RE: S.B. 2521 - RELATING TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

Dear Chair Kidani 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 S.B. 2521 which provides funds to special education classroom teachers to spend toward instructional materials and equipment to meet their students’ unique instructional needs.

A number of teacher surveys have highlighted the need for additional adaptive curricula, assistive technology and specialized equipment to enable special education students to access their individualized instruction. The monies for these additional supports are often not included in the school budget, and many special education teachers spend their own funds to support their students. The flexibility to purchase additional instructional materials and equipment is sorely needed in order for students with disabilities to access learning opportunities, make meaningful academic gains, and thus reduce the huge achievement gap between special education and non-special education students.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our testimony. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact us.

Respectfully,

Martha Guinan
SEAC Chair

Ivalee Sinclair
Legislative Committee Chair

Mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act