



EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING
HONOLULU

GG WEISENFELD
DIRECTOR

Testimony in **Support** of
Governor's Message No. 650
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Early Learning Advisory Board
Gubernatorial Nominee, Alfred Castle
For a term to expire June 30, 2016

By GG Weisenfeld, Director

Senate Committee on Education
April 9, 2014
1:15 p.m., Room 414

Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Governor's Message No. 650, nominating Alfred Castle to the Early Learning Advisory Board. The Executive Office on Early Learning supports his nomination.

Mr. Castle is the Executive Director and a member of the Board of Trustees of The Samuel N. & Mary Castle Foundation, which is committed to providing resources to improve the life of Hawaii's children and families by improving the quality and quantity of early education. Their efforts are concentrated on creating greater social equality and opportunity through improving access to high quality prekindergarten education.

The Foundation has held a special place in the history of early education in Hawaii as its founder, Mary Castle, provided the funding for our first kindergartens in the early twentieth century. Mr. Castle is committed to seeing that legacy through and providing quality early childhood education opportunities for all of Hawaii's children. It was thanks to his non-federal share match – funding to support quality initiatives and professional development – and that of a few others that Hawaii was able to secure ARRA funding for the State Advisory Council (then the Early Learning Council) in 2008-2009.

It is important to note that the Foundation does not limit its work to funding; it supports the creation and maintenance of state and federal policies which support children and families to achieve the social, emotional, cognitive and physical skills necessary to learn and grow. The Foundation believes that “investing in the healthy development of young children requires a commitment to working across domains including health, mental health, education, early intervention, food and nutrition, maternal health and child welfare to build an accountable, comprehensive seamless system of high quality service.”

Mr. Castle is being recommended to serve on the Early Learning Advisory Board as its representative of philanthropic organizations that support early learning. As part of a philanthropic family with a legacy that dates back to the 1650s and spans both coastal boundaries of our county, Mr. Castle will bring a multitude of personal and professional assets to the Board’s work. Through his work with national philanthropic associations, he will bring both financial and intellectual resources to Hawaii’s task of educating young children.