

LATE TESTIMONY

Date of Hearing: February 2, 2009

Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: H.B. 395, Relating to Early Learning

Purpose: Requires any unexpended or unencumbered general fund appropriations designated for the State's early learning system to lapse into the Keiki First Steps Trust Fund.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) is in full support of this bill. In view of the current fiscal situation this bill will allow the work of the Early Learning Council to continue, and ultimately ensure that the developmental and early learning needs of young children are equitably addressed throughout the state.

The Department welcomes the opportunity to continue working with its early childhood partners, in both public and private settings, to ensure universal access to quality early learning opportunities. Our collective efforts will help young children to be at optimal levels of readiness for learning, particularly as they make the transition into a K-12 learning system.

As appropriate, the Department respectfully requests that this bill be expedited so that actions may ensure that unexpended and unencumbered funds are secured in the trust fund at the closing of the fiscal year in June.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

Testimony to the House Committee on Education
Hearing Date: Monday, February 2, 2009
2:00 p.m. – Conference Room 309

Shawn Malia Kana'iaupuni, PhD
Director, Public Education Support (PEdS) Division
Kamehameha Schools

Friday, January 30, 2009

Re: HB 395 - Relating to Early Learning

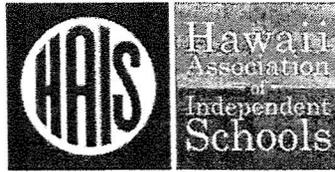
Good afternoon Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Berg and members of the Education Committee. My name is Shawn Malia Kana'iaupuni and I am Director, Public Education Support Division for Kamehameha Schools. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 395.

Kamehameha Schools applauds the legislature for establishing the Early Learning Council. We have been participating extensively in the Early Learning Council and look forward to participating in on going dialog on this critically important matter. We ask you to support this measure as funding for early learning is essential to the Early Learning Council's success for all of Hawaii.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is a statewide educational system supported by a trust endowed by Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, whose mission is to improve the capability and well-being of Native Hawaiian children through education. We serve 5,400 K-12 students through campus programs on O'ahu, Hawai'i and Maui, and 1,317 three-and-four-year-olds at 31 preschool sites statewide. Last year, we provided \$4.4 million in scholarships to 850 keiki attending community preschools.

Since its inception more than 20 years ago, the Kamehameha Schools Early Childhood Education (ECE) Division has provided more than 11,000 keiki with their first preschool experience. Early childhood education and parental support is the cornerstone of the Education Strategic Plan adopted in 2005, which seeks to foster long-term intergenerational change in the way Native Hawaiian families approach learning. Research demonstrates that early education is a key factor in lifelong success for all children, and we strongly urge the legislature to promote, enhance and support the efforts of the State of Hawai'i to appropriately address the needs of Hawaii's pre-kindergarten children.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



LATE TESTIMONY

February 2, 2009
2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 309

TESTIMONY TO
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: HB395 – Relating to Early Learning

Dear Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Berg, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Witt, and I am executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools. On behalf of the Association's 97 member institutions, I am submitting testimony in strong support of House Bill 395 – Relating to Early Learning, which requires any unexpended or unencumbered general fund appropriations designated for the State's early learning system to lapse into the Keiki First Steps Trust Fund.

Our association has long been an advocate for early childhood education and was a staunch supporter of the legislation last session which became Act 14 and authorized the creation of the Early Learning Council. We are pleased that such a body has been founded to address the educational needs of the young children of our state and believe that the work of the Council is not only essential to the development and achievement of students in early learning programs, but is important to learning of elementary and secondary school students as well.

An investment in the Early Learning Council is an investment in the lifelong success of all of Hawaii's keiki. To that end, we encourage your support of this measure so that, via the Keiki First Steps Trust Fund, the Council will be provided with the critical funding it needs to implement its work plan.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this urgent matter.