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

March 2, 2015

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

This testimony is in support of SB866, which makes an appropriation to support the Afterschool Plus Program.

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.

Because of Hawaii's high cost of living, parents and family members are often doing multiple jobs to make ends meet. Afterschool programs such as the A+ Program help lessen the burden on families who are not able to care for their children afterschool due to work. The program also keeps children in a safe place.

We support restoring funding at the Department of Education for the A+ Program back to levels that existed prior to the state's financial crisis. We also support the bill's emphasis on improving content and quality and supporting professional training and evaluation for staff.

We also would like the legislature to consider **amending the eligibility criteria to allow all children to participate.** We have heard from parents who are not currently eligible that they would gladly participate in the program at full price because often times, the A+ Program is the most appropriate afterschool option for their children. With more paying participants, additional revenue could be generated to help support the program.

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.*