

# SB 2227

Measure Title:	RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.
Report Title:	School Readiness; Preschool Open Doors Program; Appropriation (\$)
Description:	Makes an appropriation for subsidies for the preschool open doors program.
Companion:	
Package:	Keiki Caucus
Current Referral:	HMS, WAM
Introducer(s):	CHUN OAKLAND, HARIMOTO, KEITH-AGARAN, RUDERMAN, SHIMABUKURO, Galuteria, Kidani, L. Thielen



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**Executive Office on Early Learning**  
1390 Miller Street, Room 303  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 1, 2016

**TO:** Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services

**FROM:** Lauren Moriguchi, Director

**SUBJECT: SB 2227- RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES**  
**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 2, 2016  
**Time:** 1:15 p.m.  
**Location:** Conference Room 016

**Purpose of Bill:** Makes an appropriation for subsidies for the preschool open doors program.

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION:** The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) supports SB 2227. We appreciate that Governor Ige included \$6 million in the budget for Preschool Open Doors (POD) and hope that it remains in the budget as an appropriation.

The state-funded EOEL Pre-Kindergarten Program currently provides 420 students the opportunity to receive a high-quality early learning experience in the year before they attend kindergarten. While there is a plan for expansion, it is essential that we concurrently build a strong infrastructure for the system in order to provide a high quality early learning program. In order to maintain "high quality" as we expand, it will take time before the program can be offered to all eligible children across the state.

As the Pre-Kindergarten Program is limited to serving 420 students at this time, POD provides funding to 8,000 families of children five and under, who otherwise could not afford child care.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



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

January 29, 2015

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Rachael Wong, DrPH, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2227 – RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 2, 2016; 1:15 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) is focused on investing in children and families and appreciates the intent of this bill to make an appropriation for the Preschool Open Doors (POD) program. The DHS provides comments and respectfully requests the Committee consider supporting the funding request that is included in the Governor's Executive Budget for the POD program.

The Executive Budget request for fiscal year 2016-2017 is \$6,000,000 for HMS 305 for the POD child care subsidies and \$198,773 for HMS 302 for administrative costs that includes one (1) FTE position and related costs in administering the program.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this measure is to make an appropriation for the POD program.

For the 2015-2016 year, the POD program received 2,123 applications between the Spring 2015 and October 2015 application periods. POD enrolled 1,158 children who attend 256 preschools throughout the State. There are currently 62 families on the wait-list for POD services.

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



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**FamilyProgramsHawaii.com**

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senator Gil Riviere, Vice Chair  
Committee on Human Services

HEARING: Tuesday, February 2, 2016  
1:15 PM  
Conference Room 016

FROM: Judith Wilhoite  
Family Advocate  
It Takes An `Ohana

RE: SB2227 – Relating to Human Services

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am the Family Advocate for Family Program Hawaii's *It Takes An `Ohana* (ITAO) program and a resource caregiver. I, along with the ITAO Advisory Committee, strongly support SB 2227.

I am writing today to ask you to make sure funding for the Pre-school Open Doors (POD) program is constant. POD has provided a hand up to children who otherwise would not have the opportunity to attend preschool, including many foster children. This is important, for research has consistently found a high need for early intervention and early childhood education services among children in foster care as a result of their developmental, emotional and behavioral problems. One study that analyzed data for foster children ages two to 24 months old found that nearly six in ten were at high risk for neurological or cognitive developmental impairments (Vandivere, et al., 2003). Yet, several studies indicate that many young children do not receive the early intervention or early childhood education services they need to address these problems. If our foster keiki don't have POD, many will not be able to have the all of the benefits a good preschool experience provides.

That said, early childhood education is important for all children. It has been shown to:

- Improve school performance
- Raise math and language abilities
- Sharpen thinking/attention skills
- Reduce special education placement
- Lowers school dropout rates

It is very important for all of us to come together to make certain that all of Hawaii's Keiki have the opportunity for school success. I can't think of any better place to put our resources, can you?

Thank you for this opportunity to voice strong support for SB 2227.

*We help kids*

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [HMS Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [tsymons@fsswh.org](mailto:tsymons@fsswh.org)  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB2227 on Feb 2, 2016 13:15PM  
**Date:** Monday, February 01, 2016 9:47:42 AM

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**SB2227**

Submitted on: 2/1/2016

Testimony for HMS on Feb 2, 2016 13:15PM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Toni Symons	Family Support Hawaii	Support	No

Comments: In strong 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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February 2, 2016

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To: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senator Gil Riviere, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services

From: Deborah Zysman, Executive Director  
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **SB 2227 Relating to Human Services – Restoration of \$6 million in  
funding for Preschool Open Doors program for FY2016-17  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 016, February 2, 2016 – 1:15 P.M.**

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**On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), formerly Good Beginnings Alliance, we are writing in strong support of SB2227, Relating to Human Services. Preschool Open Doors (POD) is a critical safety net program that helps underserved and at-risk children gain access to Department of Human Services-licensed childcare.**

HCAN is committed to improving lives and being a strong voice advocating for Hawai'i's children. Last fall, HCAN convened input in person and online from more than 50 organizations and individuals that came forward to support or express interest for a number of issues affecting children and families in our state that resulted in the compilation of 2016 Hawai'i Children's Policy Agenda, which can be accessed at <http://www.hawaii-can.org/2016policyagenda>.

We are seeking continuation of POD funding for the next fiscal year. Last session, the legislature passed Act 191 (SB64) to appropriate \$6 million for POD in the FY15-16 budget.

Currently, the state's FY16-FY17 biennium budget includes funding for \$1.6 million. Governor David Ige requested \$6 million in his supplemental budget for FY 16-17, which HCAN strongly supports. However, the passage of SB

2227 is dually critical to ensuring the restoration a \$6 million appropriation to equal the current FY15-16 level funding of \$7.6 million for the POD program.

**In Hawaii, access to childcare is especially challenging with average childcare costs ranging from \$7600-\$9300/year. For most families, childcare is the second highest cost for families after rent or mortgage.** The average POD subsidy is \$540/month to families with a median annual income of \$33,000 in 2015. Nearly half of the families served come from single-parent households. So, POD is especially critical to help bridge the financial gap for as many low- and low-moderate income families in the state.

POD provides access to affordable and quality care for young children and serves two main purposes by:

- Providing families with young children the needed childcare so they can seek employment or higher education opportunities to improve their family's economic status; and
- Providing young children with a stimulating and safe environment that boosts cognitive, social and emotional development that supports school readiness in our state, where only 14.5 percent of children display comprehensive readiness for Kindergarten and one out of three children are not reading at grade-level by the time they enter 3rd-grade, which is a key indicator to high school graduation and later success outcomes.

POD is now in its 26th year currently serves approximately 1,300 4- and 5-year-olds from low to moderate-income families throughout the state. Prior to the Great Recession, POD served as many as 1,571 children in 2006. In 2010, POD saw drastic cuts and by 2012 and 2013, POD served fewer than 350 families. Historically, the POD program provided childcare subsidies for 3- and 4-year-olds. In 2013, Act 169, restructured POD to focus on four-year olds to get as many into a childcare program the year before kindergarten, so help them prepare for school.

**For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that members Senate Committee on Human Services pass SB 2227, a bill to authorize the restoration \$6 million to the state's Preschool Open Doors (POD) program for FY16-17.**