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Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Ronald Kouchi, Vice Chair

February 25, 2015

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kouchi, and Committee Members:

This testimony is in support of SB374 SD1, which replaces the running start program and jump start program with dual credit programs.

The Hui for Excellence in Education (HE'E) is a diverse coalition of over 40 parent and community organizations dedicated to improving student achievement by increasing family and community engagement and partnerships in our schools. Our member list is attached.

The Coalition understands that having a post-secondary degree gives choices to our youth, allowing them to prepare for jobs in our workforce as well as challenging them with higher-level thinking. However, we hear that many students do not think that college is an option because they do not have the confidence or the financial support. Jump Start and Running Start Programs have allowed high school students to experience college classes, start accumulating college credits and gain the confidence that they can succeed in a post-secondary program. We applaud these programs for giving students the opportunity and exposure while still in high school.

We support this bill, which expands the eligibility to 9th grade, giving more students the opportunity to participate in the dual credit programs. In addition, we support the financial appropriation, which will allow students to participate in dual credit programs tuition free. From a parent, family and student perspective, the cost of college tuition is extremely daunting. If a student can participate in their high school years to gain college credits tuition free, it eases the burden on families and the student, especially for those families and students who are contemplating pursuing a post-secondary education because of costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Our support of this bill represents a 75% consensus or more of our membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

Academy 21
After-School All-Stars Hawaii
Alliance for Place Based Learning
*Castle Complex Community Council
*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS
Center for Civic Education
Coalition for Children with Special Needs
*Faith Action for Community Equity
Fresh Leadership LLC
Girl Scouts Hawaii
*Good Beginnings Alliance
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation
*Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Hawai‘i Athletic League of Scholars
*Hawai‘i Charter School Network
*Hawai‘i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition
*Hawaii State PTSA
Hawai‘i State Student Council
Hawai‘i State Teachers Association
Hawai‘i P-20
Hawai‘i 3Rs
Head Start Collaboration Office
It’s All About Kids
*INPEACE
Joint Venture Education Forum
Junior Achievement of Hawaii
*Kaho‘omiki
Kamehameha Schools
Kanu Hawai‘i
*Kaua‘i Ho‘okele Council
Keiki to Career Kaua‘i
Kupu A‘e
*Leaders for the Next Generation
Learning First
McREL’s Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
Our Public School
*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
*Parents and Children Together
*Parents for Public Schools Hawai‘i
Punahou School PUEO Program

Teach for America
The Learning Coalition
US PACOM
University of Hawai‘i College of Education
YMCA of Honolulu

Voting Members () Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.*