



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 12, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: **S.B. 1329 - RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**

Hearing: Thursday, February 12, 2009; 1:45 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B. 1666 is to authorize the Hawaii Council of Mayors to name designees for their two representatives on the early learning council and changes the name of the keiki first steps trust fund to the early learning council trust fund and specifies that moneys in the trust fund shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal year.

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** As a member of the Early Learning Council (ELC) created through Act 14, First Special Session 2008, the Department of Human Services supports the intent of Sections 1 and 2 of this bill as it provides adequate flexibility to the Hawaii Council of Mayors and provides additional opportunities for the intended use of the funds that may have otherwise been lost due to non-expenditure at the fiscal period. This allows the ELC to maximize all available resources to plan for and create an early learning system.

We defer to the Department of Budget and Finance on Section 3 of this bill regarding the Early Learning Council Trust Fund.

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

Date of Hearing: February 12, 2009

Committee: Senate Human Services

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: S.B. 1329, Relating to Early Learning

Purpose: Authorizes the Hawaii Council of Mayors to name designees for their two representatives on the early learning council; changes the name of the keiki first steps trust fund to the early learning council trust fund and specifies that moneys in the trust fund should not lapse at the end of the fiscal year.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) is in full support of S.B. 1329. In view of the current fiscal situation, this bill will allow the work of the Early Learning Council (Council) to continue, and ultimately ensure that the developmental and early learning needs of young children are equitably addressed throughout the state.

One point of clarification on the first provision as stated in Section 1 of the bill, the Council is asking that all members of the council be allowed to designate an alternate, in the case that they cannot attend a schedule meeting. The current statute does not provide this opportunity for the Governor's and Hawaii Council of Mayor's appointees.

An additional point of clarification on the third provision as stated in Section 1 of the bill, the Council is requesting that the unencumbered,

unexpended funds in the current appropriation be allowed to lapse into the Keiki First Steps Trust Fund at the end of the fiscal year.

The Department respectfully requests that the language in the bill be revised to reflect these two points.

The Department sincerely thanks the Legislature and the Governor for the opportunity to continue working with its early childhood partners, in both public and private settings, to ensure universal access to quality early learning opportunities. Our collective efforts will help young children to be at optimal levels of readiness for learning, particularly as they make the transition into a K-12 learning system.

As appropriate, the Department respectfully requests that this bill be expedited so that actions may ensure that unexpended and unencumbered funds are secured in the trust fund at the closing of the fiscal year in June.



## KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Human Services

Hearing Date: Thursday, February 12, 2009

1:45 p.m. – Conference Room 016

**Re: SB1329 Relating to Early Learning**

Dee Jay Mailer, Chief Executive Officer  
Kamehameha Schools

Good afternoon Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Ihara and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services. My name is Dee Jay Mailer, Chief Executive Officer of Kamehameha Schools. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 1329.

Kamehameha Schools supports the efforts of the legislature to enhance the early education opportunities of children across the state through the Early Learning Council. In order for the Council to do its work, it needs resources and therefore Kamehameha Schools strongly supports efforts to prevent any lapse of funding that the Council needs to fulfill its charter.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is a statewide educational system supported by a trust endowed by Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, whose mission is to improve the capability and well-being of Native Hawaiian children through education. We serve 5,400 K-12 students through campus programs on O'ahu, Hawai'i and Maui, and 1,485 three-and-four-year-olds at 31 preschool sites statewide. We also provide scholarships to keiki attending other pre-schools and provide funding for child-family interaction programs that have filled a great need in rural communities.

Since its inception more than 20 years ago, the Kamehameha Schools Early Childhood Education (ECE) Division has provided more than 11,000 keiki with their first preschool experience. Early childhood education and parental support is the cornerstone of the Education Strategic Plan adopted in 2005, which seeks to foster long-term intergenerational change in the way Native Hawaiian families approach learning. Research demonstrates that early education is a key factor in lifelong success for all children, and we strongly urge the legislature to promote, enhance and support the efforts of the State of Hawai'i to appropriately address the needs of Hawai'i's pre-kindergarten children.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with the legislature, the Department of Education and other public and private stakeholders in the community for the benefit of the children of Hawai'i.

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*Founded and Endowed by the Legacy of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop*

We also understand the economic burden that government and the private sector are under today and are actively working with and within the Early Learning Council to keep momentum going in its first year. It is extremely important, therefore, that funds allocated to the Council are not allowed to lapse, but rather be transferred to the Keiki First Trust Fund. Only in these modest ways can the determined early learning community move forward to serve more keiki and families with the Council's support. As a member of the Early Learning Council, Kamehameha Schools, stands committed to this work and we support this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



February 12, 2009  
1:45 p.m.  
Conference Room 016

TESTIMONY TO  
THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

RE: SB 1329 – Relating to Early Learning

Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Ihara, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Witt and I am executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 97 private and independent schools in Hawaii and educates over 30,000 students statewide.

The Association is in strong support of Senate Bill 1329 – Relating to Early Learning, which clarifies provisions of the State’s early learning system regarding both the membership of the Early Learning Council and the Keiki First Steps Trust Fund.

HAIS has always been an advocate for educational programming and services for young children and is a great supporter of the Early Learning Council – of which the head of one of our member schools, Dr. Robert Peters of Hanahau’oli School, serves as co-chair – and its work to develop a comprehensive early childhood education system for our state. By preventing the funds in the trust fund from lapsing at the end of the fiscal year, this measure will provide the Council with additional support to continue the good work that they have already begun.

While it is our hope that the Committee will pass this measure, we respectfully suggest that two amendments are made. The first is to allow for the assignment of designees for not only the representatives of the Hawaii Council of Mayors, as already proposed by the bill, but the Governor’s appointees to the Early Learning Council as well. Permitting the appointment of these designees will ensure full representation of the Council’s constituent members and improved communication between the Council and appointees. The second is to change the name of the Keiki First Steps Trust Fund to the “Early Learning Trust” – rather than the “Early Learning Council Trust Fund,” as proposed by the bill in its current form – to reflect the broader nature of the work that the fund will support, which will extend beyond the Council itself.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.



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Thursday,  
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Senate Human  
Services  
Committee  
Room 016

To: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

From: Elisabeth Chun, Executive Director  
Good Beginnings Alliance

Date: Thursday, February 12, 2009, 1:45 p.m.  
Conference Room 016

Subject: **SB1329: Authorizes the Hawaii Council of Mayors to name designees for their two representatives on the early learning council; changes the name of the keiki first steps trust fund to the early learning council trust fund and specifies that moneys in the trust fund shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal year.**

The Good Beginnings Alliance is a policy and advocacy organization focused on Hawaii's youngest children and their families. We strive to ensure a nurturing, safe and healthy development for all children from pre-birth to age eight. We believe all children deserve safe and supportive environments that meet their needs as they grow and develop.

**We strongly support this bill.**

Good Beginnings Alliance has been actively supporting the new Early Learning Council through its different subcommittees. We recognize the importance of continuing this work despite the current state budget challenges. We also support the ability of the Hawaii Council of Mayors to name alternate designees for their representatives so that the work of the Early Learning Council can continue in the absence of the representatives. Passage of this bill will allow the Early Learning Council to carry on its work during the next fiscal year.

Mahalo for your support.

For more information contact: Good Beginnings Alliance; phone: 531-5502;  
[lchun@goodbeginnings.org](mailto:lchun@goodbeginnings.org)