



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

February 26, 2024

**TO:** Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair  
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Finance

**FROM:** Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Director  
Executive Office on Early Learning

**SUBJECT: Measure: H.B. No. 2578 H.D. 1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support**

The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) is committed to expanding early learning opportunities for all keiki across the State and supports H.B. No. 2578 H.D. 1 and defers to the Hawai'i Public Charter School Commission.

In addition to EOEL Public Prekindergarten programs, Charter schools also offer prekindergarten classrooms and opportunities. Supporting the expansion of these programs will assist the State in effectuating its goals to expand access to all 3- and 4-year-old children by 2032.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



CATHY K. IKEDA  
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII  
**STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**  
**(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)**

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>  
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1100, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

---

FOR: HB 2578 HD1 Relating to Early Education  
DATE: February 28, 2024  
TIME: 2:00 P.M.  
COMMITTEE: Committee on Finance  
ROOM: Conference Room 308 & Videoconference  
FROM: Ed H. Noh, Ed. D., Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

---

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to offer **SUPPORT on HB 2578 HD1** which amends Chapter 302D, the statutes governing public charter schools, by adding a new section applicable to Prekindergarten-only public charter schools. This section exempts prekindergarten-only public charter schools from certain provisions affecting charter schools relating to funding and finance, the use of the weighted student formula, athletics, enrollment, computer science courses and content, and enrollment in industry-credential programs.

For clarification, Prekindergarten-only public charter schools are public charter schools that only serve prekindergarten students and have no K-12 students. At its January 2024 general business meeting, the Commission approved the first Prekindergarten-only school, PACT Parkway Villages Preschool.

The Commission is available to work with the Legislature, interested stakeholders, and our public charter schools in moving this legislation forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



**Parents And  
Children Together**

**BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIPS  
THAT MATTER MOST**

ParentsAndChildrenTogether.org

## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2578 HD1**

**TO:** Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa & Members,  
House Committee on Finance  
**FROM:** Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO  
**DATE:** February 28, 2024 at 2:00 PM

**Parents And Children Together (PACT) supports HB 2578 HD1 Relating to Early Learning,** which requires all public charter schools that offer prekindergarten programs exclusively to adhere to the provisions of chapter 302D, HRS, with certain exceptions that align with the distinction between prekindergarten and other levels of education. PACT is aligned with the State Public Charter School Commission in establishing exemptions from certain sections of Chapter 302D as drafted in SB 3305 for prekindergarten only public charter schools.

Founded in 1968, PACT is a statewide community-based organization providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, we help identify, address, and successfully resolve challenges through our 20 programs. Among our services are early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs. Notably, PACT has decades of experience serving the community through Head Start prekindergarten classrooms.

In 2023, the opportunity to participate in the Ready Keiki initiative by applying for a prekindergarten only public charter school became available and in January 2024, PACT's application was approved. PACT Parkway Villages Preschool will offer four public prekindergarten classrooms, increasing access to quality pre-k education and building on PACT's many years of Head Start experience. We are currently working with the Commission to complete pre-opening assurances for the school.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or [rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org](mailto:rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org) if you have any questions.

To: House Committee on Finance

**Re: HB 2578 HD 1 – in strong support**

Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 308

February 28, 2024, 2:00PM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT of House Bill 2578 relating to Early Learning.**

Investing in early childhood education is crucial to fostering a more equitable future. Research consistently demonstrates the long-term benefits of early childhood education in fostering academic achievement, social-emotional development, and lifelong success.

This bill is a critical opportunity to create more access to much-needed, community-based prekindergarten programs across the state, thereby expanding access to high-quality early childhood education for our keiki. This bill allows for developing innovative approaches that meet the diverse needs of young learners and their families, ultimately enhancing the overall quality and effectiveness of prekindergarten education within the charter school sector. This proactive approach addresses the immediate need for increased access to prekindergarten education and lays the groundwork for continued expansion and innovation in the years to come.

Mahalo for your leadership and commitment to improving access to early learning for all of our keiki. **Please pass HB 2578 HD 1.**

Mahalo,

Chevelle Davis, MPH

Director of Early Childhood and Health Policy



Committee on Finance  
Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair  
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

February 28, 2024

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee,

We support HB 2578 HD1, which exempts prekindergarten-only public charter schools from certain provisions affecting charter schools relating to funding and finance, the use of the weighted student formula, athletics, enrollment, computer science courses and content, and enrollment in industry-credential programs.

Prekindergarten-only public charter schools is an innovative way to expand access to quality early learning opportunities, which is the goal of Act 46. We support the testimony of the Hawaii State Charter School Commission on this measure.

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 for this measure represents at least a 75% consensus of our voting membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura  
HE’E Coalition Director



Coalition Members and Participants

Academy 21

Alliance for Place Based Learning

American Civil Liberties Union

Atherton YMCA

Education Institute of Hawai'i

\*Faith Action for Community Equity

Fresh Leadership LLC

Girl Scouts Hawai'i

\*HawaiiKidsCAN

\*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance

\*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and  
Economic Justice

\*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists

Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars

\*Hawai'i Children's Action Network

Hawai'i Education Association

Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition

\* Hawai'i State PTSA

Hawai'i State Student Council

Hawai'i State Teachers Association

Head Start Collaboration Office

It's All About Kids

\*INPEACE

Joint Venture Education Forum

Junior Achievement of Hawaii

Kamehameha Schools

Kanu Hawai'i

Kaua'i Ho'okele Council

Keiki to Career Kaua'i

Kupu A'e

\*Leaders for the Next Generation

Learning First

McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds

Native Hawaiian Education Council

Our Public School

\*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning

\*Parents and Children Together

\*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i

Special Education Provider Alliance

\*Teach for America

The Learning Coalition

US PACOM

University of Hawai'i College of Education

\* Youth Service Hawai'i

*Voting Members (\*) Voting member  
organizations vote on action items while  
individual and non-voting participants may  
collaborate on all efforts within the*