



Hawaii Children's Action Network

Building a unified voice for Hawaii's children

February 24, 2016

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To: Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

Re: **SB2232, SD1 – Relating to Education - Support**
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 211 – February 24, 2016 – 10 AM

On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), formerly Good Beginnings Alliance, we are writing in support of SB2232, SD1 – Relating to Education.

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>.

HCAN supports SB2232, SD1 – Relating to Education, which would appropriate funds for an Erin's Law Task Force to guide the establishment of a program to educate public school students on sexual abuse prevention through the use of age-appropriate curricula.

Twenty-six states have enacted a model of "Erin's Law," named after a child abuse victim in Illinois, that requires all public schools in each state implement a prevention-oriented child sexual abuse program which teaches:

- Students in grades pre-K – 12th grade, age-appropriate techniques to recognize child sexual abuse and tell a trusted adult;
- School personnel all about child sexual abuse;

- Parents & guardians the warning signs of child sexual abuse, plus needed assistance, referral or resource information to support sexually abused children and their families.

It is estimated that one in ten children will become the victims of child sexual abuse by the time they reach age 18. It's critical that we provide safeguards to protect children from being prey to child sexual abuse.

For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that the committee vote to pass this bill.



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TESTIMONY FOR SENATE BILL 2232, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO EDUCATION

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hon. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Hon. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Hon. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Hon. Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

Honorable Chair Keith-Agaran, Chair Tokuda, and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing the IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 350 local members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in strong support of SB 2232, SD1, relating to education.

IMUAlliance is one of Hawai'i's leading providers of anti-exploitation education, teaching over 10,000 students each year about the perils of sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. Victims typically induced into exploitation between the ages of 12-14, years of heightened developmental vulnerability, and are often predisposed to exploitation by a complex and overlapping traumatic history that may include child abuse or neglect, assault, sexual abuse, sexual assault, rape, and bullying.

We believe that education ends exploitation. When students are empowered with knowledge about risk factors of sex trafficking and sexual abuse, they are able to spot the signs of abuse and take action to protect themselves, their peers, and their communities. Moreover, education guards against the psychological impact of abuse, which can include depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, dissociative disorder, explosive outbursts, self-injurious and suicidal behavior, and hyper-sexualization. That said, we ask that this bill be amended to include a

public school teacher as part of the task force, since teachers facilitate educational programming and curricula, while managing student response and intervention frameworks.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Executive Director
IMUAlliance