



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council
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March 17, 2020

**Special Education
Advisory Council**

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Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair
Committee on Health
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: SB 2901, SD 2 - RELATING TO HEARING & VISION PROGRAM

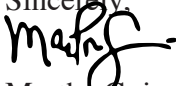
Dear Chair Mizuno and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii's State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), **strongly supports** SB 2901, SD 2 that aims to increase the early identification of children with hearing or vision loss as well as consistent and effective follow-up care.

Since the Department of Health's hearing and vision screening program was defunded in the mid-nineties, there has been a lack of consistency in screening procedures and tools, data collection, data reporting, and referral for follow-up services by the various providers and organizations screening children from early intervention to secondary school. This legislation allows the Department of Health to significantly improve services by setting recommended standards based on evidence-based practice for the training of screening personnel, appropriate screening tools and referral for services.

Early intervention is essential to ensure language acquisition, literacy and healthy social-emotional development, thereby potentially reducing the need for more intensive special education and related services. Equally important is the support and information given to parents to enable them to seek out appropriate services and partner in their child's educational success.

SEAC appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Martha Guinan
Chair


Ivalee Sinclair
Legislative Committee Chair