SB 1022 Testimony Draft

**EARLY LEARNING BOARD POSITION: Comments**

**Comments:** The Early Learning Board (ELB) appreciates the Legislature’s recognition of the value of the diversity of early learning and care stakeholders in its current composition “providing unique and important input on how to best serve Hawaii's families and young children” (Senate Education Committee Report, Feb. 2023). The ELB also recognizes that its composition does not specifically call for members from each of the counties, reflective of different early childhood needs across the State.

In order to shape policy designed to provide quality opportunities for all children and respect the value inherent in the diversity of stakeholder and county perspectives, the ELB respectfully recommends amendments to SB 1022. These amendments are designed to increase the effectiveness of ELB governance by expanding the qualifications for Board membership to seek skill sets needed to guide early childhood systems development. The ELB believes that one voting member from each county is sufficient to provide county perspectives and that it is essential to include a Hawaiian medium provider as a voting member to reflect our dual language State along with a pediatrician whose focus is child development in recognition of the value of a holistic view of the child in policy making. Finally, the composition of the Board recommended seeks to minimize the potential for, or perception of conflict of interest while not overlooking the inherent value of multiple voices from the early childhood community that can be offered by an advisory council for the Board.

ELB also recommends the effective date take into consideration adequate time for the current board to transition based on the provisions of this bill.

**Amendments to SB 1022:**

Amend Section 1, Subsection (b)(3), Page 2 to read: “(3) Have an understanding of ~~best practices in~~ early learning governance or be willing to be trained ~~in best practices~~ in early learning governance; and”

Amend Section 1, Subsection (b)(4), Page 2 to read: “(4) Have ~~a clear~~ an understanding of the board's ~~role~~ responsibility in developing and ~~protecting~~ promoting a clear, long-term strategic vision for early learning and systems building.”

Amend Section 1, Subsection (c)(2), Page 2 to read: “ (2) Demonstrate a deep and abiding interest in early ~~learning~~ childhood and a dedication to the social, academic, and ~~character~~ healthy development of children.”

Add to Section 1, Subsection (c), Page 2: “(3) Bring an expertise in one or more professional disciplines of education, health, human services, business, workforce development, early childhood development or brain development.”

Amend Section 2, Subsection (b), Pages 2-4 to read: “(b) The board shall consist of the following voting members:

(l) One voting member from the county of Hawaii;

(2) One voting member from the county of Maui;

(3) One voting member from the county of Kauai;

(4) [~~Three~~ One voting [~~members~~] member from the city and county of Honolulu; ~~and~~

(5) Three at-large voting members;

(6) One representative of Hawaiian medium early learning providers; and

(7) One pediatrician with child development focus.”

Add to Section 2, Subsection (d), Page 7 to read: “(d) The board shall create an early learning stakeholder advisory council that meets four times a year. Advisory council members may serve on Board subcommittees.”