; however low compensation has forced dedicated professionals to leave the field and prevented others from joining. We are experiencing a childcare crisis. Early childhood staff should be provided equitable salaries and benefits commensurate with their qualifications, experience and job responsibilities. We believe equitable compensation will reduce high staff turnover and keep qualified staff in the field. A pilot compensation program would address workforce retention and provide insight on how to structure a long-term, sustainable program for the future.

Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program: Early childhood professionals must have access to quality preparation programs and ongoing professional development. Barriers to this access include the cost of higher education tuition. The Early Childhood Educator Stipend program was established through Act 210 in 2021 without appropriation. HB 2701 seeks to appropriate

funding of this program. Funding of the stipend program is essential to retaining a qualified workforce already experiencing economic hardships through low compensation.

HiAEYC strongly supports the two programs of HB2701--the Early Child Care Worker Subsidy Pilot and the Early Childhood Educator Stipend. These support the mission of HiAEYC and we recommend these measures be passed.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to share our views and provide testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brenda Watanabe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brenda Watanabe,
VP of Public Policy,
HiAEYC Board



To: Representative Luke, Chair
Representative Yamashita, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: **SB 2701 SD2 HD1, relating to early education**
3:00 PM, April 1, 2022

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and committee members,

On behalf of HCAN Speaks!, thank you for the opportunity to **testify in STRONG SUPPORT of Senate Bill 2701 SD2 HD1, relating to early education. We need bold efforts to stabilize the child care workforce.**

To improve the measure and the Department of Human Services' ability to implement the program, we suggest the following amendments:

- Strike the term "pilot" from the language of the bill. This would be a new program within the Department of Human Services
- Remove lottery and requirements for size and geographic preference
- Strike page 2, lines 8-21, and page 3, lines 5-6, and insert "The department of human services shall implement a wage subsidy program" and give authority to create administrative rules
- Strike page 3, lines 10-12
- Strike page 3, section 3 (a)
- Change reporting requirements from report on pilot program to report on progress of program in 2024.
- Request \$2M in general funds
- Strike repeal date on page 5, line 2, and make effective date July 1, 2022

We need to prioritize maintaining our current child care workforce. The intent behind the measure is to prevent child care workers from leaving the profession. Low compensation has been an on-going issue for early care and learning. Although the problem has been recognized, there has been no action to improve compensation. **The average hourly wage of a child care worker in Hawai'i is under \$13.** As a result, our early care and learning workforce is shrinking. Without the professionals in the programs, we will continue to see a reduction of spaces for children. The ripple effect in our community will be outstanding.

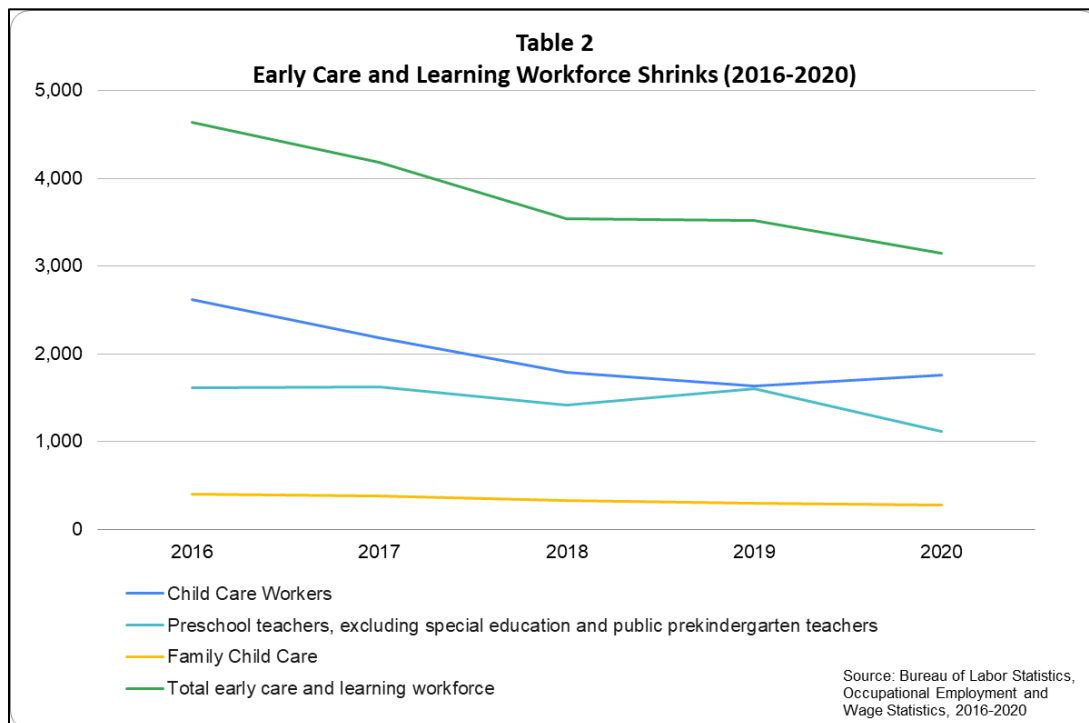
Supporting new early care and learning educators helps us grow the programs children and families need. The Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program (Act 210, 2021) supports recent graduates entering into the early care and learning profession. Educators are eligible for the education stipend if they provide early care and learning services to children between the ages of birth and five years old for at least two consecutive years. While the measure was passed last session, no appropriation was made. We cannot grow our programs if we have no one to work in them.

"Recruitment, development and retention of qualified child care staff remains problematic in most areas of the state. A major contributing factor is low compensation for teachers which deters interested and qualified individuals from entering or remaining in the child care profession. The high rate of turnover among child care staff negatively affects the consistency and quality of care provided to children."
Department of Human Services¹

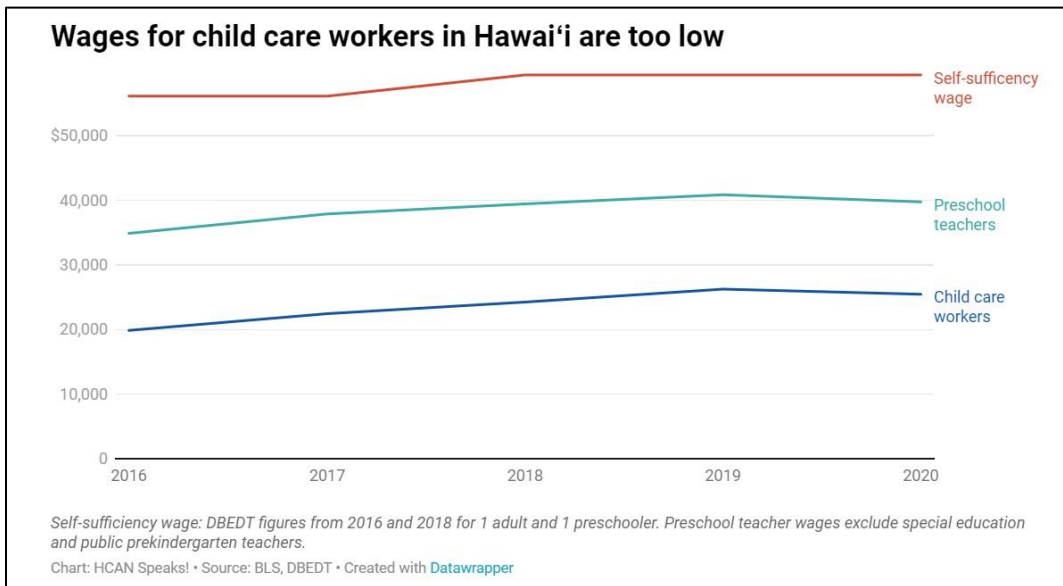
Our shrinking workforce directly contributes to the loss of child care programs. While we've seen a reduction in the number of child care programs since the start of the pandemic, we've been in a steady decline for the last five years (Table 1). It is not a coincidence that we have also seen a reduction in the early care and learning workforce (Table 2). Demand remains high for early care and learning programs and parents are sometimes waiting months for a spot. But we can stop and reverse these trends. We can invest in our early care and learning workforce the same way we do for other public goods. Several states and the District of Columbia have launched initiatives to do this. Recently, Washington D.C passed a bill to give child care workers a one-time payment between \$10,000 and \$14,000. They also adopted a plan to raise wages permanently.¹

Table 1	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Regulated Child Care Licensed Capacity	35,988	36,070	35,548	35,548	35,418
Number of Children Under Age 6 Needing Care	66,000	65,000	64,000	61,000	59,750

Sources: Kids Count, "Children under age 6 with all available parents in workforce"; Department of Human Services regulated child care licensed capacity



¹ dcist, February 2, 2022, "D.C. Child Care Workers To Get \$10,000 Checks As Part Of Pay-Raise Plan", <https://dcist.com/story/22/02/02/dc-child-care-worker-payment/>



Child care programs cannot increase wages without increasing the costs to families. But for most families, child care is already too expensive.

In the fall, early care and learning professionals were asked what came to mind when they heard “Early childhood professionals deserve worthy wages for worthy work”, here are a few of their responses:

“ABSOLUTELY! They are doing the work with our youngest children whose brains are growing exponentially! Why are they getting paid so little when they have the MOST important work!”

“Like my dream come true, to get paid what I am worth”

“Employee retention is getting more difficult as the years go by.....Its so hard to give an employee the pay they deserve for all the hard work they do. Benefits such as retirement are unheard of!”

Let’s take the steps to support children, families, and our early care and learning professionals. Investing in the child care workforce is an investment in our children. For these reasons, HCAN Speaks! respectfully requests the Committee to amend and support this measure.

Thank you,

Kathleen Algire
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy

March 29, 2021

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

From: Dr. Terry Lock, Director,
Hawai'i Early Childhood Educator Excellence and Equity Project
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa College of Education

Subject: Measure – SB 2701 SD2 HD1
RELATING TO EARLY EDUCATION
Hearing Date – April 1, 2022
Time – 3:00 PM
Location: Room 308 and videoconference

My name is Dr. Terry Lock. I am with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) College of Education (COE) and serve as the director of the Hawai'i Early Childhood Educator Excellence and Equity (ECE³) Project. This project's goal is to transform early childhood education lead teacher preparation programs and compensation/ financing systems.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am in strong support of SB 2701 SD2 HD1. This bill seeks to help recruit and retain early childhood educators. We need to make investments in our early childhood workforce to support young children, our working families, and our state.

Research has shown that a diverse well-prepared, well-supported, and well-compensated workforce is essential for the delivery of high-quality early childhood programs (Institute of Medicine, 2015). Early care and learning programs are the cornerstones of our communities in Hawai'i. They support our youngest learners and our working families. But for decades, they have been facing a crisis that is only getting worse. Low-compensation has forced dedicated professionals, especially those working in community-based and home-based programs, to leave the field and this has prevented others from joining.

Three key facts about the child care in Hawai'i are: 1) \$12.43 is the median wage of a child care worker; 2) 16% is the percent of child care workers who live in poverty; and 3) 35,000 is the estimated number of child care spaces we need to serve all children needing care

SB 2701 SD2 HD1 seeks to create a 1- year pilot wage subsidy program for licensed child care centers, licensed infant and toddler centers, registered family child care homes, and licensed group child care centers; to be expended by the state Department of Human Services (DHS). The purpose of this child care worker subsidy pilot program is to prevent existing child care workers from leaving the early care and education field.

Related to low wages, a common barrier to recruiting and retaining students who are pursuing early childhood education degrees in higher education is not having enough money to pay for tuition. Therefore, there needs to be funding for Hawai'i's Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program, whose purpose is to support the early learning workforce by providing financial assistance upfront to eligible individuals taking coursework in early childhood education. Hawai'i's Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program was established through Act 210 in 2021 without appropriation. Therefore, I am in support of appropriations for the Early Learning Special Fund to be expended by the Executive Office on Early Learning for Hawai'i's Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program.

By supporting the child care worker subsidy pilot program and Hawai'i's Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program in SB 2701 SD2 HD1, we will be strengthening and expanding the early care and learning workforce who will provide needed services to young children and their families across our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of SB 2701 SD2 HD1.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Terry Lock

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 8:36:28 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Toni Fujimoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 2701 SD2 HD1, relating to early education. This bill seeks to help retain and recruit early childhood educators. We need to make investments in our early childhood workforce to support children, our working families, and our state.

Early care and learning programs are the cornerstones of our communities. They support our youngest learners and our working families. But they are facing a crisis. Low-compensation has forced dedicated professionals to leave the field and prevented others from joining. Three key facts about the child care in Hawai‘i are:

- \$12.43 The median wage of a child care worker in Hawai‘i**
- 16% The percent of child care workers in poverty in the state**
- 35,000 The estimated number of child care spaces we need to serve all children needing care**

Without support for these programs and the workforce, families will have fewer options for the care and education of their children. In UHERO’s economic forecast for the state, economist Carl Bonham noted, “By making early childhood education accessible to more families, these programs will increase labor force participation, particularly among women. They also represent an important investment in the development of the country’s future human capital and in the fight against poverty”. Growing quality, affordable programs won’t happen without ensuring we have the workforce we need and our children deserve.

The Early Educator Stipend Program will help ensure we have the workforce we need moving forward. It was established in 2021 without funding and therefore we request a \$1M appropriation to sustain the program.

Mahalo

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:06:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kenisha Strong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:12:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris Barzman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

No more important job in the world than those who take care of our children. Let's reward them with fair pay.

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:46:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Millicent Cox	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To retain and recruit early childhood educators, a pilot program to increase child care workers' wages is an important step.

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:09:07 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cassia Simms-Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 2701 SD2 HD1, relating to early education. This bill seeks to help retain and recruit early childhood educators. We need to make investments in our early childhood workforce to support children, our working families, and our state.

Early care and learning programs are the cornerstones of our communities. They support our youngest learners and our working families. But they are facing a crisis. Low-compensation has forced dedicated professionals to leave the field and prevented others from joining. Three key facts about the child care in Hawai‘i are:

- **\$12.43** The median wage of a child care worker in Hawai‘i
- **16%** The percent of child care workers in poverty in the state
- **35,000** The estimated number of child care spaces we need to serve all children needing care

Without support for these programs and the workforce, families will have fewer options for the care and education of their children. In UHERO’s economic forecast for the state, economist Carl Bonham noted, “By making early childhood education accessible to more families, these programs will increase labor force participation, particularly among women. They also represent an important investment in the development of the country’s future human capital and in the fight against poverty”. Growing quality, affordable programs won’t happen without ensuring we have the workforce we need and our children deserve.

The Early Educator Stipend Program will help ensure we have the workforce we need moving forward. It was established in 2021 without funding and therefore we request a \$1M appropriation to sustain the program.

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:16:52 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marian Heidel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- **Families can't afford to pay and child care educators can't afford to stay. Programs rely on child care tuition to stay open and that cost is too high for families to shoulder alone. We need public investment to fund a system that works for children, families, and teachers.**
- **Hawai'i has a dire shortage of child care and early learning programs.**
 - In the last 10 years, we have seen a decrease in the number of programs and spaces.
 - The early childhood workforce has shrunk as more professionals leave the field for higher paying jobs.
- **Hawai'i has too many families needing early care and learning and not enough spaces. In 2020, Hawai'i had an estimated 59,000 kids under 6 needing care and only 24,000 spaces in licensed/regulated programs.**

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:22:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leah McRae	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo.

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:39:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dawn Morais Webster Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need to make investments in our early childhood workforce to support children, our working families, and our state.

Early care and learning programs are the cornerstones of our communities. They support our youngest learners and our working families. But they are facing a crisis. Low-compensation has forced dedicated professionals to leave the field and prevented others from joining.

Please move this bill forward. Mahalo.

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:57:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Barry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support passing this important Bill.

Mahalo,

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 11:08:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JoAnn Farnsworth	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 2701 SD2 HD1, relating to early education. This bill seeks to help retain and recruit early childhood educators. We need to make investments in our early childhood workforce to support children, our working families, and our state.

Early care and learning programs are the cornerstones of our communities. They support our youngest learners and our working families. But they are facing a crisis. Low-compensation has forced dedicated professionals to leave the field and prevented others from joining. Three key facts about the child care in Hawai‘i are:

- \$12.43 The median wage of a child care worker in Hawai‘i**
- 16% The percent of child care workers in poverty in the state**
- 35,000 The estimated number of child care spaces we need to serve all children needing care**

Without support for these programs and the workforce, families will have fewer options for the care and education of their children. In UHERO’s economic forecast for the state, economist Carl Bonham noted, “By making early childhood education accessible to more families, these programs will increase labor force participation, particularly among women. They also represent an important investment in the development of the country’s future human capital and in the fight against poverty”. Growing quality, affordable programs won’t happen without ensuring we have the workforce we need and our children deserve.

The Early Educator Stipend Program will help ensure we have the workforce we need moving forward. It was established in 2021 without funding and therefore we request a \$1M appropriation to sustain the program.

Thank you,

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 11:11:54 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanani Kai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 11:36:54 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dr. Lori de Crinis	Imua Family Services	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 2701 SD2 HD1, relating to early education. This bill seeks to help retain and recruit early childhood educators. We need to make investments in our early childhood workforce to support children, our working families, and our state.

Early care and learning programs are the cornerstones of our communities. They support our youngest learners and our working families. But they are facing a crisis. Low-compensation has forced dedicated professionals to leave the field and prevented others from joining. Three key facts about the child care in Hawai'i are:

- **\$12.43 The median wage of a child care worker in Hawai'i**
- **16% The percent of child care workers in poverty in the state**
- **35,000 The estimated number of child care spaces we need to serve all children needing care**

Without support for these programs and the workforce, families will have fewer options for the care and education of their children. In UHERO's economic forecast for the state, economist Carl Bonham noted, "By making early childhood education accessible to more families, these programs will increase labor force participation, particularly among women. They also represent an important investment in the development of the country's future human capital and in the fight against poverty". Growing quality, affordable programs won't happen without ensuring we have the workforce we need and our children deserve.

The Early Educator Stipend Program will help ensure we have the workforce we need moving forward. It was established in 2021 without funding and therefore we request a \$1M appropriation to sustain the program.

Thank you,

Dr. Lori de Crinis, BCBA, LBA

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 1:09:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lea Minton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke and Finance Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to stand in strong support of Sb2701SD2HD1. I encourage you to pass this bill and fund this pilot program.

Mahalo,

Le'a Minton, CNM

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 4:40:18 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Luciano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please approve SB 2701 for our keiki. Mahalo Luciano Minerbi

Date: March 29, 2022

From: Caitlin Kryss
P.O. Box 711687
Mountain View, HI. 96771

To: Hawaii State Legislature

RE: Support for SB 2701

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 2701 SD2 HD1, relating to early education. This bill seeks to help retain and recruit early childhood educators. We need to make investments in our early childhood workforce to support children, our working families, and our state.

Early care and learning programs are the cornerstones of our communities. They support our youngest learners and our working families. But they are facing a crisis. Low-compensation has forced dedicated professionals to leave the field and prevented others from joining. Three key facts about the child care in Hawai'i are:

- **\$12.43** The median wage of a child care worker in Hawai'i
- **16%** The percent of child care workers in poverty in the state
- **35,000** The estimated number of child care spaces we need to serve all children needing care

Without support for these programs and the workforce, families will have fewer options for the care and education of their children. In UHERO's economic forecast for the state, economist Carl Bonham noted, "By making early childhood education accessible to more families, these programs will increase labor force participation, particularly among women. They also represent an important investment in the development of the country's future human capital and in the fight against poverty". Growing quality, affordable programs won't happen without ensuring we have the workforce we need and our children deserve.

The Early Educator Stipend Program will help ensure we have the workforce we need moving forward. It was established in 2021 without funding and therefore we request a \$1M appropriation to sustain the program.

Thank you,

Caitlin Kryss

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:55:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Starr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Honorable Members of the Committee,

I am writing this testimony in strong support of SB2701. The early childcare and education system is underfunded, understaffed, and seriously lacks quality teachers, programs and support. This is despite the fact that the reasearch in neurodevelopment clearly shows that early childhood (birth to age 3) is the most critical and rapid period of brain development. So much learning takes place at this time. and yet:

- **The median wage of child care workers in Hawai'i is \$12.43**
- **Nationally, 1 in 3 child care workers experienced food insecurity in 2020.**
- **Our child care system is broken. Families can't afford to pay and child care educators can't afford to stay. Programs rely on child care tuition to stay open and that cost is too high for families to shoulder alone. We need public investment to fund a system that works for children, families, and teachers.**
- **Hawai'i has too many families needing early care and learning and not enough spaces. In 2020, Hawai'i had an estimated 59,000 kids under 6 needing care and only 24,000 spaces in licensed/regulated programs.**
- **Increasing compensation has been cited as the #1 way to increase retention and recruitment for early childhood education in Hawai'i.**

Further, we need to create a way to actually recruit, teach, and train our own early childhood teachers here in Hawaii. There IS an Early Childhood act already passed, but it lacks appropriations:

- **Established through Act 210 in 2021. The purpose of the program is intended to support the early learning workforce by providing financial assistance upfront to eligible individuals taking coursework in early childhood education.**
- **The bill was passed in 2021 but without an appropriation.**
- **One of the greatest barriers for early childhood professionals to pursue higher education is not having the money to pay for tuition.**

I am currently enrolled in a MEd in Early Childhood Education at UH Manoa. As a single mother with debts, I rely on the ever dwindling private scholarships and grants to fund my education, but EVERY SEMESTER I am not sure if I will be able to attend or will have to put my education on hold. This summer we will take 9 credits at a cost of over \$5,000. I am still not sure if I will be able to afford to attend my program. I am struggling and paying money out of my own small salary to become the educator that our youngest, most vulnerable keiki in Hawaii deserve. Please support quality teachers for our children!

Without support for these programs and the workforce, families will have fewer options for the care and education of their children. In UHERO's economic forecast for the state, economist Carl Bonham noted, "By making early childhood education accessible to more families, these programs will increase labor force participation, particularly among women. They also represent an important investment in the development of the country's future human capital and in the fight against poverty". Growing quality, affordable programs won't happen without ensuring we have the workforce we need and our children deserve.

The Early Educator Stipend Program will help ensure we have the workforce we need moving forward. It was established in 2021 without funding and therefore we request a \$1M appropriation to sustain the program.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sarah Starr

Pre K SPED Teacher

Honolulu District

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 12:44:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Fairchild	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a single, working mom of three, I strongly support this bill. We need more child care both for our children to develop, and for working parents to be able to earn their incomes. The pandemic has decreased the number of childcare workers and I see the financial and logistical hardships this has created for other working parents. We need our government to help improve this situation. Paying a more decent pay is the first step, though clearly \$17/hour is not enough to live on in this state.

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 2:23:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathleen Reinhardt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 2701 SD2 HD1, relating to early education. This bill seeks to help retain and recruit early childhood educators.

Much evidence has been accumulated demonstrating the need for and benefits of providing high quality early childhood education. Hawaii can't do this without a well-prepared and compensated workforce. Please support these new initiatives that will take important steps toward this goal.

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 3:11:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Liza Ryan Gill	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Our childcare workers are doing an incredibly important job, not just for the families that rely on them, but our state as whole. We cannot have a fully recovery from the pandemic until women can get back in the workplace. Women can't work if there aren't childcare workers. At this time, childcare workers are underpaid while families pay too much of their personal income to cover care. The state needs to step in and subsidize this common good so that we can have an equitable and full economic recovery to this pandemic.

Mahalo.

Liza Ryan Gill

Round Top Drive

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 6:41:00 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 2701 SD2 HD1, relating to early education. This bill seeks to help retain and recruit early childhood educators. We need to make investments in our early childhood workforce to support children, our working families, and our state.

Early care and learning programs are the cornerstones of our communities. They support our youngest learners and our working families. But they are facing a crisis. Low-compensation has forced dedicated professionals to leave the field and prevented others from joining. Three key facts about the child care in Hawai‘i are:

- \$12.43 The median wage of a child care worker in Hawai‘i
- 16% The percent of child care workers in poverty in the state
- 35,000 The estimated number of child care spaces we need to serve all children needing care

Without support for these programs and the workforce, families will have fewer options for the care and education of their children. In UHERO’s economic forecast for the state, economist Carl Bonham noted, “By making early childhood education accessible to more families, these programs will increase labor force participation, particularly among women. They also represent an important investment in the development of the country’s future human capital and in the fight against poverty”. Growing quality, affordable programs won’t happen without ensuring we have the workforce we need and our children deserve.

The Early Educator Stipend Program will help ensure we have the workforce we need moving forward. It was established in 2021 without funding and therefore we request a \$1M appropriation to sustain the program.

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 12:54:33 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bryan Mih	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill relating to early education, which helps retain and recruit early childhood educators. As a pediatrician, I have seen that a strong and well-supported early child education system helps our keiki's learning and development, as well as allow parents and other family members be more productive members of our workforce.

Mahalo!

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:19:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justina Acevedo-Cross	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 2701 HD1, relating to early education. This bill seeks to help retain and recruit early childhood educators. We need to make investments in our early childhood workforce to support children, our working families, and our state. I personally see the struggles that a under-compensated early care and learning workforce faces. I am a parent of a three year old in preschool and his school has faced staffing shortages; recently the lead teacher resigned from her position. In turn that created havoc as a parent because the center needed to temporarily reduce the hours of preschool drop off and pick up because they were short staffed.

I firmly believe if educators in all care and learning settings are valued and compensated as they are in other professions for their knowledge and skills, the early care and learning sector would not be having a deeply felt retention problem. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown light on how early care and learning programs support our youngest learners and our working families. Low-compensation has forced dedicated professionals to leave the field and prevented others from joining. Three key facts about the child care in Hawai'i are:

- \$12.43 The median wage of a child care worker in Hawai'i
- 16% The percent of child care workers in poverty in the state
- 35,000 The estimated number of child care spaces we need to serve all children needing care

In addition, a common barrier to recruiting and retaining students who are pursuing early childhood education courses through higher education is not having money to pay for tuition.

There needs to be funding for Hawaii's Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program, whose purpose is to support the early learning workforce by providing financial assistance upfront to eligible individuals taking coursework. Hawaii's Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program was established through Act 210 in 2021 without an appropriation. SB 2701 seeks to fund the Hawaii Early Childhood Educator Special Fund, which will be expended by the Executive Office on Early Learning for Hawaii's Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program.

I request that the committee advances this measure to show support for working families and take action to support a much needed staffing recruitment and retention.

SB-2701-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:32:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nikki-Ann Yee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB2701, relating to early education. We need to make investments in our early childhood workforce to support children, our working families, and our state. Without support for these programs and the workforce, families will have fewer options for the care and education of their children. Please pass this bill. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!