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## Easter Seals Hawaii

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March 18, 2015

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

From: Ron Brandvold, President & CEO

Re: **HB119/HD 2 – Relating to Health**  
Hearing Scheduled for March 19, 2015 (1:45 pm)

For over 60 years, Easter Seals Hawaii has provided exceptional, individualized, family-centered services to empower infants, children, youth and adults with disabilities or special needs to achieve their goals and live independent fulfilling lives. Easter Seals Hawaii is a statewide CARF accredited organization with 15 facilities from Waimea, Kauai to Hilo, Hawaii providing a variety of programs including Early Intervention, Medicaid Waiver Home and Community Based, Employment, and Autism Services.

Easter Seals Hawaii supports **HB 119/HD 2** establishing the Hawaii ABLE Savings Program which would allow individuals with disabilities the same kind of flexible savings tools that others in Hawaii have through college savings accounts, health savings accounts and individual retirement accounts. Individuals with disabilities, including those who are Medicaid eligible, and their families could save private funds to support the individual without risking eligibility for Social Security and government programs.

**HB 119/HD 2** follows Congressional passage and Presidential signature of the Stephen J. Beck Jr. Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act in December 2014. The ABLE Act and favorable action by this Committee on **HB 119/HD 2** to establish the Hawaii Program recognizes the possibility of additional costs associated with living with a disability. However, it also aligns with other policy objectives intended to encourage the full and competitive employment of individuals with disabilities which benefits not only the individual, but employers, communities, and our State. The Hawaii ABLE Savings Program makes sense.

Easter Seals Hawaii encourages swift passage of **HB 119/HD 2** and establishment and implementation by the Director of Finance in as short a time as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments on behalf of Easter Seals Hawaii.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 19, 2015 7:09 AM  
**To:** HSH Testimony  
**Cc:** debbra.jackson@doh.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB119 on Mar 19, 2015 13:45PM\*

**HB119**

Submitted on: 3/19/2015

Testimony for HSH on Mar 19, 2015 13:45PM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Debbie Jackson	State Government Agency - DCAB	Support	No

**Comments:**

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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