



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

February 9, 2022

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair
Representative Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair
House Committee on Education

Representative Nadine K. Nakamura, Chair
Representative Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair
House Committee on Housing

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

SUBJECT: Measure: H.B. No. 1940 – RELATING TO EARLY EDUCATION
Hearing Date: Thursday, February 10, 2022
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Location: Room 309 and Videoconference

Bill Description: Establishes and makes an appropriation for an early child care worker subsidy pilot program. Makes an appropriation to the Hawaii Early Childhood Educator Special Fund.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Supports the Intent

Aloha. I am Coleen Momohara, Interim Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL supports the intent of, with comments on, H.B. No. 1940, 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.**

EOEL recommends the following amendments:

- Section 1, line 14, subsection (2): “Make an appropriation to the ~~Hawaii early childhood educator~~ Early Learning special fund.”
- Section 4, lines 15 and 16: “There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for the ~~Hawaii Early childhood educator~~ Early Learning Special Fund established pursuant to Section 302L-~~10-5.~~”

The Hawaii early childhood educator special fund, to be administered by EOEL, shall have moneys received by the office pursuant to section 302L-9(e), which refer to stipend funds repaid by a stipend recipient. Furthermore, this special fund shall be abolished and repealed on June 30, 2023. Appropriating funds to the Early Learning Special Fund instead would allow EOEL to utilize the appropriations for its intended purpose and provide sustainability and continuity to the program.

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 Justin H. Woodson, Chair
Representative Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee On Education

Representative Nadine K. Nakamura, Chair
Representative Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee On Housing

From: Robert G. Peters, Chair
Early Learning Board

Subject: **Measure:** HB 1940, Relating to Early Education
Hearing Date: Thursday, February 10, 2022
Time: 2:00 PM
Location: Conference Room 309 Via Videoconference

Description: Establishes and makes an appropriation for an early child care worker subsidy pilot program. Makes an appropriation to the Hawaii Early Childhood Educator Special Fund.

Early Learning Board Position: Support the Intent

Aloha. I am Robert G. Peters, Chair of the Early Learning Board (ELB). Thank you for this opportunity to support the intent of HB 1940.

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 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.

Timing has prevented the ELB from discussing HB 1940 and its specific elements; it is on the agenda for the Board's February meeting. Supporting the bill's intent at this time is based upon the ELB annual priorities which include, "Supporting efforts to expand workforce capacity building" and 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.

The ELB is also expected to support the following amendments recommended by EOEL in order for it to utilize the appropriation included in HB 1940 for its intended purpose:

- Section 1, line 14, subsection (2): "Make an appropriation to the ~~Hawaii early childhood educator~~ Early Learning special fund."
- Section 4, line 15: "There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for the ~~Hawaii Early childhood educator~~ Early Learning Special Fund established pursuant to Section ~~302L-40-5~~."

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. The Hawaii early childhood educator special fund, to be administered by EOEL, shall have moneys received by the office pursuant to section 302L-9(e), which refer to stipend funds repaid by a stipend recipient. Furthermore, this special fund shall be abolished and repealed on June 30, 2023. Appropriating funds to the Early Learning Special Fund instead would allow EOEL to utilize the appropriations for its intended purpose and provide sustainability and continuity to the program.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer this testimony supportive of the intent of HB 1940.

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 EDUCATION
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1940

February 10, 2022
2:00 p.m.
Room 309 and Videoconference

RELATING TO EARLY EDUCATION

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

House Bill No. 1940: 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 \$1,900,000 of general funds to DHS in FY 23 for the pilot program; and 4) appropriates \$1,000,000 of general funds to the Executive Office on Early Learning in FY 23 for the Hawai'i Early Childhood Educator Special Fund.

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

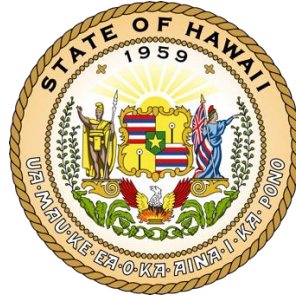
- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

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.



‘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

In Support of H.B. 1940

Dear Chairs Woodson and Nakamura, Vice Chairs, and Honorable Members,

The Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women **supports** H.B. 1940, 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.

H.B. 1940 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 H.B. 1940.

Sincerely,

Khara Jabola-Carolus
Executive Director

HB-1940

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 2:18:02 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/10/2022 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Remote Testimony Requested |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Mike Golojuch, Sr. | Rainbow Family 808 | Support | No |

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 supports HB1940.



To: House Committee on Education and House Committee on Housing
Hearing Date/Time: February 10, 2022 2:00PM
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 309 & Video Conference
Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1940

Dear Chair Woodson, Chair Nakamura, Vice Chair Kapela, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and the Members of Committees,

Members of AAUW of Hawaii thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB1940 which would create a 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, HB1940 allows mothers to remain in the workforce. HB1940 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



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

To: Representative Woodson, Chair
Representative Kapela, Vice Chair
House Committee on Education

Re: **HB 1940, relating to early education**
2:00 PM, February 10, 2022

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Kapela, and committee members,

On behalf of HCAN Speaks!, thank you for the opportunity to **testify in STRONG SUPPORT of House Bill 1940, relating to early education. We need bold efforts to stabilize the early care and learning workforce*. Piloting a compensation program and funding the Early Childhood Educator Stipend program help us keep our current qualified and dedicated workforce and builds the workforce for tomorrow.** To ensure the funding for the Early Educator Stipend Program can be delivered successfully, we support the Executive Office on Early Learning's suggested amendments.

We need to prioritize maintaining our current child care workforce. This bill pilots a compensation program aimed 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.

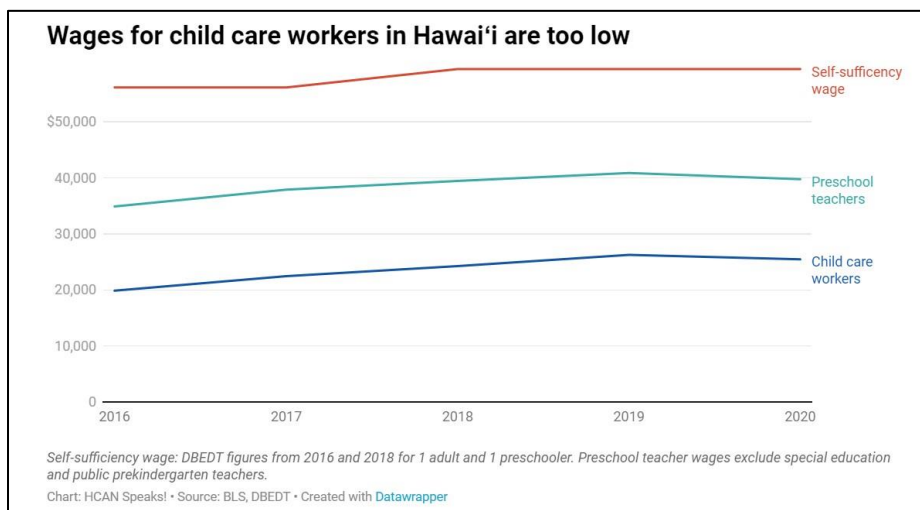
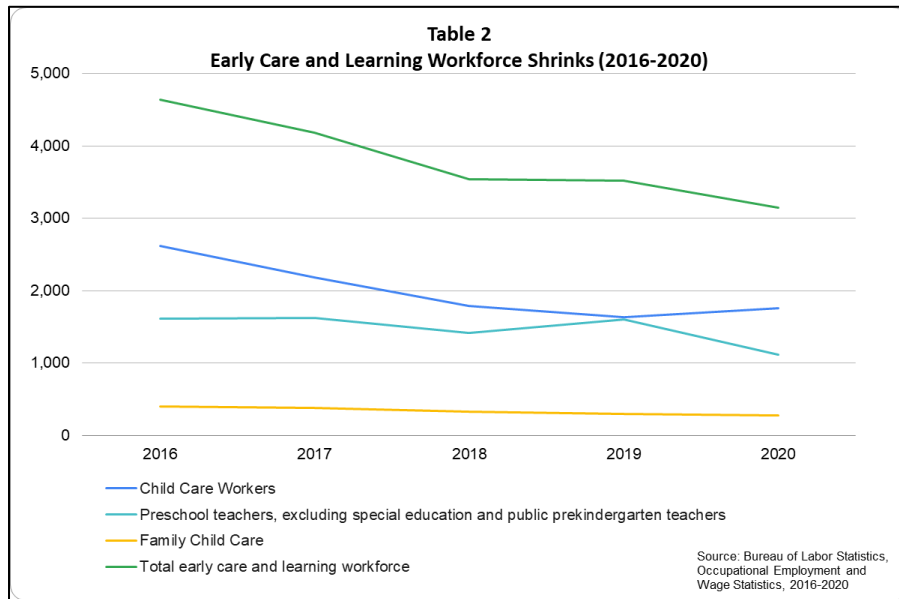
"Recruitment, development and retention of qualified child care staff remains problematic in most areas of the state. A major contributing factor is low compensation for teachers which deters interested and qualified individuals from entering or remaining in the child care profession. The high rate of 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/>

* The terms 'early care and learning', 'early childhood educator', and 'child care worker' are used interchangeably.

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 early childhood workforce is an investment in our children. For these reasons, HCAN Speaks! respectfully requests the Committee to support this measure.

Thank you,

Kathleen Algire
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy

Date: February 8, 2022

To: House Committee on Education
Representative Justin Woodson, Chair
Representative Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: Support for HB1940, 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 HB1940, 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 Hawai'i'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 HB1940 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 HB1940, to stabilize and expand the early childhood workforce.

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

HB-1940

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 10:20:28 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/10/2022 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Remote Testimony Requested |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Anne Tanaka | EnvironMETeo Services, Inc. | Support | No |

Comments:

I am training instructor for EMET Services, Inc., I certify asbestos, lead for the EPA and Department of Health as well as conduct awareness classes for all schools, companies in Hawaii as well as across the United States. It is very important that we support our educators and everyone involved with taking care of our children. Part of what I teach is to educate people in Safety, Health and Well-being and saving lives. Our children are our future. They are the most special people in our lives that are taking care of us now and our future leaders. Without the support our team of people needed in our schools to help them to keep our children safe, educate them for their future, it will be so very sad to see these children suffer and our teams at all of the schools suffer.

I have 4 grandchildren that are my life and their education, sports, safety, health, well-being and happiness and are so important not just for myself and their parents, BUT THEY ARE OUR FUTURE!

For what little I have monetarily, I give. For all the love, caring and support which is priceless in my heart I give each and everyday of my life.

Please support this bill.

Sincerely,

Anne Tanaka

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair
Rep. Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair

BILL HB 1940
POSITION: SUPPORT

Hearing Date: February 10, 2022; Hearing Time 2:00pm

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Kapela and Committee Members:

Aloha United Way supports Bill 1940, which relates to early education. This bill seeks to help retain and recruit early childhood educators and would make needed investments in supporting and expanding Hawaii's early childhood workforce that is essential to the wellbeing of working families, and our state's economy.

Early care and learning programs are an essential service in our communities and have been hit hard by COVID-19. However high the need for such services is, the sector cannot and will not be able to meet the need for child care and a main reason for this is the low-compensation child care professional receive, often hourly wages that put their own households below the ALICE threshold and sometimes in poverty. Such low wages for critical care work also means it is incredibly hard or impossible to attract new employees to the workforce. Three key facts about the childcare in Hawai'i from HCAN are:

- **\$12.43** is the median wage of a childcare worker in Hawai'i, translating to only \$25,800 a year for full time work, and often not enough to even pay a year of rent/
- **16%** of childcare workers live in poverty in Hawaii, 50% higher than the average.
- **35,000 additional** childcare spaces must be created just to serve all families seeking care

Without support for these programs and the workforce that operates them each day, families will have limited options for the care and education of their children, which further limits workforce participation and economic growth (UHERO). Having accessible, high-quality, affordable programs can only happen if the field can attract professionally trained and dedicated workers who see it as a viable career that can provide livable wage.

We also support the Executive Office on Early Learning's suggested amendments to ensure funding for the Early Educator Stipend Program can be delivered successfully

Thank you for considering this testimony and for your action to support measures and pass HB 1940.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Skjold
Chief Operating Officer

HB-1940

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 3:30:27 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/10/2022 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Remote Testimony Requested |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Will Caron | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 2701, 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. I respectfully request the committee support working families and the dedicated early care and learning professionals by voting favorably on SB 2701.

Mahalo!

HB-1940

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 4:15:19 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/10/2022 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Remote Testimony Requested |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Liza Ryan Gill | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Dear Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

Nothing is more important than the health and education of our keiki. As new parents my family has struggled to find childcare, at any cost, for our 10 month old. We started looking when she was 3 months old and eventually got on a waitlist for AFTER she turns one. This is not a tenable situation for families. If we want folks to go back to work, especially the many working women who were forced out of the economy during the pandemic, we need to provide childcare.

In order for more childcare to be available for families there needs to be more childcare workers. Even though the cost of childcare is out of reach for many families, these dollars are not flowing down to the hard-working folks who provide the care. We need to raise their wages through subsidies for facilities so that more qualified centers can open.

Please consider passing this bill and supporting the working families of Hawai'i.

Mahalo nunui,

Liza Ryan Gill

Round Top Drive/Honolulu

HB-1940

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 4:34:22 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/10/2022 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Remote Testimony Requested |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Sandra Mactagone | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Parents cannot bear any more higher costs. Childcare providers cannot cutback on cost without sacrificing quality of service.

When working families don't have childcare, it not only affects them, but it affects the community.

HB 1940 recognizes this problem and could solve it by using public funds to start increasing wages for childcare workers.

I support HB 1940.

To: Honorable Chair Woodson

Vice Chair Kapela

Committee Members Au Belatti, Ohno, Clark, Quinlan, Ganaden, Takayama, Gates, Yamane, Hashimoto, and Okimoto

From: Dana Senaha, Parent, Early Childhood Educator and Hawaii Children's Action Network Board Member

Subject: Measure: HB 1940- Relating to Early Education

Date: February 10, 2022

Time: 2:00 pm

Location: Conference Room 309 & Videoconference

Aloha,

My name is Dana Senaha and I am respectfully submitting this testimony in support of House Bill 1940.

I am a parent of two children ages four and seven; a former preschool teacher; a parent volunteer at my children's schools; a board member of Hawaii Children's Action Network and a family researcher at the University of Hawai'i Center on the Family. I am submitting this testimony as an individual citizen and do not speak on behalf of my employer.

HB 1940 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.

I can speak personally to this problem. In 2004, I returned home to Hawaii with a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education from Vanderbilt University and ABD (All But Dissertation in a PhD program) in the same program. My salary as a lead teacher and administrator at a private preschool in Honolulu was less than \$30,000/year with restricted benefits. Understandably, I was not able to continue in that position and afford to live in Hawaii. Like so many teachers, economic realities led me to leave that position for an entry level marketing assistant position at a 20% higher salary, full benefits and employer paid training with guaranteed career advancement after the first year. Thankfully, I was able to secure a teaching position with Kamehameha Schools (KS), probably the only private program with the means to competitively compensate their early childhood staff. Because KS was able to offer me a salary on par with its K-12 teaching staff, I was able to return to the classroom where I taught for the next 9 years. It is an opportunity few in the field can access and a privilege I remain deeply grateful for.

The statistics regarding early childhood teacher compensation are unconscionable. The median wage for childcare workers in Hawaii is \$12.43 (Child Care Employment, Early Childhood Workforce Index 2020). My teenaged babysitter charges more per hour simply for watching my children while they sleep! A full 16% of childcare workers are in poverty, compared to 10% of the general population in

Hawai'i (Child Care Employment, Early Childhood Workforce Index 2020) and nationally 1 in 3 childcare workers experienced food insecurity in 2020 (Center for Early Childhood Innovation, Food insecurity in a nationally representative sample of childcare workers). Our youngest keiki who are able to attend preschool, spend 8 – 10 hours each day in the care of early education teachers and staff, who not only educate them, but provide love, nurturing and guidance. *These teachers deserve better and are worth so much more than what they are paid.*

The pandemic has made one thing obvious, there is no economic recovery without early care and education. For parents to return to work, the must know that their children are safe and well cared for. Yet, 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. Adding to the problem of childcare shortage, the cost of care that is available is too expensive for families. The average family of 4 spends around 26% of their income on childcare for an infant and a 4-year-old in Hawai'i. Research has shown over decades that investments in high quality Early Childhood Education reap substantial benefits, with cost benefit estimates that range from \$4 to over \$15 for every dollar spent (Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Kentucky, Costs and Benefits of Early Childhood Education).

Our childcare system is broken. Families can't afford to pay and childcare educators can't afford to stay. Programs rely on childcare 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. 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. I respectfully request the committee support working families and the dedicated early care and learning professionals by voting favorably on HB 1940.

Thank you,

Dana Senaha, EdD

HB-1940

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 5:02:33 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/10/2022 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Remote Testimony Requested |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| chelsea pang | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Childcare care is important to parents who are both working to make ends meet in Hawaii. This bill can help working, poor, women and Hawaiians especially.

Feb. 8, 2022

To: Representative Justin H. Woodsen, Chair
Representative Jeanne Kalepa, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Education

Representative Nadine K. Nakamura, Chair
Representative Troy N. Hashimoto Vice-Chair
House Committee on Housing,

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 - HB 1940: RELATING TO EARLY EDUCATION.
Hearing Date - February 10, 2022
Time - 2:00 pm
Location: Room 309 and videoconference

My name is Dr. Terry Lock. I am with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa College of Education and currently serve as the director of the Hawai'i Early Childhood Educator Excellence and Equity 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 strongly support the intent of HB 1940. This bill seeks to help retain and recruit 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

HB 1940 seeks to create a pilot wage subsidy program for child care workers. I strongly support this and recommend that this pilot wage subsidy program develop an equitable wage scale for our early childhood educators in our state. I also recommend that this program prioritizes those

who work with infants and toddlers in home-based and center-based programs. Highly skilled and knowledgeable infant and toddler caregivers are in high demand and often overlooked as states, like ours, plan to expand to serve more four and three-year old children and their families. In addition, this wage subsidy pilot should implement a direct-to- educator supplemental payment, improve salary and benefits, and promote completion of associate and/or bachelor degrees in early childhood education.

Related to this, a common barrier to recruiting and retaining students who are pursuing early childhood education degrees in higher education is not having 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.

My recommendation is to fund Hawai'i's Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program through Hawai'i Early Learning Special Fund rather than the Hawai'i Early Childhood Educator Special Fund that is stated in HB 1940. This is because the Early Childhood Educator Special Fund is intended for recouped payments only and therefore, funds appropriated to this special fund would not be able to be utilized in the way the bill indicates. If it is appropriated to the Hawai'i Early Learning Special Fund, it could be. Then from this Early Learning Special Fund the appropriation will be expended by the Executive Office on Early Learning for Hawai'i's Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program.

Without support for these programs and the workforce, families will have fewer options for the care and education of their children. Growing quality, affordable programs won't happen without ensuring we have the workforce we need and our children deserve.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support for the intent of HB 1940.

Respectfully submitted by,

Dr. Terry Lock

HB-1940

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 9:23:21 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/10/2022 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Remote Testimony Requested |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Judith Wilhoite | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Paying child care workers a living wage will help our state in so many ways. First, it will allow those who want to do the important work of caring for our keiki to be able to do so while supporting their own family. Second, it will bring stability to children in childcare as their caregivers will be able to remain at their schools to care for them. A stable workforce will give Hawaii better quality preschools which sets our keiki up for greater success in every area of life.

Please vote yes on HB1940.

Mahalo, Judith Wilhoite

HB-1940

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 6:42:19 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/10/2022 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Remote Testimony Requested |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Melanie Padgett | Maui County Early Childhood Resource Center | Support | No |

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

Thank you for considering this urgently needed legislation to build our child care work force. In my job as Project Specialist at the Maui County Early Childhood Resource Center I answer calls every day from parents at their wits end trying to find child care for their children. The waitlists are long and they need reliable safe care now so they can work. If they don't find it in time many of them will lose their jobs. The problem is that Child Care Centers and Homes can't find qualified staff. Pay is way too low to attract workers who need a living wage to afford Hawaii's high cost of living. Child Care Providers literally saved Hawaii's economy by working through the darkest days of the pandemic caring for the children of essential workers. They are heroes and deserve long overdue fair compensation for their own absolutely essential work. This bill is an exciting and very needed step in the right direction to attract new child care providers and retain current ones with fair pay.

Thank You all for seeing the need and taking action to address it.

Melanie Padgett

Maui County Early Childhood Resource Center Project Specialist

242-1608

HB-1940

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 6:48:11 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/10/2022 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Remote Testimony Requested |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Carol Akiu | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Aloha Education Committee Members,

I urge you to support HB 1940.

Mahalo.

February 9, 2022

I sincerely appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony for House Bill 1904 related 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. The early childhood education can better prepare the State's early childhood workforce to interact with young children (aged 0-5), whose brain development is critical for long-term learning and success individually which in turns have implications to the society and the country. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children 2021 annual report, the benefits of investing in high quality early childhood education are clear and extensive—for children, adults, and society at large, which is with a return on investment of up to 13% and a contribution of \$163 billion to the US gross domestic product. A substantial research base confirms that when children participate in highly quality early childhood education, they are: 1) More likely to experience improved cognitive and social outcomes; 2) More likely to graduate from high schools; 3) Less likely to require remedial education; 4) Less likely to commit crimes; 5) Less likely to be neglected and abused; 6) Less likely to be unemployed; and 7) Less likely to require public assistance.

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** 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 in early childhood education. Hawaii's Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program was established through Act 210 in 2021 without an appropriation. HB 1904/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.

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. I sincerely appreciate the Committee's time and consideration of my testimony. Please vote in support of this vital House Bill 1904 that would change the future and scenery of the early childhood education in the State of Hawaii.

Respectfully,

Helen Au, Ph.D., M.Ed.

HB-1940

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 1:06:42 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/10/2022 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Remote Testimony Requested |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Robert Godinez Sr | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

As a father of four, grandfather of fourteen, and ggreat-grandfather of thirteen, I understand the importance of a system that provides support for families. Early child care educators need to be recognized and acknowledge as essential workers and compensated as such. In order to build a strong community, the foundation must be strong.

I strongly support HB 1940. Thank you for your time.

HB-1940

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 1:18:17 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/10/2022 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Remote Testimony Requested |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Ed Akiu | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

I strongly support HB 1940 which establishes and makes an appropriation for an early child care worker subsidy pilot program and an appropriation to the Hawai'i Early Childhood Educator Special Fund.

HB-1940

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 3:29:14 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/10/2022 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Remote Testimony Requested |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Makanoe Hufana | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

I support HB1940.

Mahalo

Makanoe Hufana.