

TESTIMONY BY GEORGINA K. KAWAMURA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 395

March 2, 2009

RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING

House Bill No. 395 proposes that any general fund appropriations designated for the State's early learning system under Chapter 302L that are unexpended or unencumbered by the end of the fiscal period specified in the appropriating Act shall lapse into the Keiki First Steps Trust Fund.

We oppose this bill because it will further reduce the amount of funds available for the State's general fund.

Although we support efforts to develop high-quality early learning opportunities, we note that the Department of Education has the authority to carry over up to 5% of any appropriation rather than lapsing unexpended funds at the end of a fiscal year. In Fiscal Year 2007 and Fiscal Year 2008, the Department of Education's general fund carryovers were over \$40 million each year. Normally, any unexpended amounts would have lapsed to the general fund.

In light of the current fiscal crisis, we cannot afford to reduce the State's general fund balance.

Date of Hearing: March 2, 2009

Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: H.B. 0395 (HSCR 119) 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 H.B. 0395 (HSCR 119). 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.



OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

HB395

RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING

House Committee on Finance

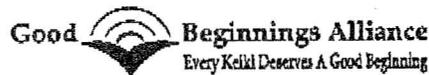
Monday, March 2, 2009
308

2:30pm

Room

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS, HB 395**, Relating to Early Learning. OHA supports that any unexpended or unencumbered general fund appropriations be designated for the State's early learning system to lapse into the Keiki First Steps Trust Fund. From birth to a child's transition to kindergarten are critical early childhood learning opportunities for children and their caregivers. OHA agrees that it is vital for the State to help the sustainability of early childhood learning.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Hearing date:
Monday, March
2, 2009, 2:30 p.m.
House Finance
Committee
Room 308

To: Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair
Representative Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

From: Elisabeth Chun, Executive Director
Good Beginnings Alliance

Date: Monday, March 2, 2009, 2:30 p.m.
Conference Room 308

Subject: **HB395: 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.**

The Good Beginnings Alliance is a policy and advocacy organization focused on Hawaii's youngest children and their families. We strive to ensure a nurturing, safe and healthy development for all children from pre-birth to age eight. We believe all children deserve safe and supportive environments that meet their needs as they grow and develop.

We strongly support this bill.

Good Beginnings Alliance has been actively supporting the new Early Learning Council through its different subcommittees. We recognize the importance of continuing this work despite the current state budget challenges. Passage of this bill will allow the Early Learning Council to carry on its work during the next fiscal year. Mahalo for your support.

For more information contact: Good Beginnings Alliance; phone: 531-5502;
lchun@goodbeginnings.org



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Hearing Date: Monday, March 2, 2009
2:30 p.m. – Conference Room 308
HB 395, relating to early learning

Dee Jay Mailer, Chief Executive Officer
Kamehameha Schools

Good afternoon Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee and members of the House Committee on Finance. My name is Dee Jay Mailer, Chief Executive Officer of Kamehameha Schools. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **support** of HB 395, relating to early learning.

Kamehameha Schools supports the efforts of the legislature to enhance the early education opportunities of children across the state through the Early Learning Council. In order for the Council to do its work, it needs resources and therefore Kamehameha Schools strongly supports efforts to prevent any lapse of funding that the Council needs to fulfill its charter.

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 1,485 three-and-four-year-olds at 31 preschool sites statewide. We also provide scholarships to keiki attending other pre-schools and provide funding for child-family interaction programs that have filled a great need in rural communities.

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 Hawai'i's pre-kindergarten children.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with the legislature, the Department of Education and other public and private stakeholders in the community for the benefit of the children of Hawai'i.

Aloha United Way

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Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-3938
Telephone (808) 536-1951
Fax (808) 543-2222
www.auw.org



Aloha United Way

February 27, 2009

House Committee on Finance
Representative Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
Representative Marilyn B. Lee, Vice-Chair
Monday, March 02, 2009 at 2:30 p.m.
Conference Room 308

HB 395 Relating to Early Learning– Support

Dear Chair Oshiro, Vice-Chair Lee and Committee Members:

Aloha United Way encourages your favorable consideration of HB 395 which allows unexpended or unencumbered general fund appropriations designated for the State's early learning system to lapse into the Keiki First Steps Trust Fund.

We thank you for your support of early childhood learning. When children don't succeed in school they require additional services, are over represented in the juvenile justice system and fail to achieve the skills necessary to live a self-sufficient life as adults. An early investment in our children will significantly reduce the added cost to society in future years – national studies indicate that a \$1 investment in early childhood development will save \$7 in future costs.

Because HB 395 will allow the Early Learning Council to continue their essential work in the upcoming fiscal year, Aloha United Way encourages favorable consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Doyle".

Susan Doyle
President & Chief Professional Officer

Keiki Funders

NETWORK OF HAWAII

Hearing date:
Monday, March
2, 2009, 2:30 p.m.
House Finance
Committee
Room 308

To: Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair
Representative Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

From: Alfred Castle, Executive Director, Treasurer
Samuel N. and Mary Castle Foundation

Date: Monday, March 2, 2009, 2:30 p.m.
Conference Room 308

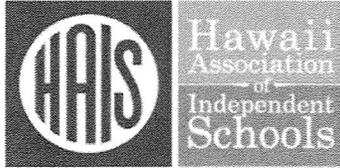
Subject: **HB395: Requires any unexpended or unencumbered general fund appropriations designated for the State's early learning system to lapse into the Keiki First Steps Trust Fund.**

My name is Al Castle, and I serve as both the Co-Chair of the Keiki Funders Network, an alliance of private philanthropic foundations in Hawaii supporting quality early childhood education, and the Executive Director, Treasurer of the Samuel N. and Mary Castle Foundation. Keiki Funders Network and Samuel N. and Mary Castle Foundation strongly support HB395.

Hawaii was among the first countries in the world to innovate in creating progressive kindergarten education for a multi-cultural, multi-racial population. As early as the 1890's, private funders, primarily women, were working collegially to privately fund kindergartens modeled on the progressive educational pedagogy of the American philosopher John Dewey and George H. Mead at the University of Chicago. By the time the Territorial Department of Education responded to community pressure to adopt the kindergartens and to provide a more comprehensive tax supported K-12 system in 1943, Hawaii's early education experiment had helped generations of our citizens to achieve admirable social and economic mobility. To accomplish this in the midst of the many challenges posed by World War II took bold leadership.

Today, Hawaii again faces significant challenges in taking the next step forward by establishing quality early childhood education for all of Hawaii's keiki with our current economic downturn. A growing number of economists and business leaders around the country have come to the conclusion that investment in quality early childhood education makes great economic sense. Hawaii's private foundations also wholeheartedly support this position too. Hawaii's philanthropic community contributed over \$35.7 million in 2007 and nearly \$38 million in 2008. This generosity is due also in large part to Kamehameha Schools, which has made early learning and parent engagement a priority of its education strategic plan, and provided the largest share of these private contributions 89% in 2007 and 96% in 2008. While HB395 will only apply to unencumbered funds, it is a step in the right direction. To ensure all of Hawaii's keiki receive

access to quality early education, it will take substantial public and private support. Passing this bill is the right thing to do, as we believe all children deserve quality early education that meets their needs as they grow and develop.



March 2, 2009
2:30 p.m.
Conference Room 308

TESTIMONY TO
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

RE: HB395 – Relating to Early Learning

Dear Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Witt, and I am executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS). 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.

HAIS 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. We strongly urge the Committee to pass this measure, as it will provide the Council with the much-needed means to continue the good work that it has already begun.

We steadfastly believe that when investments are made in the education of the youngest members of our community – in this case, by allowing the moneys in the trust fund to remain available to the Early Learning Council after the end of the fiscal year – the returns are enormous. We are certain that an increase in the State's overall investment in education will not only positively impact the future success of our keiki, but will produce significant dividends for all of us in Hawaii, for many years to come.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

Shelley Ng, Vice President of Public Policy for
Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children

Testimony addressed to House Finance Committee
For hearing on March 2, Monday, 2009 at 2:30 p.m.
HB 395 Relating to Early Learning

‘Ano‘ai kakou! Chair Oshiro, Vice-Chair Lee, and esteemed members of the House Finance Committee.

As the vice president of public policy for the Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children (Hawaii AEYC), I represent 1,000 members who are early childhood development and educational professionals across the state. My name is Shelley Ng.

I support the proposed amendment to §302-L5, Keiki First Steps Trust Fund, that would require any unexpended or unencumbered general fund appropriations designated for the State’s early learning system to lapse into the Keiki First Steps Trust Fund. This amendment would allow the Early Learning Council more flexibility and discretion in budgeting for unanticipated changes in projected or actual expenses, thereby increasing prudent budget management.

The staff and board of Hawaii AEYC are most willing to assist the legislature in providing information or strategies that can better inform the decision-making over this proposed amendment. I invite you to contact us at (808) 942-4708.

Hawaii AEYC’s mission is to promote, support, and expand quality and professionalism in early childhood programs and services for Hawaii’s children (0 – 8) and their families.

Best wishes during this legislative session.

INPEACE- Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture

TESTIMONY

HB395
RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING
Testimony Presented Before
The Joint Committees on Finance and Education
March 2, 2009 @ 2:30pm in Conference Room 308
by
Kanoë Nāone, Ph.D. Chief Executive Officer

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.

INPEACE **SUPPORTS** the overall intent of this bill and urges the committees to pass it. INPEACE annually serves more than 2,400 children, parents and community members through its early childhood and workforce development programs on 5 different islands. With more than fourteen years experience providing high-quality, culturally-relevant and developmentally appropriate services to young children, INPEACE understands the critical role the early years (ages 0-8 years) play in the overall development of children. Research continually advocates for adequate, *quality* child-rearing supports in place for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers to ensure successful future outcomes for them. These supports are currently disparate, underfunded, and in need of a strong and comprehensive governance structure in the state of Hawai'i. The creation of the Early Learning Council has been a step toward developing a stable governance structure, but a sustainable funding stream has yet to be created. The Keiki Steps First Trust Fund, also known as the Early Learning Trust Fund, will be a central source of funds specifically geared toward and aimed at developing, enhancing and sustaining quality early childhood education programs and services. This main funding stream will allow early childhood services, from prenatal care to preschool programs, to better align their resources and personnel, cutting back on overlapping and misallocated funds. The Early Learning Trust Fund is crucial to maintaining an early learning *system* that can have the capacity to develop,

monitor, evaluate and improve the highest quality programs possible for Hawai'i's keiki and future generation. The lapsing of unexpended and unencumbered general funds into the Early Learning Trust Fund will allow a continual stream of funds for continued early education services and the work of the Early Learning Council. On behalf of the families and children we serve, we humbly urge you to pass this measure.