

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

Re: Testimony in Support of SB 2603, Relating to Making Appropriates for Early Learning -- Hearing February 26, 2016 at 9:40 AM, Conference Room 211

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Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

My name is Robert G. Peters and I currently serve as the chair of the State Early Learning Advisory Board (ELAB) composed of 19 public and private members representing state departments, the early learning community, philanthropy, and the State university system. The ELAB was established to advise the Executive Office on Early Learning and speaks as an independent voice on issues related to child development as they relate to health, safety and learning for children from 0 – 5.

The ELAB supports SB 2603 and views the appropriations as critical to the work of the Executive Office on Early Learning if it is to fulfill its responsibilities to our *keiki*. The office is currently under-staffed with only two members and is in great need of clerical support as well as a data processing systems analyst, the former to address the day-to-day needs of the office while the latter position will enable the EOEL to gather/analyse the critical data needed to ascertain issues around pre-K needs, public capacity to meet them and to plan for a future that increases access and equity. This data will also be essential when seeking federal assistance and local philanthropic support.

ELAB would suggest changing the language in the bill to reflect that the \$28,800 amount is strictly for travel expenses and eliminate the reference to “conferences.” Travel expenses are for ELAB members from neighbor Islands to be able to attend both monthly board meetings and participate on subcommittees as needed to ensure all voices are heard.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I hope you will see the value in supporting this legislation in order for the EOEL to fulfill its responsibilities to our *keiki*.

Robert G. Peters, EdD  
Early Learning Advisory Board, Chair



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

February 25, 2016

**TO:** Jill Tokuda, Chair  
House Committee on Ways and Means

**FROM:** Lauren Moriguchi, Director

**SUBJECT: SB 2603 – MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR EARLY LEARNING**  
**Hearing Date:** Friday, February 26, 2016  
**Time:** 9:40 a.m.  
**Location:** Conference Room 211

**Purpose of Bill:** Makes appropriations to the Executive Office on Early Learning and Early Learning Advisory Board for staffing and travel, and attendance at relevant conferences, as applicable.

**WRITTEN COMMENTS**

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION:** The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) **strongly supports** SB2603 and would like to thank the introducers of the bill.

EOEL is committed to our mission which is to coordinate efforts to help ensure a solid foundation for Hawai'i's young children, prenatal to age five, by working with partners, families, and communities and connecting policies, programs, and funding in relation to health, safety, early childhood education, and school readiness and success.

Adequate staffing and funding is crucial in order to address the comprehensive responsibilities of the office, currently in statute.

EOEL would also like to clarify that the appropriation for travel is solely for the purpose of allowing board members to attend meetings and respectfully requests that the language in this measure (p.1, line 5) be revised to read as follows: "\$28,800 for travel for the early learning advisory board."

It has recently come to my attention that the title of the position currently in the executive budget and HB 2266 requires a correction and I'd like to clarify my request. While the position requested is for a Data Processing Systems Analyst VI, what I am requesting is a Research Statistician IV. The Research Statistician IV will conduct research studies yielding data which will be instrumental in guiding decision making for my office. The

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salary for the Research Statistician IV is \$57,168 and the difference in cost would be an additional \$60 per year.

We respectfully request that the language on p.1, lines 10-11, be revised to read, "57,168 for the establishment of a research statistician IV position for the executive office on early learning."

Unlike the data position, funding for the secretary position and funds for travel are not currently in the executive budget. The secretary position is required to manage daily operations of the office. Both the research statistician and secretary positions are crucial to support and expand the early learning system for all children in Hawai'i. The cost of the secretary position is \$39,492.

We respectfully request that if this bill passes final reading, the effective date be changed to July 1, 2016.

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



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February 26, 2016

To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

Re: **SB 2603 Making Appropriations for Early Learning – Support  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 211, February 26, 2016 – 9:40 A.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 SB 2603, Making Appropriations for Early Learning.**

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.hawaiican.org/2016policyagenda>.

SB 2603 seeks to restore funds for general operation costs of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) for fiscal year 2016-2017 for the following purposes:

(1) \$28,800 for travel and attendance at relevant conferences for the Early Learning Advisory Board;

(2) \$39,492 for the establishment of a secretary IV position for the executive office on early learning; and

(3) \$59,736 for the establishment of a data processing systems analyst VI position for the executive office on early learning.

Hawaii was one of a handful of states that decreased their pre-k funding last year while overall other states' funding for pre-k programs increased by nearly \$767 million, or 12 percent over FY2015-15. This supplemental funding for EOEL is needed to restore and maintain the minimum required operations to carry out its duties and functions; however, HCAN also supports a planned expansion of public pre-k programs in Hawaii's DOE and public charter schools so eligible children have access to programs that help them prepare for and have a better shot at succeeding in school.

**For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that members of the Senate Committee on Education pass SB 2603, to appropriate and restore operational funding for EOEL in the FY 2016-17 budget.**

Personal Written Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Friday, February 26, 2016 at 9:40 a.m. Room 211  
by  
Donald B. Young

SB 2603 – MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR EARLY LEARNING

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and members of the Committee on Ways and Means, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2603.

My name is Donald Young. I am the Dean of the College of Education at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and co-chair the legislatively established Teacher Education Coordinating Committee (TECC).

I support SB 2603. In order to address the needs in our community for quality early learning programs we must have the support at the top level of administration to ensure our commitments are indeed a priority. SB 2603 provides through appropriation that support.

In 2013, the Teacher Education Coordinating Committee prepared a position statement relevant to SB 2603. The TECC members, representing the education organizations that prepare teachers in the state, stated in part,

*It is time for the State of Hawai‘i to commit funding for early childhood education. Hawai‘i is one of only 11 states without state-funded preschool. Yet the research is clear that laying a strong foundation for our youth through high quality preschool programs will result in productive and capable citizens. A recent study in Hawai‘i found that every \$1 invested in early education returns \$4.20 in future social program savings. We have spent years studying the issues. We know what the right thing to do is. Now is the time to do it.*

While it has taken longer than anticipated to actualize public support for early learning programs, I continue to believe it is the right thing to do and urge you to pass SB 2603 along with its appropriation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

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About the TECC

The Teacher Education Coordinating Committee (TECC) is a statewide advisory committee created in HRS 304A-1202. Its membership consists of representatives of institutions of higher education that prepare teachers for the State’s schools, the Hawai‘i Department of Education, and the Hawai‘i Teacher Standards Board. The TECC identifies, studies, acts, and makes recommendations on matters of education of common interest to the Hawai‘i State Department of Education.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

PERSON TESTIFYING: Robyn S. B. Chun

DATE: Thursday, February 26, 2016

TIME: 9:40 AM

LOCATION: State Capitol Conference Room 211

TITLE OF BILL: SB 2603 RELATING TO MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR  
EARLY LEARNING

Honorable Chair, Jill Tokuda, Vice Chair, Dele Cruz, and Committee Members Chun  
Oakland, English, Galuteria, Harimoto, Inouye, Riviere, Taniguchi, Wakai and Slom

I **strongly support** SB 2603 Relating to Making Appropriations for Early Learning with one suggested revision.

I appreciate the forward thinking of our state lawmakers. Supporting early learning is a long term investment in the well-being of our state. **SB 2603 restores crucial positions necessary to the smooth functioning of the Executive Office of Early Learning.** The success of the EOEL is dependent on adequate staffing so that the program can carry out daily administrative tasks and program assessment/evaluation functions.

Currently, the EOEL PreK program services 420 children based in 21 classrooms. They are located on 19 DOE campuses on 6 different islands. The EOEL is responsible for establishing a system of quality early learning settings and providing professional development for 21 classroom teachers and 21 educational assistants. In addition, the EOEL is responsible for overseeing the Pre-Plus Child Development services and Head Start Collaboration Office. The staff includes: an Executive Director, an Educational Specialist and 5 Resource Teachers. There are currently no provisions for clerical or data management staff. Both positions were lost as the EOEL transitioned from the governor's office to an attached agency in the DOE, and their absence hampers the smooth functioning of the Office.

Without a secretary, program administrators must spend time on clerical tasks necessary to keep the program running. The absence of a data processing systems analyst also creates a significant challenge for the EOEL at a time when it needs to establish data governance agreements with the DOE and put in place an effective system for data collection and analyses. Accurate data is necessary to inform program decisions and to prepare timely and accurate reports that demonstrate funds were used appropriately.

SB 2603 also provides travel funding that enables Early Learning Advisory Board to convene. I suggest the bill be amended so that it provides funding for travel of neighbor island board members to attend advisory board and committee meetings and eliminates travel for "attendance at relevant conferences".

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.