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**S E A C**

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February 20, 2019

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair

Committee on Education

Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Chair

Committee on Human Services

Hawaii State Capitol

Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: S.B. 1220 - RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Dear Chairs Kidani and Ruderman and Members of the Committees,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii’s State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), strongly supports S.B. 1220 which prohibits student suspensions and expulsions within the Executive Office on Early Learning Public Prekindergarten Program.

SEAC has long advocated for prevention and early intervention of student misconduct through the use of positive behavior supports and tiered interventions. Suspensions take away academic and social supports from children who are often the most vulnerable to academic failure and anti-social behaviors, and should therefore be utilized in only the most extraordinary situations where there is a credible and serious threat to the safety of the student or others.

Furthermore, providing developmentally appropriate learning, social-emotional and behavioral supports to young children lessens the likelihood that they may need more intensive supports in elementary and secondary settings.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important legislation. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Ivalee Sinclair

Legislative Committee Chair

Martha Guinan Chair

*Mandated by the* ***Individuals with Disabilities Education Act***