

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



ELAINE YAMASHITA
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII
Early Learning Board
2759 South King Street, Room C6
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

February 4, 2025

Aloha, Honorable Chair Kidani, Vice-chair Kim, and members of the Senate Education committee:

The Early Learning Board (ELB) formulates statewide policy relating to early learning, as well as directing the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL).

The Early Learning Board (ELB) supports SB 1384.

This is essentially a housekeeping bill that will clean up the statute. The stated proposed language clarifies where any repaid stipend funds would be deposited. The early learning special fund has already been established.

Mahalo for your consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,

/s/Elaine Yamashita
Early Learning Board Chair



STATE OF HAWAII

Executive Office on Early Learning

Ke'ena Ho'okele Ho'ona'auao Pae Kamali'i o Hawai'i Moku'āina
2759 South King Street, Room C6
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

TO: Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education

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

SUBJECT: Testimony on S.B. No. 1384 – RELATING TO THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR
SPECIAL FUND

Committee: EDU
Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025
Time: 3:05 p.m.
Location: Conference Room 229

Executive Office on Early Learning's Position: **SUPPORT**

The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) offers the following comments in strong support of S.B. No. 1384, a housekeeping measure to clean up statutory language related to the Early Childhood Educator Special Fund.

Act 210, SLH 2021 established the Hawai'i Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators in Hawai'i. The Act specified that recipients of the stipends who do not satisfy the requirements of the program must repay the stipend funds. It added a new section to HRS, establishing the Hawai'i Early Childhood Educator Special Fund, into which any repaid stipend funds were to be deposited. However, Act 210 also specified that the special fund shall be abolished and repealed on June 30, 2023. As a result, the fund was abolished in 2023 and is no longer in use.

This bill deletes section 302L-10, HRS which established the Early Childhood Educator Special Fund, and redirect any stipend funds repaid by a stipend recipient to the Early Learning Special Fund instead.

We appreciate the Legislature's continued investment in our youngest keiki and their families and thank you for your consideration of S.B. No. 1384.