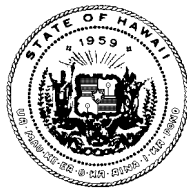


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 22, 2023

TO: The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 261 HD1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES.**

HEARING: Friday, February 24, 2023, 11:30 a.m.
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this bill, provides comments, requests clarification, and suggests friendly amendments. DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation in this measure not replace or adversely impact priorities identified in the executive budget.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill requires the Department of Human Services to establish a child care accreditation program to assist licensed and registered child care providers obtain accreditation. Authorizes the use of the child care grant program special fund for child care accreditation program grants. Amends the time period for when existing preschool open doors service providers are required to obtain accreditation. Appropriates funds for the child care accreditation program, including for the establishment of one full-time position for the program. Appropriates funds into and out of the child care grant special fund. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD1).

The HD1 amended this measure by:

- 1) Inserting language establishing standards for the distribution of the funds appropriated in this measure as grants under the child care accreditation program;

- 2) Clarifying the circumstances in which an individual or organization that owns or operates both a private educational institution and child care facility may apply for a child care accreditation program grant;
- 3) Amending the child care grant program special fund to allow for the use of the fund to award child care accreditation program grants;
- 4) Changing the time frame by which an existing POD service provider must begin and complete the accreditation process to an unspecified date;
- 5) Appropriating an unspecified amount of funds out of the child care grant program special fund for child care accreditation program grants;
- 6) Changing the effective date to June 30, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- 7) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

The Department respectfully requests clarification if child care providers seeking renewal of their accreditation from appropriate bodies would be eligible for the upfront grant funding to cover the cost of accreditation and grant funding for technical assistance.

DHS respectfully requests the following **amendments** to clarify the types of licensed and registered child care settings that the accreditation program would be available to:

- Section 2, page 3, at lines 1-3, "Be available to licensed **group** child care centers, **licensed group child care homes**, licensed infant and toddler centers, **and** registered family child care homes."

DHS supports family choice and offers higher child care subsidy payment rates to families that choose child care providers accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Early Childhood Program Accreditation, and National Association for Family Child Care Accreditation. In addition, higher subsidies are available for the POD and the federally funded Child Care Connection Hawaii (CCCH) programs.

DHS agrees with the extended time frames in section 4 as extending the time to become accredited will give new child care workforce initiatives time to increase capacity and also allows eligible facilities ready to access accreditation resources more time to do so in a less pressured time frame. However, given the continuing economic impacts of COVID-19 on child care facilities' ability to maintain sufficient staff levels, DHS suggests the Legislature consider amending section 346-184(a), HRS, to change the accreditation requirement to be voluntary until the child care workforce is more stabilized or subsidized.

The Department also recommends that the sums appropriated to award grants to eligible private child care providers participating in the child care accreditation program include the costs for providers with annual accreditation fees and a one-time system modification fee.

DHS will update the resources needed to implement additional changes as the session progresses.

If the measure passes, DHS would need time to develop standards, policies, application forms, and procedures for administering the child care accreditation program. Additionally, DHS must make program and system changes and develop administrative processes and rules to establish and implement the program. Therefore, DHS respectfully requests an effective date of January 31, 2024, or later.

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



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

February 22, 2023

TO: Representative Kyle T. 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. 261 H.D. 1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
Hearing Date: Friday, February 24, 2023
Time: 11:30 am
Location: Conference Room 308

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

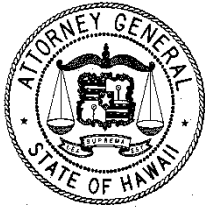
EOEL supports the intent of H.B. No. 261 H.D. 1 and defers to the Department of Human Services.

This bill would establish a child care accreditation program that supports licensed or registered child care providers in obtaining accreditation from a national early learning accrediting organization. This program will also provide payment for fees, technical assistance, and incidental costs.

Accreditation is one well-known measure of quality in early childhood education programming. However, obtaining accreditation can be costly and time-consuming for providers, many who are still recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Establishing this program with adequate appropriations would help support more providers in achieving and maintaining accreditation.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature to support affordable, high-quality early learning programs and services in the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2023**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 261, H.D. 1, RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

DATE: Friday, February 24, 2023

TIME: 11:30 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 308

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
James W. Walther, or Melissa J. Kolonie, Deputy Attorneys
General

Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) establish within the Department of Human Services a child care accreditation program to support licensed or registered child care providers to obtain accreditation from a national early learning accrediting organization, and provide grant funding for technical assistance to assist a child care provider through the accreditation process; (2) extend the deadlines by which unaccredited service providers of the preschool open doors program must commence the accreditation process and obtain accreditation; (3) appropriate funds for the establishment of the child care accreditation program; and (4) appropriate funds to be deposited into and out of the child care grant special fund.

The Department previously presented testimony on this bill to the House Committee on Human Services at its February 2, 2023, hearing. The House Committee on Human Services adopted the sample standards that we attached to our testimony to address a potential constitutional issue under article VII, section 4, of the Hawaii State Constitution. House Draft 1, however, appears to have inadvertently added a semicolon and return after "pre-kindergarten level services" on page 8, line 16. The semicolon and return change the meaning of the definition of "private educational institution" by making the subsequent wording "that are provided by an entity that holds itself out to the public

as a school or educational institution" apply to all the institutions listed in the preceding paragraphs (1) to (3), however, the wording is meant to apply only to the pre-kindergarten level services listed in paragraph (3). Therefore, we recommend deleting the semicolon and bringing the wording "that are provided by" up to line 16 of page 8, so the paragraph reads:

- (3) Pre-kindergarten level services[;] that are provided by an entity that holds itself out to the public as a school or educational institution, or that are identified by the entity as educational services rather than solely as child care services.

The Department also notes that article X, section 1, of the Hawaii State Constitution prohibits appropriations of public funds for the support or benefit of any sectarian or nonsectarian private educational institution, which may limit the number of eligible child care facilities under the child care accreditation program.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

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

FROM: Robert G. Peters, Chair
Early Learning Board

SUBJECT: Measure: H.B. No. 261 H.D. 1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING
OPPORTUNITIES
Hearing Date: Friday, February 24, 2023
Time: 11:30 am
Location: Conference Room 308

EARLY LEARNING BOARD POSITION: Support the Intent

The Early Learning Board (ELB) supports the intent of H.B. No. 261 H.D. 1 and defers to the Department of Human Services regarding the particulars of the bill and its implementation.

This bill would establish a child care accreditation program to support licensed or registered child care providers to obtain accreditation from a national early learning accrediting organization and by paying for fees, technical assistance, and incidental costs.

Accreditation is a rigorous process in support of quality early learning and care, which can be costly and time-consuming. Both are especially challenging post-COVID. Establishing this program with adequate supports, both financial and technical, will allow more providers to pursue accreditation and those already accredited to maintain that status.

We thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the intent of H.B. No.261 H.D. 1.

HB-261-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 3:27:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Golojuch Jr	Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

The Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i; Hawai‘i’s oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization supports HB 261 HD 1.

The Stonewall Caucus requests any amendments necessary to ensure that any child care provider that avails themselves of any tax-payer funds to assist with accreditation not be allowed to discriminate against anyone (i.e. students, parents, faculty, staff, etc.) that belongs to any of the protected classes under Hawai‘i’s public accommodations laws.

We hope you all will support this important piece of legislation and any amendments that may be needed.

Mahalo nui loa,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.
Chair and SCC Representative
Stonewall Caucus for the DPH

Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

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

Re: HB261 HD1, relating to early learning opportunities
11:30 a.m., Feb. 24, 2023

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 261 HD1, relating to early learning opportunities.

Early learning programs often use accreditation as one tool to mark quality. Unfortunately, **accreditation is expensive, intensive and time-consuming**. For example, fees to begin and complete accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) begin at \$1,825 and increase with the size of the preschool. Many preschools and child care providers also seek technical assistance to identify areas needing improvement, complete necessary paperwork, collect documentation and other tasks to ensure the process goes as smoothly as possible. During preparations for accreditation, it is common for preschools and child care providers to identify upgrades that need to be made to buildings, classrooms, furniture or play equipment. These too cost money. Once a preschool or child care provider successfully achieves accreditation, they then must pay annual fees to maintain it. **All these reasons compound to make it extremely burdensome for many child care providers, especially small centers and family child care homes, to pursue accreditation.**

H.R.S. §346-184 currently requires existing Preschool Open Doors providers to begin the accreditation process by July 1, 2024 and obtain accreditation by July 1, 2029. New providers must have or obtain accreditation within seven calendar years of first receiving funds. **This means that unaccredited providers who are already serving Preschool Open Doors families must begin this expensive and intensive process within the next 18 months.**

This requirement places a heavy burden on an already taxed early childhood care and education sector in a very short amount of time. **They cannot afford to carry more costs on**

their own; they need assistance and more time to begin and complete the accreditation the process.

HB261 will help providers shoulder the cost of achieving accreditation. The bill, as it is currently written, allows the Department of Human Services to support providers with funding that can cover myriad expenses associated with the accreditation process. **It is important that the Department has this flexibility to support providers in the various ways necessary.**

We respectfully ask the committee **amend this measure to extend the current deadlines for accreditation.** The following amended deadlines have received support from early childhood education community members.

SECTION 4. Section 346-184, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) Each service provider of the preschool open doors program shall be accredited or shall obtain accreditation within seven calendar years of first receiving any funds from the preschool open doors program; provided that any existing service provider unaccredited on July 1, 2022, shall commence the accreditation process no later than July 1, [~~2024~~] 2029, and obtain accreditation by July 1, [~~2029~~] 2034; provided further that the director may grant to any service provider one or more extensions to obtain accreditation on a case-by-case basis."

Please support and amend HB261 HD1. This program and additional time will ensure providers of all sizes meet the quality markers our young children and their families deserve while preserving the current stock of available providers participating in Preschool Open Doors.

Mahalo,

Ke'ōpū Reelitz
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy

HB-261-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 10:14:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angelina Mercado	Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (HSCADV) addresses the social, political, and economic impacts of domestic violence on individuals, families, and communities. We are a statewide partnership of domestic violence programs and shelters.

On behalf of HSCADV and our 28 member programs statewide, I respectfully submit testimony in strong support HB261 HD1. This measure preserves the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families and supports regulated preschool and childcare providers in improving and/or maintaining quality.

Sincerely,

Angelina Mercado, Executive Director



Date: February 23, 2023

To: House Committee on Finance
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: Support for **HB261 HD1**, Relating to Early Learning Opportunities

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 HB261 HD1, which would establish a program to support child care providers in obtaining quality accreditation from a national organization and extend the deadline by which Preschool Open Doors providers must achieve accreditation.

With the passage of Act 46 in 2020, early care and learning programs wishing to serve or continue serving children via the state's Preschool Open Doors subsidy program must initiate the process of national quality accreditation by 2024, and achieve accreditation no later than 2029.

Accreditation is a well-known measure of quality for early care and learning programs, and involves an arduous cycle of self- and external assessment to meet a battery of standards related to curriculum, staff and administrative qualifications, training and development, physical environment and more. Accreditation, however, is an expensive, intensive, and time-consuming endeavor for both programs new to the process, as well as those seeking to renew their time-limited accreditation. Basic fees to undergo the process with an accrediting body typically run into the thousands (e.g., \$1,825 for the National Association for the Education of Young Children/NAEYC) and providers must often make significant financial investments to upgrade their facilities, classroom environments, equipment and materials. Additionally, many programs need the support of coaching and technical assistance from content and process experts who can advise on areas needing improvement to meet standards, as well as the documentation and paperwork processes of the accrediting body.

Without a support program for our preschool and child care programs, the accreditation requirement of Act 46 creates a significant barrier and/or burden for these programs in serving Preschool Open Doors families and will significantly impact efforts to expand access to publicly-supported preschool opportunities for children. The creation of the accreditation program proposed by **HB261 HD1**, which would provide technical and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers, is critical to helping programs achieve important markers of quality and to preserving and expanding the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Additionally, we agree with agency concerns regarding the tenuous state of child care programs and support recommendations to either change Preschool Open Doors accreditation requirements to be voluntary, until workforce conditions are more stable, or extending the timeframes by which programs must become accredited, as proposed by this bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony **in support of HB261 HD1**.



TO: The Honorable Kyle Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Philip Bossert, Executive Director
Hawaii Association of Independent Schools

RE: **HB 261 HD1 - Relating to Early Learning Opportunities
In Strong Support**

DATE: Friday, February 24, 2023; Agenda #2
11:30 a.m.; Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

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

The Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS) and its subsidiary, the Hawaii Council of Private Schools (HCPS), strongly supports HB 261 HD1. Funding for the Open Doors program is an important resource for Hawaii families in providing early childhood education opportunities for their children.

HAIS also strongly supports the expansion of types of organizations from which Open Doors service providers may obtain accreditation. In particular, we believe that accreditation by HAIS should be recognized by DHS as an authorized accrediting organization for the Open Doors program. HAIS currently serves 114 independent PK-12 schools and over 33,000 students in Hawai'i. More than 50 of these schools include preschool programs.

In 1996, the legislature transferred responsibility for the licensing of private schools to HAIS and its subsidiary, HCPS. This licensing process ensures on an annual basis that every PK-12 private school is in compliance with the health and safety requirements of all federal and state agencies. In addition, for those schools which seek a higher level of educational program verification and recognition, the HAIS accreditation process provides a much more rigorous protocol of compliance and review, one that is recognized and accepted by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The HAIS accreditation protocol includes a comprehensive self-study process and a three to five day visit to the school by a team of educators from other private schools in Hawaii and California with comparable programs to verify the information provided in the self-study document. We believe that this protocol and process is in line with those of the accrediting agencies already on the approved list.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



**Parents And
Children Together**

BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIPS THAT MATTER MOST

TO: Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the House Committee on Finance

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

DATE/LOCATION: February 24, 2023; 11:30am, Conference Room 308

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 261 HD1– RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

PACT supports HB 261 HD1, which will support preschools and regulated child care providers to achieve accreditation while preserving the amount of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Accreditation is among the most well-known measures of quality in early childhood education. However, accreditation is expensive, intensive and time-consuming for providers who have not been accredited previously. As the law is currently written, programs wishing to serve or continue serving Preschool Open Doors families must start this expensive and intensive process by 2024 and complete it by 2029. This requirement creates a significant burden for preschools and child care providers who currently serve Preschool Open Doors families but are unaccredited and it hinders efforts to increase the number of programs available.

The creation of an accreditation program is an important step to provide technical assistance and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality while preserving and expanding the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address, and successfully resolve challenges through its 20 programs. Among its services are early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs.

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



TO:

Rep. K. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. L. Kitagawa, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance Members

FROM:

Brenda Watanabe, VP Public Policy, HiAEYC Board

SUBJECT: Measure: HB261 – RELATING TO THE EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Hearing Date: February 24, 2023

Time: 11:30am

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, which is a leading accreditation organization for early learning program quality.

Please support HB261 which will support preschools and regulated child care providers achieve accreditation and preserve the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families. HiAEYC recognizes program quality as important for the success of child development programs. Accreditation is among the most well-known measures of quality. However, accreditation is expensive, intensive and time-consuming for providers who have not been accredited previously. As the law is currently written, a program wishing to serve or continue serving Preschool Open Doors families must start this expensive and intensive process by 2024 and complete it by 2029. This requirement creates a significant burden for preschools and child care providers who currently serve Preschool Open Doors families but are unaccredited as well as hinders efforts to increase the number of programs available. The creation of an accreditation program is an important step to provide technical and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality and preserving and expanding the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

HiAEYC strongly supports this measure and requests this measure be passed. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to share our views and provide testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Watanabe,
VP of Public Policy,
HiAEYC Board

HB-261-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 1:44:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelsey Gans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and committee members,

Please support HB261 which will support preschools and regulated child care providers achieve accreditation and preserve the amount of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families. Accreditation is among the most well-known measures of quality in early childhood education. However, accreditation is expensive, intensive and time-consuming for providers who have not been accredited previously. As the law is currently written, programs wishing to serve or continue serving Preschool Open Doors families must start this expensive and intensive process by 2024 and complete it by 2029. This requirement creates a significant burden for preschools and child care providers who currently serve Preschool Open Doors families but are unaccredited as well as hinders efforts to increase the number of programs available.

The creation of an accreditation program is an important step to provide technical assistance and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality and preserve and expand the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Please support this measure.

HB-261-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 3:27:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2023 11:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and committee members,

Please support HB261 which will support preschools and regulated child care providers achieve accreditation and preserve the amount of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families. Accreditation is among the most well-known measures of quality in early childhood education. However, accreditation is expensive, intensive and time-consuming for providers who have not been accredited previously. As the law is currently written, programs wishing to serve or continue serving Preschool Open Doors families must start this expensive and intensive process by 2024 and complete it by 2029. This requirement creates a significant burden for preschools and child care providers who currently serve Preschool Open Doors families but are unaccredited as well as hinders efforts to increase the number of programs available.

The creation of an accreditation program is an important step to provide technical assistance and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality and preserve and expand the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Please support this measure.

Feb. 22, 2023

To: Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Finance

Subject: **Measure** – HB261 HD1 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
Hearing Date – Feb. 24, 2023
Time - 11:30 AM
Location - Room 308

This testimony is in support of HB261 HD1.

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.

I am in support of SB 239, which will support licensed preschools and regulated child care providers achieve program accreditation and preserve the number of quality preschools and child care programs available for Preschool Open Doors families.

Research shows a direct correlation between high-quality early learning and children's positive long-term outcomes in life, including increased educational attainment, healthier lifestyles, and more successful careers.

For many years, I assisted DHS licensed preschools through an accreditation process. I found one of the important benefits of accreditation is how teachers and other staff of early learning programs develop a shared understanding and commitment to quality. The accreditation process leads to increased staff morale, greater staff retention, and a more positive, energetic work atmosphere overall.

As the law is currently written, programs wishing to serve or continue serving Preschool Open Doors families must start the accreditation process by 2027 and complete it by 2032. This requirement creates a significant burden for both preschools and child care providers who currently serve and want to serve Preschool Open Doors families.

In addition, some of the challenges for those programs, especially for smaller sized preschools and family child care homes, to successfully go through the accreditation self-study and improvement process, is that it is expensive, intensive, and time-consuming. These programs are already operating on razor-thin budgets and have limited time as they manage the complexities for serving children and families. Additional costs might be in upgrading equipment, increasing professional learning opportunities for staff and paying for outside

assistance to help with this process. Therefore, it will be of tremendous help if these programs have technical support, mentoring, and funding to complete and obtain accreditation.

Therefore, the establishment of an accreditation support program in the Department of Human Services (DHS) is an important step to providing technical assistance and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality and preserve and expand the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Elaine Yamashita
105 Kamehameiki Rd.
Kula, HI 96790-8451
808-281-1216
elainey208@gmail.com

February 22, 2023

Aloha to Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa and committee members:

I am in support of HB 261 HD1. I'm an advocate for early care and education, longtime Hawai'i Association for the Education of Young Children (HiAEYC, an affiliate of NAEYC) member, and professor emerita of UH Maui College.

Programs are wanting to pursue accreditation, and need financial and technical support in order to successful bring the program up to accreditation standards.

Research shows that high quality programs have made significant improvements in children's lives. NAEYC accreditation and other accrediting bodies are a way for programs to achieve high quality in order to have the most positive impact on our keiki and their 'ohana. However, many programs' budgets are just enough to cover operating expenses and staff salaries. They need financial and technical help and this bill is a first step towards building a system that will support and enhance program quality.

Your support of this measure is much appreciated.

Mahalo,
Elaine Yamashita

HB-261-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:42:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shantell Calarruda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

HB-261-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:48:55 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB261 HD1.

HB-261-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 9:11:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gemma Medina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and committee members,

Please support HB261 which will support preschools and regulated child care providers achieve accreditation and preserve the amount of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families. Accreditation is among the most well-known measures of quality in early childhood education. However, accreditation is expensive, intensive and time-consuming for providers who have not been accredited previously.

As a former preschool director of a small program, I know first hand the challenges that come with obtaining accreditation. The cost was preventative in the first few years of operation. Because of this, I was unable to enroll children who received certain subsidies. The costs have increased over time yet programs cannot increase their tuition to support these additional cost.

As a board member of the Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children, I know that programs will need additional support as they go through the process of accreditation. I utilized HECAP, an accreditation support program that was run by HiAEYC, as a preschool director and I felt encouraged and confident!

As the law is currently written, programs wishing to serve or continue serving Preschool Open Doors families must start this expensive and intensive process by 2024 and complete it by 2029. This requirement creates a significant burden for preschools and child care providers who currently serve Preschool Open Doors families but are unaccredited as well as hinders efforts to increase the number of programs available.

Please support this measure.

Gemma Medina

Testimony of Malia Tsuchiya
Before the Hawaii State Legislature
Committee on Human Services
Feb, 24, 2023
Honolulu, Hawaii

Committee On Finance
11:30 Pm
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

HB 261 HD 1 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES.
IN SUPPORT

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and respected members of the Committee on Finance,

Thank you for your time and for allowing me to submit testimony **IN SUPPORT of HB 261 HD 1**. My name is Malia Tsuchiya. I am a mother of five children, ranging in ages 17-2. I am also a preschool teacher and family childcare provider by trade and have spent many years helping organizations and individuals to meet state and national requirements for childcare accreditation and licensing. I humbly request for the committee to please vote **IN SUPPORT** of HB 261 for the following reasons:

Accreditation is an essential component to determining quality of care.

Accreditation facilitates constant assessment and improvement.

Accreditation is complicated and costly and is better accomplished with professional accreditation assistance.

Accreditation requires individuals and programs to constantly reflect on what they are doing well and what can be done better. In all other educational environments the knowledge or accomplishment is not rendered valid unless it comes from an accredited institution. Early childhood should be no different. Brain development is at its peak from birth to age five. This time of life is foundational for all future learning. Accreditation forces stakeholders to take a significant look at the impacts of early childhood education on all future learning. Accreditation encourages the workforce and its administrators to always be striving to do better for the benefit of our children. Our children deserve the opportunity to receive quality early childhood education and accreditation helps to establish that.

Without financial support the task of accreditation is daunting. Organizations need support so that they can effectively complete the task of becoming accredited. Without it, there is no definitive way to ensure for quality. For these reasons I humbly request that the committee

VOTE IN FAVOR OF HB 261 HD 1.

Thank you for your time. Kūlia I ka nu'u.

Mahalo nui,
Malia Tsuchiya

HB-261-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 10:16:35 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raya Esteban	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and committee members,

Please support HB261, which will help preschools and regulated child care providers achieve accreditation and safeguard the amount of programs available to Preschool Open Doors (POD) families. Accreditation is one of the most recognized measures of quality in early childhood care and education. However, accreditation is costly, rigorous, and time-consuming for providers who have not been accredited previously and for those who have to repeat the accreditation process. The bottomline is that many preschools and child care providers are tapped out of money and energy to begin and complete the accreditation that will soon be required to continue serving POD families. Additionally, without the support and guidance of an accreditation program, this requirement stalls efforts to increase the number of programs available. The creation of an accreditation program is an essential step to provide technical assistance and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality and preserve and expand the number of programs available to POD families. As a young, middle-class woman hoping to start a family soon in Honolulu, it is my sincere hope that affordable, high-quality childcare programs will be available to my future children. Ensuring that programs serving POD families get the support they need to gain accreditation is a huge step in the right direction. Please support this measure—for the present and future families who seek the quality child care that their keiki deserve.

Mahalo,

Raya Esteban

HB-261-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 10:36:40 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2023 11:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and committee members,

Please support HB261 which will support preschools and regulated child care providers achieve accreditation and preserve the amount of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families. Accreditation is among the most well-known measures of quality in early childhood education. However, accreditation is expensive, intensive and time-consuming for providers who have not been accredited previously. As the law is currently written, programs wishing to serve or continue serving Preschool Open Doors families must start this expensive and intensive process by 2024 and complete it by 2029. This requirement creates a significant burden for preschools and child care providers who currently serve Preschool Open Doors families but are unaccredited as well as hinders efforts to increase the number of programs available.

The creation of an accreditation program is an important step to provide technical assistance and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality and preserve and expand the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Please support this measure.

Kee Lo

TO: COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

SUBJECT: HB 261 - RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING ACCREDITATION

POSITION: IN SUPPORT

Aloha, Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning House Bill (HB) 261, relating to early learning accreditation, which will support preschools and regulated child care providers achieve accreditation and preserve the amount of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families. As a member of the community, I strongly support HB 261 as I believe that having a stable early learning framework is critical to the economic and social health of our state.

Accreditation is among the most well-known measures of quality in early childhood education. Currently, accreditation is expensive, intensive and time-consuming for providers. The creation of an accreditation program strengthens the early learning system in Hawaii as it is a critical step in providing technical and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality. It also preserves and expands the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

As a community member, I strongly believe we should have measures in place that support a healthy, robust early learning system, because it is the foundation on which the workforce relies so that they can work. Strong, accredited early learning systems are a springboard for the economy. I appreciate the opportunity to provide the Committee with my testimony in support of HB 261.

Thank you,

Moevanu Jameson
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