

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 9, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Dee Morikawa, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Rachael Wong, DrPH, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 1499 – RELATING TO FAMILY LITERACY**

Hearing: Thursday, February 12, 2015 9:30 AM
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to establish and make an appropriation for a statewide literacy program under the Department of Human Services; the bill proposes to allow direct services to be provided by existing programs and non-profits.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates efforts to increase statewide literacy, however, the DHS respectfully opposes this measure based upon the following concerns: per section 312-8, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), this may result in the duplication of services; the DHS is not the appropriate agency to develop, implement and monitor such a program; and the cost implications, as far as passage of the bill naming the DHS as the responsible agency, will likely replace and or adversely impact DHS' priorities in the Executive Budget.

This bill proposes to establish and fund a statewide literacy program that will duplicate the literacy and lifelong learning program that currently exists through the Board of Education and administered by the Hawaii State Public Library System.

Section 312-8, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), provides:

§312-8 Literacy and lifelong learning program. (a) In addition to its other duties, the board of education, through the state librarian, shall:

(1) Provide for the establishment and ongoing operation of a literacy and lifelong learning program for the public libraries in the State;

(2) Provide coordination and facilitation of the activities of literacy service providers and literacy programs in the public, private, and volunteer sectors; and

(3) Develop public-private sector literacy partnerships for literacy program support.

(b) The objectives of the literacy and lifelong learning program shall be to provide programmatic activities that promote intergenerational learning and well-being by improving parents' skills and attitudes toward education; increasing children's learning skills; enhancing parenting skills; and uniting adults and children in positive educational experiences.

...

[L 1993, c 361, pt of §1; am L 1996, c 89, §13; am L 1997, c 310 §1; am L 2001, c 109, §1]"

The DHS previously funded a similar program from 2007 – 2011 using Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) federal funds. The basis for the funding was that the program provided a “family strengthening” service under TANF Purpose 3 – the prevention and reduction of out-of-wedlock pregnancies, and TANF Purpose 4 – to encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families, and not because the DHS has the expertise in the area of developing, monitoring, or implementing statewide literacy programs. The DHS terminated this contracted service to reprioritize the depleted TANF federal funds to the program's core purposes of providing cash assistance and work/employment program services. The DHS 's priorities with regard to TANF funding continues to be focusing on these core purposes that support a families' ability to become self-sufficient.

For the committee's review and consideration, the budget proposal from the literacy non-profit organization that the DHS last contracted with, proposed that to provide a state-wide reading program that addresses positive youth development and family strengthening, a total of \$2,648,492 for a minimum of 48 schools during school year 2014-2015 would be required. This proposed amount equals approximately \$55,177 per school, per year. Based on this proposed figure, it would cost the State \$9,876,693 per year in general funds to provide this literacy service statewide to 179 elementary schools.

Should the Legislature decide to pass the measure and appropriate general funds, the DHS requests that the Legislature consider placing such a program with an agency that currently has the experience in the area of developing, monitoring, and implementing statewide literacy programs, or experience in developing reading programs with measures for literacy progress.

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



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KIHEI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

250 E. Lipoa St.
Kihei, HI 96753

LATE

TESTIMONY TO THE TWENTY-SIXTH STATE LEGISLATURE, 2012 SESSION

TO: House Committee on Human Services
FROM: Halle Maxwell, Principal
Kihei Elementary School
RE: HB 1499
Family Literacy

Honorable Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Kihei Elementary School faculty and families, I would like to encourage you to pass HB 1499. The Read Aloud America Program (RAP) is a unique opportunity to bring our families together and to encourage literacy. RAP provides a fun and safe environment for parents and their children to learn to love reading!

My school community faces many economic challenges. We also have a large population of families who do not have English as their native language. Despite these obstacles, our families make time to attend "RAP nights" and value this time spent together as a family. After each session, I review the comments from parents regarding how RAP has affected them. It is inspirational and touching to see how this program changes their lives for the better! Here are a couple of examples:

One mom wrote that she didn't want to attend. She was busy and tired but her children begged her to bring them to RAP. She wrote that she was so happy to have attended and that she was grateful that the presenter made her laugh. She wrote that it has been a really long time since she has laughed.

Another parent wrote, "We love this program. This program is the whole reason why my two youngest daughters love to read."

A busy parent wrote, "I really enjoy this. It gives me quality time to spend with my kids since I work full time.... I make it a point to schedule these days to get off early just to spend time with my kids."

Another parent who has faced many struggles in her life wrote, "My daughter, who is in second grade, looks forward to coming each session. I've just been released from prison after doing 5 years straight and my daughter was just 2 years old. All I did was read. That kept my mind from going insane. Since being out, I've read only one book. Then I came to this RAP program and it's reminded me about the pleasures to the soul of reading. Now I'm reading again on a daily basis. Time is set aside each day, Monday- Sunday, for one hour just for reading. This is done with my husband, myself and our daughter. Again, thank you."

When I read comments like these, and the dozens more just like them, I am reminded of the role the school and programs like RAP can play in helping to bring families together, create meaningful memories and foster a life-long love of reading!

I have seen first hand how this program changes lives and I implore you to support HB 1499 so that RAP can continue to positively impact the lives of our children and their families.

Sincerely,

Halle Maxwell, Principal
Kihei Elementary School
808-875-6818
02/27/2012

AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Shawn Leong
SAVERS
380 Dairy Road
Kahului, HI 96732
808.871.7244
1118@savers.com

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT



To: Whom it may concern Re: Read Aloud Program

Good Evening and Aloha,

We are writing this letter on behalf of the Read Aloud Program/Read Aloud America here in Maui Hawaii to provide testimony of the wonderful and impactful work they do for our island community. Savers of Maui has had a successful partnership with the local Read Aloud Program for at least the last 6 months working with Larry and Joanne Laird to help promote literacy to our island's keiki (children). We have done this through having "Keiki Story Time" here in our stores book section once a month and also by donating our gently used picture and chapter books to their program when they are at our schools to do their program. In that time we have seen the tireless efforts of the Laird's to encourage our keiki to love reading as it is a fundamental part of the learning process. We have also seen the program have to cut back this important service to the community in the form of shorter programs and less frequent visits to schools. If you have ever been to a RAP Program event you would know that it is full of passion and enthusiasm from the volunteers and attendees. RAP programs also are very well attended and engaging not only for the kids but also their parents to encourage all to become avid readers. The Rap Program here has positively impacted thousands of individuals in our community. Please put your support behind not only funding but growing this valuable program that gives our keiki the opportunity to excel in this most fundamental of learning skills. Mahalo nui loa! for all your time and considerations and if you should have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us directly.

Sincerely,

Shawn Leong **SAVERS** Community Donation Center Ambassador 380
Dairy Road, Kahului, Hawaii 96732 [808.871.7244](tel:808.871.7244)

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Joanne Laird

Assistant District Governor

Rotary Clubs of Maui

250 Hau`oli Street #220

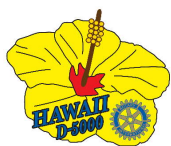
Wailuku, HI 96793

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

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Conference Room 329



The Rotary Clubs
of Maui

2014 – 2015

District 5000

Phil Sammer

District Governor

Coastal Clubs

Joanne Laird

Assistant District Governor

Kihei Sunrise

Christine Pawliuk, President

Kihei-Wailea

Stuart Karlan, President

Lahaina

Art Ortiz, President

Lahaina Sunrise

Dr. Anne Biedel, President

Valley Isle Clubs

Hugh Chare

Assistant District Governor

Kahului

Paul Janes-Brown, President

Maui

Dan Porter, President

Upcountry

Dr. Robert Sandry, President

Valley Isle Sunset

Wendy Acosta, President

Wailuku

Karin Harris, President

The Rotary Clubs of Maui

"Re: House Bill 1499 - Testimony in Strong Support

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1499 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii Schools. These programs get the parents more involved with the schools, help teach entire families the power of reading, and will help our children grow into better prepared, and more productive citizens! Your support is very important. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

On behalf of the Rotary Clubs of Maui, many of our members are involved in the Read Aloud America Programs that have been held in Maui County Schools. We see for ourselves the spark in the eyes of our keiki when they get to spend an enjoyable evening with their families and get to take home a new book. Please consider financial support for this House Bill in order to bring this evening family literacy program to even more Maui County schools.

Joanne Laird

Assistant District Governor

Rotary Clubs of Maui

250 Hau`oli Street #220

Wailuku, HI 96793

kobayashi2-Lynda

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 07, 2015 1:59 AM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: cariagacora@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1499 on Feb 12, 2015 09:30AM

HB1499

Submitted on: 2/7/2015

Testimony for HUS on Feb 12, 2015 09:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maria Corazon E. Cariaga	Big Island Adult foster home operators	Support	No

Comments: Thank for all your hardwork . Thank you too for allowing us to support.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Ana Sorote

744 Ponoï Place

Makawao, HI 96768

sorote@earthlink.net

808 232 8790

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1499 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii Schools. These programs get the parents more involved with the schools, help teach entire families the power of reading, and will help our children grow into better prepared, and more productive citizens! Hawaii children are in dire need of educational programs that complement the formal classroom lectures. Your support is very important. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

Ana Sorote

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Anne E. Biedel, MD

Vice President

Maui Medical Group

abiedel@mauimedical.com

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

I am writing in support of Read Aloud America program. Having been a part of the program in Lahaina I have a first hand appreciation of how much good we can do to help our kids learn to read. It is a critical part of this program to include parents in the experience with their children. What a great way to empower parents to help their little ones. I hope the government of Hawaii will appreciate and support this effort.

Sincerely,

Anne E. Biedel, MD

Vice President

Maui Medical Group

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Beverly Heikes
124 Chong Street'
Hilo, HI 96720
(808) 935-1561
bgheikes@yahoo.com

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

Aloha Legislators,

I have experienced first hand how RAP has made a measurable difference in the lives of families, schools and communities. Read Aloud America's RAP has taken a simple concept of "building families of lifetime readers" and engaged more families in the educational process of their children than any other program in the state of Hawaii.

After attending RAP sessions parents and guardians feel they are now equipped with some simple tools to become proactive, such as reading aloud great stories to their children, taking the entire family to the public library, turning off technology and engaging in positive family time together. Parents have also stated that after attending RAP they are starting to feel that the school is now working for their student and working as partners with them in educating their children. They also feel more comfortable and confident in coming into the school to inquire about their student progress and have a simple basic conversation with the teacher, staff and principal. Parents and children are reading more and students are doing better in school all because they attended RAP sessions. This in itself is a major accomplishment, as it is just what we as parents want from the educational system, to work as a team around simple concepts in educating our children.

With that, I believe Read Aloud America's RAP should be in every school in the state of Hawaii but we need your help in making this happen.

Beverly Heikes
124 Chong Street'
Hilo, HI 96720
(808) 935-1561

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Camille Michel
1617 Kalaniuka Way
Honolulu, HI 96821
ctdmic@aol.com
(808) 382-4001

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Re: House Bill 1499 - Testimony in Strong Support

I humbly submit this testimony to offer my strong support of House Bill 1499 to bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii schools. Reading is the cornerstone of education, which in turn is the key to a productive and prosperous community in which its members can care for themselves and also for each other. To provide families opportunities to engage purposefully in reading and to increase access to literacy programs throughout our community are investments that we must make now if we truly care about the future of the State of Hawaii and, most importantly, its people. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

Camille Michel
1617 Kalaniuka Way
Honolulu, HI 96821
ctdmic@aol.com
(808) 382-4001

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Christina Harrod

4725 Bougainville Dr #299

Honolulu, HI 96818

(808) 364-5352

chryztii@icloud.com

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1499 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii Schools. These programs get the parents more involved with the schools, help teach entire families the power of reading, and will help children grow into better prepared, more productive citizens! As a reader myself, I have seen kids grow to love reading. We read some of the Percy Jackson series and the kids were earnestly upset that they couldn't find the next book at the school library but absolutely thrilled that it was at the local library - and they even got their orange slip stamped to potentially win a prize! It makes me so happy, as a future educator, to see kids so eager to learn. Your support is very important. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

RAP reader, Christina Harrod,

4725 Bougainville Dr #299, Honolulu, HI 96818, (808) 364-5352

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Dee DeLancey
114 Ley Court
Pearl City, Hawaii 96782
demetria.delancey@gmail.com

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT

To whom it may concern,

I wanted to take a moment to discuss how wonderful the Read Aloud Program is for our family. I read to my children almost daily, so they already have a love of books. But this program has been so great, they have been excited to come to each RAP session and interact with the different readers, friends, teachers, and volunteers. It is wonderful that the RAP program has been provided free of charge to so many children and families who may not have people to read to them at home, or have any outside interactions with the school aside from the time that they are there daily. I think it sheds a positive light on the school environment and I personally know that I have brought along friends who are planning to let their child attend Pearl City Elementary School. I am proud of this program at our school and pleased to be able to attend with my two daughters. It nurtures a continued love of reading for my children, but for so many, it may be the steps into reading that they need to develop that love. And not just for adults, I think it is wonderful that they have the adult portion of the evening too! What a great way to reach the adults who may not be able to read well, or have access to books. So this is something great for the whole family!!

It is my hope that this program is continued on a yearly basis, and I hope that it is able to spread to many other schools, communities and states.

Mahalo for your time,

Dee DeLancey
114 Ley Court
Pearl City, Hawaii 96782

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair
Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Edward F Corbett
160 Keonekai Road Apt 11-102
Kihei, HI 96753
efcorbett@yahoo.com
808 264 3468

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

"Re:House Bill 1499 – Testimony in Strong Support

I Strongly support House Bill 1499's introduction to encourage bringing an improved literacy program to all of Hawaii's schools and most importantly the offer to enhance all of Hawaii's Children the opportunity to encourage at an early age the importance that literacy provides for their futures.

As a former President of the Kihei Sunrise Rotary Club on Maui I have seen a tremendous excitement exhibited in our youth, as well as the parents of the children who have participated in the Read Aloud America literacy program that has been introduced to most of the elementary schools over the last few years. When you see anywhere from 300 to 600 students and parents actively involved in these programs and you see them receive free books to read and then bring in additional books for others to read during the 6 week programs it encourages the entire family to understand the power of reading, and will help all our children grow into better prepared students as they progress through the elementary school, middle school and high school years. After all, a literate student becomes more qualified for upper education which ultimately supports their ability to become a successful individual in their adult years.

I fully support passage of this House Bill and Mahalo for your support for this legislation

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Eugene Lam

80 Mahalani Street

Section L

Wailuku, HI 96793

Genelam88@gmail.com

310-883-4648

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

"Re: House Bill 1499 - Testimony in Strong Support"

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1499 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii Schools. These programs get the parents more involved with the schools, help teach entire families the power of reading, and will help our children grow into better prepared, and more productive citizens! Your support is very important. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

Literacy programs which bring a fun and educational way to stimulate reading skills in children and families are essential to the growth of Hawaii's Keiki.

Eugene Lam

80 Mahalani Street

Section L

Wailuku, HI 96793

Genelam88@gmail.com

310-883-4648

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Gwyndolin Gorg
237 Auoli Drive
Makawao, Hawaii 96768
gigorg@yahoo.com

HB1499 -Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Members of the House Committee on Human Services,

This letter is a request for you to support the funding that will allow this valuable service provided by Read Aloud America to continue. Having been involved in this program for the past few years has given me the opportunity to experience the value of families spending more quality time together. Read Aloud America encourages families to turn off technology for a few days and interact more with each other. Observing adults being read to and the joyful expressions on their faces is tantamount to a happy child's face experiencing the pleasure of Christmas morning. Some of the evaluations submitted by the parents reveal they had never been read to before until coming to Read-Aloud. . Based on the continuous feedback everyone is happy and benefitting.

Please support more adequate funding.

Mahalo in advance for your cooperation,

Gwyndolin Gorg
237 Auoli Drive
Makawao, Hawaii 96768

kobayashi2-Lynda

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 7:28 AM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: velvet@readaloudamerica.org
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1499 on Feb 12, 2015 09:30AM*

HB1499

Submitted on: 2/11/2015

Testimony for HUS on Feb 12, 2015 09:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Adesina Ogunelese	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Barbara A. Campbell

1487 Hiikala Place #30

Honolulu, HI 96816

barbara.campbell@outrigger.com

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

I am writing in support of HB 1499 that would support literacy and reading programs in our public schools. As a volunteer for Read Aloud America, I have had the opportunity to talk to parents and kids about the positive effect the Read Aloud Program (RAP) on families. One family reported RAP has had a very positive influence on how they spend their evenings together and how they now enjoy having dinner together and reading stories before bed. These activities are the important foundation for kids to improve their education and future in the workforce by being comfortable with reading. Many of the parents in these schools have not had the benefit of literacy programs and they too are learning the enjoyment of reading.

In our public schools, Read Aloud America draws large crowds of parents and students (anywhere from 300-600 at each of the 6 sessions) and advances the concept of reading through strong family values and the love of reading and being read too. It's truly magical to observe children and families captivated with a good story. Oftentimes, the kids are the ones telling Mom and Dad they all have to go to RAP. Read Aloud America also has a book swap and the families love picking up books to read in between sessions. By supporting Read Aloud America, we are giving our kids and future leaders a better chance at education and stronger values as they grow up.

I encourage you to seriously consider Read Aloud America as the vehicle who will bring literacy across the state to our children and parents. This is a critical problem in the State of Hawaii and for our future success please invest in our children.

Your support is important to our keiki and the families in our public schools. Thank you for giving me an opportunity to express my thoughts with you today.

Mahalo,

Barbara Campbell

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

George Kahumoku Jr

GeorgeKahumoku@me.com

808-280-9948 cell

808-249-2125 home

POB 12804

Lahaina Hi 96761

Www.Kahumoku.com

Www.SlackKeyShow.com

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

To Whom this may Concern:

Aloha,

My name is George Kahumoku Jr & I am a musician, teacher, writer, artist & a farmer. I was the Principal for an Alternative School in Kona called Hale O Ho'oponono that lasted for 25 years. I have also taught At Risk kids at Lahainaluna High School for almost 20 years. I am the Retired Director of the UHMC Institute of Hawaiian Music & a teacher at the College for over 8 years. As a writer, I have participated & attended Read Aloud's Events here on Maui from the West side in Lahaina at King Kamehameha III Elementary School all the way to the East side at Hana Elementary, Intermediate, & High School. It is amazing to see whole Communities Wrap themselves around this Family Event called "Read Aloud America !" This Event brings families Closer together! There's so much buzz & excitement in the air when we go to a school. You can feel & see the anticipation on the faces of the students as well as the support of the parents! Please support this worthy cause!

Please Support kids, families, whole Communities! Please help Support Read Aloud America!

You know I've been nominated for The Grammys 6 times, & won 4 Grammys for Best Hawaiian music. My wife Nancy & I have attended the Grammy Festivities in LA at Staples Center with 40,000+ people in the crowd, All 6 times! I want you to know that The Enthusiasm for "Read Aloud America," matches any one of the Grammys Festivities I've Attended!

Sincerely

George Kahumoku Jr

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair
Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Heather Knapp
183 Oke St. #3
Kailua, HI 96734
(814)758-2925
heatherslynn@gmail.com

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

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Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

Literacy development begins early. Being a “reader” involves much more than the words on the page. It is a complex system, requiring motivation, that encompasses many skills and abilities along with background knowledge to support vocabulary and understanding to obtain meaning from print. All of this develops way before introduction to the written word. Literacy development begins at birth and continues throughout our lifetimes as readers.

How can we reach readers early? Family literacy. Family literacy connects and affects all aspects of literacy development at any age. Literacy programs that strive to involve meaningful relationships with reading beyond the child nurture more than the child. The value of reading is spread through generations. This also shapes our communities. Establishing value in literacy by demonstration has benefits that go beyond the child.

Supporting literacy programs is essential to building stronger communities, bonding families, and enriching our children’s lives. Family literacy programs are our most powerful instrument to create these meaningful connections between literacy and families and families and community.

Thank you for supporting our children, our families, our communities.

Heather Knapp
183 Oke St. #3
Kailua, HI 96734
(814)758-2925
heatherslynn@gmail.com

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Israel Chavez
1867 Kaioo Dr. #307
Honolulu, HI 96815
808-280-2351

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

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Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

Dear Hawaii State Legislators,

I strongly support House Bill 11499 which will strengthen literacy programs for all children in the State of Hawaii. These literacy programs will not only benefit the children, but also increase the connection between the schools and Hawaii's parents/ guardians. The benefits will be seen in real-time, and also multiply as they are passed down to the next generation and produce more educated and productive citizens.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Israel Chavez
1867 Kaioo Dr. #307
Honolulu, HI 96815
808-280-2351

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Jim and Cheryl Harstad
2353 Kuahea Street
Honolulu, HI 96816
harstadj@hawaii.edu
harstadca@gmail.com
808 737 0727

HB1499 -Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

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Testimony in Strong Support

As parents, grandparents, and long-time educators in local schools, we urge your support for House Bill 1499 to extend funding to Read Aloud America. We know first-hand how effective this fine organization has been in not only enhancing literacy among our state's children but also in bringing families and communities of families together in positive ways. We give House Bill 1499 our very strongest approval and hope you will too.

Thank you,

Jim and Cheryl Harstad
2353 Kuahea Street
Honolulu, HI 96816
harstadj@hawaii.edu
harstadca@gmail.com
808 737 0727

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Jon Schlobohm
4370 east waiola loop
wailea, hawaii 96753
Jon Schlobohm <jonschlobohm@mac.com>
808 874 9296

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

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Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

I have been a volunteer reader for Read Aloud America on the Island of Maui since the program began. I have read to students on all parts of the Island. The students I have read to have been in grades 6,7,and 8.

The response from these students has been the same regardless of which community I was reading in. They were attentive, excited about the opportunity to participate in something constructive, good listeners, and respectful.

I knew we had been making an impact on our community with this program when Soane Faiva and his family came to our house to trim our coconut trees and his daughter recognized me from the Read Aloud America program. The light in her eyes and expression on her face when she described how much she valued her nights at Read Aloud America memorialized for me the importance of reaching out to touch our youth in ways that are responsive and supportive to their well being.

This is definitely a program that our local government should support.

Aloha

Jon Schlobohm

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Julia Wo
1517 Makiki St. #1003
Honolulu, HI 96822
juliewo@hotmail.com
808-947-6767

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

RE: House Bill 1499 – Testimony in Strong Support

To Whom It May Concern,

It cannot be overstated that our youth is our future. To invest in their literacy is to invest in their ability to navigate the world.

House Bill 1499 will bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii schools. These programs involve parents with the schools, help teach the entire family the power of reading, and will help our children grow into better prepared, more productive citizens.

Your support is very important.

Thank you for considering this vital legislation!

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair
Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Lori Kaufman
2895 So. Kihei Rd. #205
Kihei, HI 96753
kumulori@yahoo.com
(808) 874-7478

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Re: House Bill 1499 – Testimony in Strong Support

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1499 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawai'i schools. These programs get entire families involved in the schools and open their eyes to the power of reading.

I have been teaching 3rd grade at Princess Nāhi'ena'ena Elementary for 21 years. I read to my students every day. I try to share my love of reading with them. I know how important reading is to their future.

Programs like Read Aloud work to get families and communities to understand how vitally important, and fun, reading is. I have been volunteering for the program for a couple of years. I feel so strongly about the importance of reading that, even after teaching all day, I go to another school and read to children there in the evening. These kids are at school at night and they sit still, listen, and are totally enthralled in the stories I am reading. The looks on their faces when they get to choose a book to keep for their very own is priceless. Children are reading, being read to, exchanging books they have already read for new ones, and going to the Library!

These programs are vital in helping our children grow into better prepared and more productive citizens.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1499.

kobayashi2-Lynda

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2015 10:15 PM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: cariagacora@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1499 on Feb 12, 2015 09:30AM*

HB1499

Submitted on: 2/10/2015

Testimony for HUS on Feb 12, 2015 09:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maria Corazon E. Cariaga	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Matthew Gurewitsch

3415 Kuaua Pl.

Kihei (Maui) HI 96753

matthew@alohaheights.com

808-280-2351

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

With all due respect and gratitude for advances in the electronic media, reading remains a bedrock skill for every child. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1499. The dollars spent on effective literacy programs for schoolchildren in our state will pay back a thousandfold. Literacy programs stimulate children's imagination and widen their horizons. They also promote and deepen meaningful interaction between parents and schools. Effective literacy programs help our children become more creative and independent thinkers, to their lifelong benefit as they grow into responsible citizens and well-prepared members of the workforce in an ever more competitive global economy.

Matthew Gurewitsch

808-280-2351

kobayashi2-Lynda

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 7:50 AM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: velvet@readaloudamerica.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1499 on Feb 12, 2015 09:30AM
Attachments: Michelle Nevius HB1499.pdf

HB1499

Submitted on: 2/11/2015

Testimony for HUS on Feb 12, 2015 09:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michelle Nevius	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair
Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Michelle Umipeg
3510 Kilauea Ave
Honolulu, HI 96816
squeamish527@gmail.com
808-387-0527

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB1499. I believe effective literacy programs in schools will be beneficial to students, parents, teachers, and the community as a whole because it provides a means of communicating effectively and encourages self-expression. The programs will encourage parents to become more involved in schools, therefore fostering a relationship with their children and the school.

I am a single mother to a twelve-year-old boy who is in the sixth grade. He has developed a voracious appetite for reading and writing. As I youngster, I, too, fell in love with words. I loved to be read to by my parents and teachers. In high school volunteered to read to children at the public library. Literary adaptations of Shakespeare (in forms of contemporary plays and in cinema) enabled me to understand and enjoy Shakespeare. I also took theatre classes in high school and college, where I also had an opportunity to be in Shakespearean and contemporary plays.

When my son was in daycare and preschool, I volunteered to read to him and his classmates. He says he wants to become a publisher one day. His HSA 4th grade 2011-2012 school year Reading Score is 412 (exceeds proficiency). His Lexile Score from his 4th grade 2011-2012 school year is 1120L (grades 9 to 10). A two years ago, I was in a Shakespeare play and he helped me run lines, tagged along for rehearsals, and sometimes filled in for missing performers at rehearsal. He is currently studying Shakespeare at school and says he is glad he got the early

I recently signed up as a volunteer reader for Read Aloud America and was happy to share my joy of reading and performance with the students. They asked if I could read to them again at the next session. The enthusiasm expressed by the children in during the program (before and after the group reading sessions) was tremendous. I was so elated to see and hear the children's excitement over books that it nearly drove me to tears of awe and gratitude. I held my composure and took in the scenery of the exhilaration of the children's love for reading.

Literacy is a key to unlocking potential knowledge. As they say, knowledge is power. Let's empower the children to become prepared and productive citizens. Your support is important. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Moana Jenson

P.O. Box 790937

Paia, HI 96779

sweetmetalcandy@gmail.com

808-280-4479

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

Aloha, thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on Read Aloud America in strong support of House Bill 1499. I have been volunteering for the Read Aloud Program (RAP) for the past couple of years, and I can first-hand attest to the program effectiveness in reaching its 10 objectives. The children that I read to have said that they read more since the first day of the program, as well as they love reading more since the program. The children are always sad when it's the last reading session and they want it to keep going. Born and raised on Maui, I was home schooled until high school, and I grew up without a TV and reading was a huge focus in my life, and I am still an avid reader, as well as both of my sisters. My older sister and I are both college graduates, and my younger sister will be graduating in June, and we all attribute much of our educational success to the fact that we are fast readers with high comprehension, due to the fact that we have been reading since we were very little, as well as both of our parents read to us everyday. Reading is a skill that needs practice and nourishment, and with early development and love for it, children are instilled with a wonderful sense of accomplishment, as well as a very useful and practical tool that will help them later in life, whether in college or at work. The first thing I always do when I start my first reading session with the keiki is to introduce myself (I'm 27) and tell them my favorite things to do: surfing, reading, making jewelry and snowboarding. I usually read to 4th or 5th graders, and I see them perk up when I explain that you can be a surfer and love to read too, as some children believe reading is "uncool" and by the end of the 6 week session, the "cool" kids even say that they now love to read. So, in my opinion the program really does work, and I hope it will only keep expanding and being offered in more schools and more often.

Mahalo for your time,

Moana Jenson

P.O. Box 790937

Paia, HI 96779

sweetmetalcandy@gmail.com

808-280-4479

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Myrna Woolery

98-1841 Hapaki St.

Aiea, HI

newoolery@hotmail.com

ph. 486-3030

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

As a volunteer for the Read Aloud Program, I've witnessed the enthusiastic involvement and motivation of the numerous parents and children in this literacy program.

Your support for House Bill 1499 will ensure a successful future for the youth in our schools and provide a great service to the community. Mahalo!

Myrna Woolery

98-1841 Hapaki St.

Aiea, HI

ph. 486-3030

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair
Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Patty Hemmen
905 Mahealani St. Kihei, HI. 96753
Past President
R.C. Kihei Sunrise 2012-2013
Youth Services Chair 2013-2014
inthedogshouse@hawaii.rr.com
808-280-8372

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1499 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii Schools. These programs get the parents more involved with the schools, help teach entire families the power of reading, and will help our children grow into better prepared and more productive citizens! Your support is very important. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

As a volunteer with Read Aloud America I respectfully urge you to support ***House Bill 1499***.

By strengthening students' at-home support system while bridging the gap between school and the home, RAP can help prevent students from making negative academic and social choices later in life simply by focusing on reading with family. The simplicity of this concept actually fulfills a critical need. Research shows that children who attend high-quality programs after school hours are more likely to make better grades and behave better in school, spend less time watching TV, make better social choices growing up and have lower incidences of drug use, gang involvement, and teenage pregnancy.

Specific results from RAP show that families watch less TV and spend more time together; parents are more involved in their children's learning; and students have an increased interest in reading and a more positive attitude toward school. In Hawaii where more than 93% of all parents work while trying to raise healthy families, providing a low cost but very effective program to help them create firm communication skills is vital. That it also often starts a lifelong love affair with reading and learning more about the world around us, is a wonderful bonus. On behalf of the many schools, and thousands of parents and children, I respectfully ask for your help in supporting ***House Bill 1499***.

Patricia Hemmen
Volunteer, Read Aloud America
inthedogshouse@hawaii.rr.com

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Rene Tamiko Stringfellow
98-402 Koauka Loop, Apt. 1604
Aiea, Hawaii 96701
7363strings@gmail.com
(808)371-3640
February 26, 2014

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

As a former Part-time Teacher and Reading Tutor, in Hawaii Public Elementary Schools, I have experienced first-hand the energetic, and positive momentum generated by programs like Read Aloud America. The enthusiasm of volunteers, and the joy experienced by students & families is infectious. These opportunities to share the thrill of reading with families are priceless. Developing such positive feelings toward literacy is unmistakably an irreplaceable benefit to our youngsters and families of Hawaii.

The impact of my experience with Read Aloud America's visits to our school has been so positive that I am now a Volunteer Reader, after leaving teaching two years ago to earn a higher salary. Without organizations such as Read Aloud America, I would not have the vehicle to reach out, and celebrate reading with our island Keiki. More importantly, our students and families lose these valuable opportunities to develop positive lifelong feelings associated with reading and family. With deepest appreciation, I thank you for considering this meaningful legislation.

Sincerely,

Rene Tamiko Stringfellow

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Simona Patierno

171 West Panana Place, kihei 96753

simpat75@gmail.com

310-8834648

HB1499 -Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

House Bill 1499 - Testimony in Strong Support

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1499 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii Schools. These programs get the parents more involved with the schools, help teach entire families the power of reading, and will help our children grow into better prepared, and more productive citizens! Your support is very important. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

Having children relying on readings programs that are fun and educational is nowadays a powerful tool to create a nice foundation to build on.

Simona Patierno

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Susan Gurewitsch

3415 Kuaua Place

Kihei, HI 96753

susan@2engage.com

808-874-8925

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

With no disrespect to electronic media, reading remains an essential skill for every child. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1499. The investment in effective literacy programs for our schoolchildren is priceless. Literacy programs stimulate children's imagination and widen their horizons, while building meaningful interactions between parents and schools. Effective literacy programs help children become more creative and independent thinkers, to their lifelong benefit as they become responsible citizens and well-prepared members of the workforce in an ever more competitive global economy.

Susan Gurewitsch

3415 Kuaua Place

Kihei HI 96753

susan@2engage.com

808-874-8925

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Susan Harper

Makawao School

808-573-8770

susan_harper/MAKAWAO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

TESTIMONY TO THE TWENTY-SEVENTH STATE LEGISLATURE, 2015 SESSION

TO: House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Susan Harper

Curriculum Coordinator, Makawao School, Makawao, HI 96768

Telephone: (808) 573-8770

RE: House Bill 1499
Relating to Family Literacy

Honorable Members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of House Bill 1499, which names Read Aloud America as a provider of literacy related activities for the children of Hawaii and will also provide funding to achieve this goal.

Makawao School hosted this wonderful program a couple years ago with resounding success. Our student population was at 552 at that time and during the 4 sessions of RAP that were held, the average attendance per session was 438 people. Of the total student population 67% attended at least one session. For our small country school these numbers are sensational.

But what speaks' even more clearly to the value of RAP is what students and parents shared with us about the experience. I have stacks of letters testifying that the RAP experience helped strengthen a love of reading in the home and brought families closer together. Most families watched less television as a result of RAP sessions, increased the use of our public library and strengthened bonds with the Makawao community. I urge you to support Read Aloud America and House Bill 1499. This program touches communities and children in a unique and meaningful way.

Sincerely,

Susan Harper

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Susan Lee
207 Nenua Street
Honolulu, HI 96821
808-382-6609
kukana77@yahoo.com

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1499 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii Schools. These programs get the parents more involved with the schools, help teach entire families the power of reading, and will help our children grow into better prepared and more productive citizens!

Susan Lee
207 Nenua Street
Honolulu, HI 96821
808-382-6609
kukana77@yahoo.com

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Timothy Shim

703 Lauie Dr

Kula, HI 96790

mauisbest@hotmail.com

(808) 495-6633

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

Aloha,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1499 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii Schools. These programs get the parents more involved with the schools, help teach entire families the power of reading, and will help our children grow into better prepared, and more productive citizens! Your support is very important. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

As a parent of 3 and an educator in the DOE, I see the value that a House Bill like this can provide our schools and communities. This is exactly what the families of Hawaii need.

Thank You,

Timothy Shim

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Wayne Moniz

wamomaui@gmail.com

1 808 2445373

HB1499 –Family Literacy Programs

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Conference Room 329

Testimony in Strong Support

Dear Legislators,

I support house bill 1499. As a veteran teacher of 43 years and a Maui Teacher of the Year I heartily endorse a program like Read Aloud America. I have volunteered for the program and brought by reading skills to 250 students at Hana High School. The program encourages parents to get involved in the reading of their children. Our children are our future.

Wayne Moniz wamomaui@gmail.com 1 808 2445373

February 10, 2015

LATE

Re: House Bill 1499 - Testimony in Strong Support of Bill

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1499 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii Schools. As a retired teacher and principal, literacy is one of the most important tools for a child's further success. The enjoyment of reading, being able to comprehend, and problem solve comes from literacy. From my experience as an educator, a child who has difficulty in reading by grade 3 most likely will continue to have difficulty in reading in future grades. Literacy is across the curriculum so without a strong back ground in reading a student's chance for success becomes more difficult. These students often become a behavior challenge as they continue to grow, develop and advance to higher grades and this often leads to low self-esteem.

Read Aloud America draws large crowds of parents and students and advances the concept of reading through family strong family values and the love of reading and being read too. I have had the opportunity to experience first hand the twinkle in they eye of a young girl or boy as they pick their first brand new book. I look in each child's face as a story is being read and note the excitement, smile or seriousness that they express. I see them visiting the book swap table with mom or dad to pick out a slightly used book. I note the dad or mom reading to their child before the program begins. I hear the principal who states, " I have never had so many people in my cafeteria" or the public librarian who states, " our student participation has tripled since RAP begin at our neighborhood school".

I encourage you to seriously consider Read Aloud America as the vehicle who will bring literacy across the state to our children and parents. Literacy is a critical problem in the State of Hawaii and for our future success we must invest in our children.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to express my thoughts with you today.

Larry Laird
250 Hauoli Street #220
Wailuku, HI 96793
808-242-8229
lmaui@jps.net

kobayashi2-Lynda

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 11:43 AM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: velvet@readaloudamerica.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1499 on Feb 12, 2015 09:30AM
Attachments: Velvet Espinda HB1499

LATE

HB1499

Submitted on: 2/11/2015

Testimony for HUS on Feb 12, 2015 09:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Velvet Espinda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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HB 1499

LATE TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

LATE TESTIMONY

Jed Gaines

1487 Hiikala Pl #30

Honolulu, HI 96816

jedgaines@readaloudamerica.org

HB1499 -Family Literacy Program

House Committee on Human Services

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 am

Conference Room 329



Read Aloud America

Building Families of Lifetime Readers™

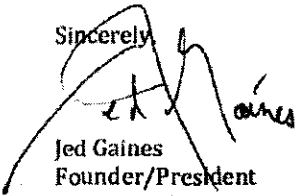
February 10, 2015

Dear Hawaii Legislators,

Please support HB 1499 which would continue to keep Read Aloud America strong in supporting Family literacy in our Hawaii schools. The key to literacy is the parents! And RAA reaches more parents than any other program in the state.

Hopefully if HB 1499 passes more and more of Hawaii's public schools will benefit from this program. As of today, over 380,000 adults and children have participated in RAP. Since 1999, Read Aloud America/RAP has taken place at 89 elementary and middle public schools totaling 149 programs.

Sincerely,


Jed Gaines
Founder/President



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LINAPUNI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1434 LINAPUNI STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819

LATE TESTIMONY

Mr. Jed Gaines, President
Read Aloud America
1314 S. King Street #G4
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jed".

Dear Mr. Gaines:

What a sensational community reading program designed especially for families, schools, and communities! Linapuni Elementary School was truly blessed to have been a recipient of the "dynamic" Read Aloud America Program (RAP) this past Fall. Since this is the third time RAP has come to Linapuni, many of our families were already very familiar with the mission of RAP and attendance always exceeded our enrollment count of 190 students for each of the six sessions.

Unlike the past two times RAP was at Linapuni, right from the start, most of our immigrant parents acknowledged the value of reading and the joy of spending quality time with their children based on feedback from the evaluation forms. Parents appreciated the fact that RAP was finally back at Linapuni. I know that after the last session in November, many parents felt a void in their lives as RAP became part of their family routine. The fantastic door prizes, snacks, pizza dinners, volunteer readers, and of course a highly engaging presenter were instrumental in the success of getting families to be part of a totally entertaining and educational experience and ultimately share the love of reading promoted through RAP!

In closing, I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to promote literacy through RAP. Each time RAP returned to Linapuni, you have always exceeded our expectations. RAP continues to effectively reinforce the value of reading, the importance of school and the need for family time in a fun and engaging manner. Thank you for your wonderful partnership!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cynthia Sunahara".

Cynthia Sunahara, Principal

David Ige
GOVERNOR

Kathryn S. Matayoshi
SUPERINTENDENT

Bob Hill
PRINCIPAL



LATE TESTIMONY

STATE OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary School

966 Kilauea Avenue

Hilo, HI 96720-4249

Phone: 974-4160 Fax: 974-4161

Mr. Jed Gaines
Read Aloud America, Inc.
1314 South King Street, Suite G4
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

Dear Mr. Gaines,

On behalf of the Chiefess Kapi'olani Elementary School, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to you for not only selecting our school to participate in the Read Aloud Program (RAP) during this past semester, but also hustling up funding to make it happen. The six session RAP program brought more quality parent participation to our school than we have had in the past three years of all our parent involvement activities combined. Our turnout averaged over 400 participants each evening, with the majority being returning families.

Increasing parent involvement is a goal and challenge for all schools. Finding the right combination of factors that will motivate students and parents to attend after school hours functions is critical. The RAP program has found a successful recipe of family fun, food, and prizes that bring families out. The parent evaluations we received were very favorable. Many parents commented how attending the program has made improvements in the quality of their family time and has spurred increased interest in reading at home.

While we will not be able to replicate the RAP program, we are making plans to develop future parent activities that will keep the forward momentum of involving activities that combine families and Reading. Thank you for modeling for us how a successful parent involvement program can work!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Hill", written over a horizontal line.

Bob Hill
Principal



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Pohakea Elementary School
91-750 Fort Weaver Road
EWA BEACH HAWAII 96706
Ph: (808) 689-1290 Fax: (808) 689-1293

LATE TESTIMONY

Mr. Jed Gaines
Read Aloud America, Inc.
1314 South King Street, Suite G4
Honolulu, HI 96814

Dear Mr. Gaines,

As an educator in the public school system, I'm a firm believer that *"it takes a village to raise a child"*. We're constantly partnering with others to help get our students to be college and career ready. RAP surely has had a huge impact on our school community. The turnout was just astonishing! The program drew in 400-600 attendees at EVERY RAP event! The fact that most families kept on returning and new families began to attend obviously indicates they found the RAP sessions beneficial.

I've read the many parent evaluations that you've shared with us over the six sessions that speak so highly of this program and the positive results on our families. The value returned in terms of building stronger family time and relationships; building a stronger love for reading amongst all family members, etc. were evident in the comments written in the evaluations and comments made directly to me. Parents, students, teachers, and other staff members have already asked me if we plan to have RAP return to Pohakea. What this program was able to achieve exceeded my expectations by far.

I am very grateful that Pohakea was able to be a participating school in this awesome program this year. It's been a pleasure working with you and the rest of the RAP staff. Everyone was extremely professional and worked hard to make this event for us a success. I appreciate everyone's diligence and "can do" attitude. It's been a great partnership and I look forward to working with you and your team again!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Judi Wong". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Judi" and last name "Wong" clearly visible.

Judi Wong
Principal



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII STATE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
OFFICE OF THE STATE LIBRARIAN
44 MERCHANT STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

SLib-15-011
RICHARD BURNS
STATE LIBRARIAN

LATE TESTIMONY

Mr. Jed Gaines, Founder/President
Read Aloud America
1314 S. King Street, #G4
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

Dear Jed:

The Hawaii State Public Library System and Read Aloud America share a common vision: families spending quality time together enjoying the pleasure and fulfillment of reading and being read to. As Hawaii's State Librarian, I hope to make that vision a reality, and to help find ways to motivate families to take advantage of their libraries' many resources. Because of our partnership with Read Aloud America's Read Aloud Program (RAP), that reality is becoming more and more common.

Since 2006, RAP has partnered with HSPLS to encourage families to visit their local public library, enjoy its resources and meet its librarians, check out a book, and share the power of story with each other in their homes. By providing simple incentives like the chance to win picture books, novels, or even an encyclopedia set, RAP adds more fun and excitement to the library experience.

Families bring their orange RAP bookmarks to the library, excited to explore the library's wealth of materials and resources, and to receive that coveted stamp on their bookmark when they borrow a book. With your rule that individuals can get one stamp per day, families visit libraries daily, finding new, fun books during each visit! It is a pleasure to see so many people enjoying the library and utilizing it for one of its primary purposes: the joy of reading.

As of April 30, 2014, RAP has brought 14,722 people to libraries across the state 35,010 times! In doing so, RAP has motivated 4,596 people to obtain library cards. More people using library cards and more people having fun in the library indicates a positive change in attitudes and in the home- families are bonding through the sheer joy and pleasure of reading. Read Aloud America's RAP program has helped inspire this change.

Our partnership is a win-win situation: libraries experience increased patronage and families enjoy the world of benefits available inside our walls. Thank you for creating and developing Read Aloud America's RAP Library Project: now more than ever families across the islands are experiencing the joy available at Hawaii's public libraries!

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Burns".

Richard Burns
State Librarian



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804
Fern Elementary School
1121 Middle Street
Honolulu, HI 96819

LATE TESTIMONY

Mr. Jed Gaines
Read Aloud America, Inc.
1314 South King Street, Suite G4
Honolulu, HI 96814

Dear Mr. Gaines,

It is with sincere pleasure to have hosted the Read Aloud America Program (RAP) for a third round here at Fern Elementary School. Our students, parents, teachers and community members are saddened that the program has ended all too soon. We have grown accustomed to the bi-monthly read aloud, dinner and gift giving that has been so rewarding for our community of learners. Thank you for bringing the joy of reading together as a family here to our Kalihi homes.

The impact of RAP is far beyond current indicators of success. We know through the evaluations that parents whom have attended all sessions have made positive changes in their homes....all technology is not used for school work is turned off, there is conscientious decision making to continue to read aloud to our children at home, and, vitally important is our students are reading more books than ever. We also see a strong desire from our students and parents that want to see this program continue here at Fern. There has been an overwhelming report of positive feedback from our parents as witnessed in the evaluations of every session. Thank you for aiding our school in helping parents and guardians see the importance of reading within the home as an activity that all can participate in.

Mr. Gaines, it is with deep gratitude that I convey our appreciation for all that RAP has done to continue our efforts to build literacy skills here at school and in our homes. RAP has increased our parent support for efforts made to get parents actively participate in school functions and support their children's learning. Thank you for helping to build positive relationships between school staff and our community members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tiare Uli'i".

Mrs. Tiare Uli'i, Principal
Fern Elementary School

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

LATE TESTIMONY

BYRON A. ELIASHOF, M.D.
4914 Kolohala Street
Honolulu, HI 96816
Tel: (808) 737-5726, Fax: (808) 732-7827

HB1499 - Family Literacy Program

House Committee on Human Services

Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 am

Conference Room 329

REGARDING H.B. 1499

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to ask you to vote for HB 1499 dealing with literacy and Read Aloud America.

Read Aloud America's focus and achievements make it the most successful parent-education program of its kind in the US. More than 300,000 parents in 82 Hawaii schools have been served since 1999. Parents give it enthusiastic reviews for improving the academic atmosphere in their home.

Studies show that by improving the curriculum of the home, the chances of improving the child's school performance are 6 times greater than if only the classroom is improved. Read Aloud America has parents reading to their children more and watching television less.

Jed Gaines' Read Aloud America Program (RAP) shows parents the simple but effective behaviors they can use to change their child's reading attitudes and skills. This helps both the child's and also the parent's self esteem.

I respectfully urge you to support this measure which will provide funding for Read Aloud America.

Sincerely yours,

Byron A. Eliashof, M.D.

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

LATE TESTIMONY

Noel G. Trainor

84-920 Alahele Street, Mauna 'Olu Estates

Makaha Valley Road, Waianae, HI 96702

HB1499 - Family Literacy Program

House Committee on Human Services

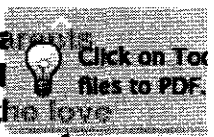
Thursday, February 12, 2015

9:30 am

Conference Room 329

Testimony In Strong Support

In our public schools, Read Aloud America draws large crowds of parents and students (anywhere from 300-600 at each of the 6 sessions) and advances the concept of reading through strong family values and the love of reading and being read too. It's truly magical to observe children and families captivated with a good story. Oftentimes, the kids are the ones telling Mom and Dad they all have to go to RAP. Read Aloud America also has a book swap and the families love picking up books to read in between sessions. By supporting Read Aloud America, we are giving our kids and future leaders a better chance at education and stronger values as they grow up.



I encourage you to seriously consider Read Aloud America as the vehicle who will bring literacy across the state to our children and parents. This is a critical problem in the State of Hawaii and for our future success please invest in our children.

Your support is important to our keiki and the families in our public schools. Thank you for giving me an opportunity to express my thoughts with you today.

This specific program helps the most needy of children and families.

Mahalo,

Noel G Trainor.

Former General Manager Hilton Hawaiian Village
Now Retired