



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**Executive Office on Early Learning**  
2759 South King Street  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

March 19, 2023

**TO:** Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

**FROM:** Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Director  
Executive Office on Early Learning

**SUBJECT: Measure:** H.B. No. 261 H.D. 1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES  
**Hearing Date:** Monday, March 20, 2023  
**Time:** 1:00 pm  
**Location:** Conference Room 225

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support the Intent**

EOEL supports the intent of H.B. No. 261 H.D. 1 and defers to the Department of Human Services.

This bill would establish a child care accreditation program that supports licensed or registered child care providers in obtaining accreditation from a national early learning accrediting organization. This program will also provide payment for fees, technical assistance, and incidental costs.

Accreditation is one well-known measure of quality in early childhood education programming. However, obtaining accreditation can be costly and time-consuming for providers, many who are still recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Establishing this program with adequate appropriations would help support more providers in achieving and maintaining accreditation.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature to support affordable, high-quality early learning programs and services in the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

TO: Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Robert G. Peters, Chair  
Early Learning Board

SUBJECT: Measure: H.B. No. 261 H.D. 1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING  
OPPORTUNITIES

Hearing Date: Monday, March 20, 2023

Time: 1:00 pm

Location: Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

EARLY LEARNING BOARD POSITION: Support the Intent

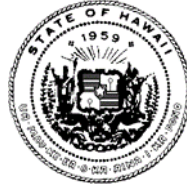
The Early Learning Board (ELB) supports the intent of H.B. No. 261 H.D. 1 and defers to the Department of Human Services regarding the particulars of the bill and its implementation.

This bill would establish a child care accreditation program to support licensed or registered child care providers to obtain accreditation from a national early learning accrediting organization and by paying for fees, technical assistance, and incidental costs.

Accreditation is a rigorous process in support of quality early learning and care, which can be costly and time-consuming. Both are especially challenging post-COVID. Establishing this program with adequate supports, both financial and technical, will allow more providers to pursue accreditation and those already accredited to maintain that status.

We thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the intent of H.B. No.261 H.D. 1.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 19, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 261 HD1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES.**

Hearing: Monday, March 20, 2023, 1:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 225, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of the bill, provides comments, requests clarification, and suggests clarifying amendments. DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation in this measure not replace or adversely impact priorities identified in the executive budget.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill requires the Department of Human Services to establish a child care accreditation program to assist licensed and registered child care providers obtain accreditation. Authorizes the use of the child care grant program special fund for child care accreditation program grants. Amends the time period for when existing preschool open doors service providers are required to obtain accreditation. Appropriates funds for the child care accreditation program, including for the establishment of one full-time position for the program. Appropriates funds into and out of the child care grant special fund. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD1).

The HD1 amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting language establishing standards for the distribution of the funds appropriated in this measure as grants under the child care accreditation program;
- (2) Clarifying the circumstances in which an individual or organization that owns or operates both a private educational institution and child care facility may apply for a child care accreditation program grant;
- (3) Amending the child care grant program special fund to allow for the use of the fund to award child care accreditation program grants;
- (4) Changing the time frame by which an existing POD service provider must begin and complete the accreditation process to an unspecified date;
- (5) Appropriating an unspecified amount of funds out of the child care grant program special fund for child care accreditation program grants;
- (6) Changing the effective date to June 30, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (7) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

The department respectfully requests clarification on *upfront grant funding to cover the cost of accreditation* by one of the national early learning accrediting organizations, as identified in section 346-184(b) or as approved by the director, and whether the "cost of accreditation" includes accreditation fees plus any incidentals such as but not limited to expenses for furniture, equipment, or minor renovations.

The Department also requests clarification if child care providers seeking renewal of their accreditation from appropriate bodies would be eligible for the upfront grant funding to cover the cost of accreditation and grant funding for technical assistance.

DHS respectfully requests the following **amendments** to clarify the types of licensed and registered child care settings that the accreditation program would be available to:

- Section 2, page 3, at lines 1-3,

"(3) Be available to licensed **group** child care centers **and homes**, licensed infant and toddler centers, **and** registered family child care homes care homes."

DHS supports family choice and offers higher child care subsidy payment rates to families that choose child care providers accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Early Childhood Program Accreditation, and National Association for Family Child Care Accreditation. In addition, higher subsidies are available for the Preschool Open Doors program and the federally funded Child Care Connection Hawaii programs.

DHS agrees with the extended time frames in section 4 as extending the time to become accredited will give new child care workforce initiatives time to increase capacity and allows eligible facilities ready to access accreditation resources more time to do so in a less pressured time frame. However, given the continuing economic impacts of COVID-19 on child care facilities' ability to maintain sufficient staff levels, DHS suggests the Legislature consider amending section 346-184(a), HRS, to change the accreditation requirement to be voluntary until the child care workforce is more stabilized or subsidized.

The Department also recommends that the sums appropriated to award grants to eligible private child care providers participating in the child care accreditation program include the costs for providers with annual accreditation fees and a one-time system modification fee.

DHS is investigating the costs for licensed providers to be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the National Early Childhood Program (NECPA), and the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) and will provide cost estimates. We estimate that approximately 28% of group child care centers are accredited and informed that accreditation takes approximately one year to complete.

The average cost for the initial fees to obtain NAEYC accredited status is \$4,155, and fees for initial NECPA accredited status are \$2,331. These costs vary depending on the licensed capacity of the group child care center. These fees are the accrediting organization's fees for processing and assessing an applying group child care center's request for accreditation.

Notably, these accreditation fees do not include additional costs that a group child care center may incur to meet the accrediting organization's standards. Once accredited, both organizations have annual fees to maintain their accreditation. A general fund appropriation will be required to support the proposed grant program, as federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) funds may be accessed by reimbursement of specific accreditation fees.

As the session continues, DHS will provide additional cost estimates to contract an entity to establish, implement, and administer the child care accreditation program, including funding for one full-time equivalent position. In addition, once the Legislature appropriates funds, DHS will need time to develop and implement administrative rules and make system modifications.

If the measure passes, DHS would need time to develop standards, policies, application forms, and procedures for administering the child care accreditation program. Additionally, DHS must make program and system changes and develop administrative processes and rules to establish and implement the program. Therefore, DHS respectfully requests an effective date of January 31, 2024, or later.

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



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2023**

---

**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

H.B. NO. 261, H.D. 1, RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES.

**BEFORE THE:**

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**DATE:** Monday, March 20, 2023 **TIME:** 1:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 225

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
James W. Walther or Melissa J. Kolonie, Deputy Attorneys General

---

Chair San Buenaventura and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) establish within the Department of Human Services a child care accreditation program to support licensed or registered child care providers to obtain accreditation from a national early learning accrediting organization, and provide grant funding for technical assistance to assist a child care provider through the accreditation process; (2) extend the deadlines by which unaccredited service providers of the preschool open doors program must commence the accreditation process and obtain accreditation; (3) appropriate funds for the establishment of the child care accreditation program; and (4) appropriate funds to be deposited into and out of the child care grant special fund.

We previously presented testimony on this bill, and the House Committee on Human Services adopted the sample standards that we suggested to address a potential constitutional issue under article VII, section 4, of the Hawaii State Constitution. House Draft 1, however, appears to have inadvertently added a semicolon and return in the definition of "private educational institution" on page 8, lines 11-20. The semicolon and return at page 8, line 16, after "pre-kindergarten level services", change the intended meaning of paragraph (3) by making the wording "that are provided by an entity that holds itself out to the public as a school or educational institution, or that are identified by the entity as educational services rather than solely

as child care services" apply to all the institutions listed in the preceding paragraphs (1) to (3). However, the wording is meant to apply only to the pre-kindergarten level services listed in paragraph (3). So that this provision can be implemented as intended, we recommend deleting the semicolon and the return on page 8, line 16, so paragraph (3) would read:

- (3) Pre-kindergarten level services[;] that are provided by an entity that holds itself out to the public as a school or educational institution, or that are identified by the entity as educational services rather than solely as child care services.

The Department also notes that article X, section 1, of the Hawaii State Constitution prohibits appropriations of public funds for the support or benefit of any sectarian or nonsectarian private educational institution, which may limit the number of eligible child care facilities under the child care accreditation program.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



*Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.*

To: Senator San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Aquino, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

Re: HB261 HD1, relating to early learning opportunities  
1:00 p.m., Mar. 20, 2023

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and members of the committee:

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT** of House Bill 261 HD1, relating to early learning opportunities.

Early learning programs often use accreditation as one tool to mark quality. Unfortunately, **accreditation is expensive, intensive and time-consuming**. For example, fees to begin and complete accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) begin at \$1,825 and increase with the size of the preschool. Many preschools and child care providers also seek technical assistance to identify areas needing improvement, complete necessary paperwork, collect documentation and other tasks to ensure the process goes as smoothly as possible. During preparations for accreditation, it is common for preschools and child care providers to identify upgrades that need to be made to buildings, classrooms, furniture or play equipment. These too cost money. Once a preschool or child care provider successfully achieves accreditation, they then must pay annual fees to maintain it. **All these reasons compound to make it extremely burdensome for many child care providers, especially small centers and family child care homes, to pursue accreditation.**

H.R.S. §346-184 currently requires existing Preschool Open Doors providers to begin the accreditation process by July 1, 2024 and obtain accreditation by July 1, 2029. New providers must have or obtain accreditation within seven calendar years of first receiving funds. **This means that unaccredited providers who are already serving Preschool Open Doors families must begin this expensive and intensive process within the next 18 months.**

This requirement places a heavy burden on an already taxed early childhood care and education sector in a very short amount of time. **They cannot afford to carry more costs on**

*Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.*

**their own; they need assistance and more time to begin and complete the accreditation the process.**

HB261 will help providers shoulder the cost of achieving accreditation. The bill, as it is currently written, allows the Department of Human Services to support providers with funding that can cover myriad expenses associated with the accreditation process. **It is important that the Department has this flexibility to support providers in the various ways necessary.**

We respectfully ask the committee **amend this measure to include the deadlines for accreditation as written in the original draft of the bill.** The following amended deadlines have received support from early childhood education community members.

SECTION 4. Section 346-184, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) Each service provider of the preschool open doors program shall be accredited or shall obtain accreditation within seven calendar years of first receiving any funds from the preschool open doors program; provided that any existing service provider unaccredited on July 1, 2022, shall commence the accreditation process no later than July 1, [~~2024~~] 2029, and obtain accreditation by July 1, [~~2029~~] 2034; provided further that the director may grant to any service provider one or more extensions to obtain accreditation on a case-by-case basis."

**Please support and amend HB261 HD1. This program and additional time will ensure providers of all sizes meet the quality markers our young children and their families deserve while preserving the current stock of available providers participating in Preschool Open Doors.**

Mahalo,

Ke'ōpū Reelitz  
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy



Date: March 19, 2023

To: Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: Support for **HB261 HD1**, Relating to Early Learning Opportunities

---

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide cross-sector collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS partners work to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki.

**ECAS strongly supports passage of HB261 HD1**, which would establish a program to support child care providers in obtaining quality accreditation from a national organization and extend the deadline by which Preschool Open Doors providers must achieve accreditation.

With the passage of Act 46 in 2020, early care and learning programs wishing to serve or continue serving children via the state's Preschool Open Doors subsidy program must initiate the process of national quality accreditation by 2024, and achieve accreditation no later than 2029.

Accreditation is a well-known measure of quality for early care and learning programs, and involves an arduous cycle of self- and external assessment to meet a battery of standards related to curriculum, staff and administrative qualifications, training and development, physical environment and more. Accreditation, however, is an expensive, intensive, and time-consuming endeavor for both programs new to the process, as well as those seeking to renew their time-limited accreditation. Basic fees to undergo the process with an accrediting body typically run into the thousands (e.g., \$1,825 for the National Association for the Education of Young Children/NAEYC) and providers must often make significant financial investments to upgrade their facilities, classroom environments, equipment and materials. Additionally, many programs need the support of coaching and technical assistance from content and process experts who can advise on areas needing improvement to meet standards, as well as the documentation and paperwork processes of the accrediting body.

Without a support program for our preschool and child care programs, the accreditation requirement of Act 46 creates a significant barrier and/or burden for these programs in serving Preschool Open Doors families and will significantly impact efforts to expand access to publicly-supported preschool opportunities for children. The creation of the accreditation program proposed by **HB261 HD1**, which would provide technical and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers, is critical to helping programs achieve important markers of quality and to preserving and expanding the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Additionally, given the tenuous state of child care programs and workforce capacity, we strongly support extensions to the timeframes by which programs must become accredited, as proposed by this bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony **in support of HB261 HD1**.

**HB-261-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2023 9:50:04 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>   | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>    |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Michael Golojuch Jr | Testifying for Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii | Support                   | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

The Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i; Hawai‘i’s oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization fully supports HB 261 HD 1.

We hope you all will support this important piece of legislation.

Mahalo nui loa,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.  
Chair and SCC Representative  
Stonewall Caucus for the DPH



## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 261 HD1

**TO:** Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Aquino, & Members,  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
**FROM:** Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO  
**DATE:** March 20, 2023 at 1:00 PM

**Parents and Children Together (PACT) supports HB 261 HD1 Relating to Early Learning Opportunities,** which will support preschools and regulated child care providers to achieve accreditation while preserving the amount of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Accreditation is among the most well-known measures of quality in early childhood education. However, accreditation is expensive, intensive and time-consuming for providers who have not been accredited previously. As the law is currently written, programs wishing to serve or continue serving Preschool Open Doors families must start this expensive and intensive process by 2024 and complete it by 2029. This requirement creates a significant burden for preschools and child care providers who currently serve Preschool Open Doors families but are unaccredited and it hinders efforts to increase the number of programs available.

The creation of an accreditation program is an important step to provide technical assistance and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality while preserving and expanding the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Founded in 1968, PACT is a statewide community-based organization providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, we help identify, address, and successfully resolve challenges through our 20 programs. Among our services are early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or [rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org](mailto:rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org) if you have any questions.

**HB-261-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/16/2023 6:56:27 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>               | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Mike Golojuch, Sr.  | Testifying for Rainbow Family 808 | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 supports HB261. Please pass this bill.

Mike Golojuch, Sr. Secretary/Board Member

**HB-261-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2023 12:39:38 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Malia Tsuchiya      | Individual          | Support                   | In Person      |

Comments:

Mar. 18, 2023

To: Senator Joy Sanbuenaventura, Chair  
Senator Henry Aquino, Vice-Chair  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

Subject: **Measure** – HB261 HD1 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES  
**Hearing Date** – Mar. 20, 2023  
**Time** - 1:00 PM  
**Location** - Room 225

**This testimony is in support of HB261 HD1.**

My name is Dr. Terry Lock. I am with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) College of Education (COE) and serve as the director of the Hawai'i Early Childhood Educator Excellence and Equity (ECE<sup>3</sup>) Project.

I am in support of SB 239, which will support licensed preschools and regulated child care providers achieve program accreditation and preserve the number of quality preschools and child care programs available for Preschool Open Doors families.

Research shows a direct correlation between high-quality early learning and children's positive long-term outcomes in life, including increased educational attainment, healthier lifestyles, and more successful careers.

For many years, I assisted DHS licensed preschools through an accreditation process. I found one of the important benefits of accreditation is how teachers and other staff of early learning programs develop a shared understanding and commitment to quality. The accreditation process leads to increased staff morale, greater staff retention, and a more positive, energetic work atmosphere overall.

As the law is currently written, programs wishing to serve or continue serving Preschool Open Doors families must start the accreditation process by 2027 and complete it by 2032. This requirement creates a significant burden for both preschools and child care providers who currently serve and want to serve Preschool Open Doors families.

In addition, some of the challenges for those programs, especially for smaller sized preschools and family child care homes, to successfully go through the accreditation self-study and improvement process, is that it is expensive, intensive, and time-consuming. These programs are already operating on razor-thin budgets and have limited time as they manage the complexities for serving children and families. Additional costs might be in upgrading equipment, increasing professional learning opportunities for staff and paying for outside



assistance to help with this process. Therefore, it will be of tremendous help if these programs have technical support, mentoring, and funding to complete and obtain accreditation.

Therefore, the establishment of an accreditation support program in the Department of Human Services (DHS) is an important step to providing technical assistance and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality and preserve and expand the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-261-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2023 8:59:16 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Raya Esteban        | Individual          | Support                   | In Person      |

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs and members of the committees,

Please support HB261 HD1, which will help preschools and regulated child care providers achieve accreditation and safeguard the amount of programs available to Preschool Open Doors (POD) families. Accreditation is one of the most recognized measures of quality in early childhood care and education. However, accreditation is costly, rigorous, and time-consuming for providers who have not been accredited previously and for those who have to repeat the accreditation process. The bottomline is that many preschools and child care providers are tapped out of money and energy to begin and complete the accreditation that will soon be required to continue serving POD families. Additionally, without the support and guidance of an accreditation program, this requirement stalls efforts to increase the number of programs available. The creation of an accreditation program is an essential step to provide technical assistance and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality and preserve and expand the number of programs available to POD families. As a young, middle-class woman hoping to start a family soon in Honolulu, it is my sincere hope that affordable, high-quality childcare programs will be available to my future children. Ensuring that programs serving POD families get the support they need to gain accreditation is a huge step in the right direction. Please support this measure—for the present and future families who seek the quality child care that their keiki deserve.

Sincerely,

Raya Esteban

**TO: HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE**

**SUBJECT: SB 239 - RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING ACCREDITATION**

**POSITION: IN SUPPORT**

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and members of the committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning Senate Bill (SB) 239, relating to early learning accreditation, which will support preschools and regulated child care providers achieve accreditation and preserve the amount of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families. As a member of the community, I strongly support SB 239 as I believe that having a stable early learning framework is critical to the economic and social health of our state.

Accreditation is among the most well-known measures of quality in early childhood education. Currently, accreditation is expensive, intensive and time-consuming for providers. The creation of an accreditation program strengthens the early learning system in Hawaii as it is a critical step in providing technical and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality. It also preserves and expands the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

As a community member, I strongly believe we should have measures in place that support a healthy, robust early learning system, because it is the foundation on which the workforce relies so that they can work. Strong, accredited early learning systems are a springboard for the economy. I appreciate the opportunity to provide the Committee with my testimony in support of SB 239.

Thank you,

Moevanu Jameson  
moevanu@yahoo.com

**HB-261-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/17/2023 10:45:12 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Cards Pintor        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Cards Pintor

**HB-261-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/17/2023 4:55:13 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Toni Fujimoto       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and committee members,**

**Please support SB261 which will support preschools and regulated child care providers achieve accreditation and preserve the amount of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families. Accreditation is among the most well-known measures of quality in early childhood education. However, accreditation is expensive, intensive and time-consuming for providers who have not been accredited previously. As the law is currently written, programs wishing to serve or continue serving Preschool Open Doors families must start this expensive and intensive process by 2024 and complete it by 2029. This requirement creates a significant burden for preschools and child care providers who currently serve Preschool Open Doors families but are unaccredited as well as hinders efforts to increase the number of programs available.**

**The creation of an accreditation program is an important step to provide technical assistance and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality and preserve and expand the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.**

**Please support this measure.**

**HB-261-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2023 12:09:24 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Shay Chan Hodges    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

✓ To preserve the number of programs available to families of Preschool Open Doors and to support regulated preschool and child care providers in improving and/or maintaining quality, **I strongly support HB261 HD1**

✓ Accreditation is among the most well-known measures of quality in early childhood.

✓ The creation of an accreditation program is an important step to provide technical and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality and preserve and expand the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Shay Chan Hodges

Maui, Hawaii

**HB-261-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2023 1:22:42 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Caroline Kunitake   | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I support HB261 HD1.Please support this bill.

**HB-261-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2023 3:53:11 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kee Lo              | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and committee members,

Please support SB239 which will support preschools and regulated child care providers achieve accreditation and preserve the amount of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families. Accreditation is among the most well-known measures of quality in early childhood education. However, accreditation is expensive, intensive and time-consuming for providers who have not been accredited previously. As the law is currently written, programs wishing to serve or continue serving Preschool Open Doors families must start this expensive and intensive process by 2024 and complete it by 2029. This requirement creates a significant burden for preschools and child care providers who currently serve Preschool Open Doors families but are unaccredited as well as hinders efforts to increase the number of programs available.

The creation of an accreditation program is an important step to provide technical assistance and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality and preserve and expand the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Please support this measure.

Kee Lo



**HB-261-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2023 5:22:31 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Erica Yamauchi      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee:

To preserve the number of programs available to families of Preschool Open Doors and to support regulated preschool and child care providers in improving and/or maintaining quality, I am writing in strong support of this bill.

Accreditation is among the most well-known measures of quality in early childhood. The creation of an accreditation program is a crucial step to provide technical and financial assistance to regulated preschools and child care providers in achieving important markers of quality, and preserving and expanding the number of programs available to Preschool Open Doors families.

Thank you for considering this measure.

Erica Yamauchi, Kaimukī/Wilhelmina Rise

**LATE**

**HB-261-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2023 3:34:15 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Linda Elento | Individual   | Oppose             | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services,

Our keiki, families, childcare providers and preschools need less regulations, less paperwork, not more. **Oppose** HB261 HD1.

I believe some standards of a "national early learning accreditation", such as NAEYC, specified in our statutes, may directly conflict with a provider's and child's religious freedom and First Amendment rights. Families need fair access to faith-based providers holding the Association of Christian Schools Internationalo (ACSI) accreditation.

Requiring a service provider to seek accreditation from a "national early learning accrediting organization" would disqualify some private schools and childcare providers solely because they are religious. Refer to the US Supreme Court's decision issued on June 21, 2022, in Carson v. Makin: [https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/20-1088\\_dbfi.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/20-1088_dbfi.pdf).

The director of human services is limited to approving a "national early learning accrediting organization", a decision that is subjective and could change, an unfair provision.

I do not believe DHS recognizes ACSI as a "national early learning accrediting organization" because schools without NAEYC (or an accreditation listed in statute) do not qualify for the 100% highest-level scale for subsidy payments but only for about 75% maximum. The providers with only ACSI (WASC, HAIS) accreditation should also be at the 100% level, not 75%, effective immediately, and the providers not be subject to losing all eligibilty for Preschool Open Doors and childcare subsidies on a deadline set for years ahead.

This bill should add ACSI to the list of accreditations for pre-K, as the statutes include ACSI in defining private schools for K-12 only. Other testimonies are seeking later implementation dates; providers need assurance now, not next year: Delete the accreditation mandate instead or add ACSI.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony in **Opposition of SB239SD1 and your consideration of the immediate suggestions.**