
From: Jordana Ferreira <anadroj422@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 6:06 PM
To: HSH Testimony
Subject: SB 64 SD1 testimony

Categories: Red category

SB 64 SD1

Dear Legislator:

Please restore the \$6 million for the Pre-school Open Doors (POD) program operated by the Hawaii Department of Human Services in HB 500 – Relating to the State Budget. This program has been in existence since 1990 and has provided a valuable lifeline for hundreds of families every year throughout the state.

I live in Waianae and have 2 friends who have used POD subsidy and have loved it, explaining that their children greatly benefitted from preschool. One of my friends is planning to enroll her second child during this upcoming enrollment because he needs the interaction with other children, and preschool is too expensive for her to afford on her own. She is a single mother working full-time at Costco. Her first child benefitted greatly from attending preschool and is now well on her way to 1st grade at the next school year and she'd love the same opportunity for her second child and other children as well.

My nephew, who I care for a great deal of the time, will be attending preschool soon enough and my entire family is hoping the POD program still exists within a couple years. We don't understand how anyone can afford to pay over a thousand dollars a month for a preschool education. The help provided from POD doesn't alleviate all the issues/worries, but it definitely helps.

POD provides critical subsidies for income-eligible families sending their children to a licensed preschool during the school year prior to kindergarten entry. The goal of POD is to promote school readiness for children, and the program focuses on meeting the needs of the child.

Sincerely,
Jordana Ferreira

LATE

Dear Legislator:

Please restore \$6 million for the Pre-school Open Doors (POD) program operated by the Hawaii Department of Human Services in HB 500 – Relating to the State Budget. This program has been in existence since 1990 and has provided a valuable lifeline for hundreds of families every year throughout the state.

POD provides critical subsidies for income-eligible families sending their children to a licensed preschool during the school year prior to kindergarten entry. The goal of POD is to promote school readiness for children, and the program focuses on meeting the needs of the child.

Sincerely,

Raquel Amber Clark
PATCH



LATE

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Josh Green, Co-Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services and Housing

Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair
Senator Breene Harimoto, Co-Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Education

RE: Testimony in Support of SB 64/SD1 RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES – Hearing
February 19, 2015 at 1:25 PM, Conference Room 016

Dear Legislators:

Please restore \$6 million for the Pre-school Open Doors (POD) program operated by the Hawaii Department of Human Services to the State Budget. This program has been in existence since 1990 and has provided a valuable lifeline for hundreds of families every year throughout the state.

The YMCA promotes the importance of early childhood education in our outreach work in public housing, where caregivers and their young children are invited to a Family Child Interaction Learning program. Through this experience caregivers see the value of quality early learning and the impact this has on the healthy growth and development of their children, and in preparing them to succeed in Kindergarten. Our staff assists families in transitioning their children from our program to a licensed prekindergarten program, and know first-hand that for most of our families this transition cannot happen without POD.

POD provides critical subsidies for income-eligible families sending their children to a licensed preschool during the school year prior to kindergarten entry. The goal of POD is to promote school readiness for children, and the program focuses on meeting the needs of the child.

Please support the passage of SB64, SD1 so POD can continue to promote school readiness for children.

Sincerely,

Diane Tabangay
Executive Director of Children's Programs
(808) 541-5470

From: Alex Means <ameans474@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 7:31 PM
To: HSH Testimony; Rep. Calvin Say
Subject: Fwd: SB 64 SD1 Testimony

Dear Legislator:

Please restore the \$6 million for the Pre-school Open Doors (POD) program operated by the Hawaii Department of Human Services in SB64 SD 1 – Relating to the State Budget. This program has been in existence since 1990 and has provided a valuable lifeline for hundreds of families every year throughout the state.

Preschool is a very important time of development in a child's life. Giving all children access to preschool will help them in starting their educational journey off on the right foot, and help to ensure that they will not fall behind early.

POD provides critical subsidies for income-eligible families sending their children to a licensed preschool during the school year prior to kindergarten entry. The goal of POD is to promote school readiness for children, and the program focuses on meeting the needs of the child.

Sincerely,
Alex Means
Project Engineer

LATE



FAMILY PROGRAMS HAWAII

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND HOUSING

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

HEARING: Thursday, February 19, 2015
1:25 PM
Conference Room 016

FROM: Judith Wilhoite
Family Advocate
It Takes An `Ohana

RE: SB 64 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, formerly referred to as foster parent. I strongly support SB 64.

I am writing today to ask you to restore funding for the Pre-school Open Doors (POD) program. 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 young 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 64.

February 19, 2015

To: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services and Housing

Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Education

From: Deborah Zysman, Executive Director
Good Beginnings Alliance

Re: **Testimony in Support of SB 64, SD1:** Relating to Human Services -- Hearing February 19, 2015 at 1:25 PM, Conference Room 016

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 64, SD1, to restore \$6 million in funding to the Department of Human Services (DHS) for FY 2015-16 and FY 2016-17 for the Preschool Open Doors Program.

Good Beginnings Alliance is Hawaii's leading independent, policy and advocacy non-profit organization on children's health, education and safety. We build a united voice to educate and advocate for Hawaii's children.

Restoring the FY 2014-15 level funding to the biennium budget will enable nearly 1,300 children throughout the state gain access to the Preschool Open Doors Program (POD). The program helps qualifying Hawaii families pay subsidized tuition at a DHS-licensed group childcare facility, such as a preschool. POD prioritizes underserved and at-risk children, for the year prior to kindergarten to promote school readiness.

POD also helps to provide subsidies for part-time care for children enrolled in Head Start, a federally funded program that provides quality services to qualifying preschoolers and their families which runs half-days.

If leftover funding is available, POD subsidies may also be awarded to help families with children under four-years-old to gain access to preschool. Keeping access to preschool is critical especially for underserved and at-risk children ages 0-5.

According to the Hawaii State School Readiness Assessment for 2012-13, more than 40% of children entering kindergarten had not attended a pre-kindergarten program and more than 90% of students in Department of Education (DOE) classrooms did not meet benchmarks in all dimensions of school readiness. This trend is alarming, but it can be reversed.

DOE data also shows that one out of three children in Hawaii is not reading at grade level by 3rd Grade. This is a key indicator to high school graduation rates and later success outcomes.

Hawaii ranks second to last out of the most affordable states in the country. Childcare is generally the second largest expense in family budgets after housing costs. The average income of families served by POD is \$33,000 annually. The average preschool cost is \$8,052 in 2012. Since 2013-14, DHS has seen a 54% increase in the number of applications for POD subsidies.

Brain research has proven that the first few years of life are a crucial time for brain development. Brains are built from the bottom up and continue to develop into adulthood. According to a Harvard study on child development, early experiences affect the development of brain architecture, which provides the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health. Just as a weak foundation compromises the quality and strength of a house, adverse experiences early in life can impair brain architecture, with negative effects lasting into adulthood.

The research is clear that when children are provided a high-quality early childhood education, they are more likely to succeed academically in school, reach higher levels of educational attainment, have a higher income and even live healthier lives. A study commissioned by GBA in 2008 found more than \$4 in return for every \$1 invested in early childhood education in Hawaii. Preparing our young children to be ready to learn and thrive before they reach kindergarten not only helps to improve their lives as individuals, it improves the lives of our communities.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge committee members to advance this authorizing legislation to restore POD subsidies to the proposed State Biennium Budget this session.

LATE

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services and Housing

Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Education

From: Douglas Mersberg, Executive Director

Re: Testimony in Support of SB 64, SD1, Relating to Human Services

Hearing

Date: February 19, 2015

Time: 1:25 PM

Place: Conference Room 016

Wai'anae Coast Early Childhood Services has been providing preschool services on the Wai'anae Coast since 1973. 94% of our families receive some form of tuition subsidy in order to afford our services, including from the Preschool Open Doors program.

Wai'anae coast elementary school principals maintain that many of the children that enter their kindergarten classrooms are two years behind in their school readiness skills. Their schools' test scores confirm this assertion. Longitudinal studies show that quality preschool services have a positive impact on school success for low-income children. There are hundreds of children in our community who are unable to access preschool services.

Our organization is in full support of restoring \$6 million in childcare subsidies to the Preschool Open Doors program, which is operated by the Dept. of Human Services. This is based upon our capacity to serve more children, the school readiness needs of children in our community, and the benefits that programs like ours can provide.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2015 8:36 AM
To: HSH Testimony
Cc: mochizuki@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB64 on Feb 19, 2015 13:25PM

SB64

Submitted on: 2/19/2015

Testimony for HSH/EDU on Feb 19, 2015 13:25PM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marsha Mochizuki	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: Dear Legislators: Please restore the \$6 million for the Pre-school Open Doors (POD) program operated by the Hawaii Department of Human Services in HB 64 SD 1 – Relating to the State Budget. This program has been in existence since 1990 and has provided a valuable lifeline for hundreds of families every year throughout the state. While I have not needed the support of the POD program myself, I have many friends who would not have been able to afford a quality preschool experience for their children had they not been able to make use of the POD program this year. POD provides critical subsidies for income-eligible families sending their children to a licensed preschool during the school year prior to kindergarten entry. The goal of POD is to promote school readiness for children, and the program focuses on meeting the needs of the child.

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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