



**LATE**

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING  
HONOLULU

TERRY LOCK  
DIRECTOR

Testimony in **Support** of  
H.B. 909 H.D. 1, Relating to Infant Mortality Program  
By Terry Lock, Director

House Committee on Finance  
February 25, 2013  
3:30 p.m., Room 308

Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Nishimoto, Vice-Chair Johanson, and Members of the Committee:

Aloha, I am Terry Lock, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL is in support of House Bill 909 House Draft 1.

EOEL is charged with coordinating efforts on behalf of young children by creating partnerships and alignment of policies and programs to achieve improved outcomes in health, safety, and school readiness and success. Over the past year, EOEL has engaged partners across the state to define the desired outcomes for children and families, as well as the critical strategies to achieve those outcomes, which should be prioritized over the next three to five years. This work – the Hawaii Early Childhood Action Strategy – is described in *Taking Action for Hawaii's Children*, which can be found at [earlylearning.hawaii.gov](http://earlylearning.hawaii.gov).

One of these priority strategies is to improve birth outcomes for our keiki. H.B. 909 H.D. 1 aligns with this strategy. It would, among other things, establish a comprehensive infant mortality reduction program under the Department of Health and require licensed birthing facilities to report information on pre-term births.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

February 25, 2013 at 3:30 p.m. (Agenda #3)  
Conference Room 308

**Commenting on HB 909 HD 1: Relating to Infant Mortality Program.**

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii advocates for its member organizations that span the entire spectrum of health care, including all acute care hospitals, as well as long term care facilities, home care agencies, and hospices. In addition to providing quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 40,000 people. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on HB 909 HD 1, which creates an infant mortality reduction program.

The intent of the bill is laudable, but we have strong concerns regarding it. The bill requires each facility to have and distribute written policies prohibiting elective pre-term delivery prior to 37 weeks of gestation. However, the major birthing centers across the state already have policies regarding preferred time frames for elective pre-term delivery. Furthermore, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists has set 39 weeks as the target rather than 37 weeks.

In addition, the proposed infant mortality reduction program largely duplicates a program that already exists. The Hawaii Child Death Review System was established in 1997 by the Legislature through Hawaii Revised Statute §321-345. Child Death Review teams conduct comprehensive and multidisciplinary reviews of child deaths, including premature births. The objectives of the Child Death Review System include the following:

- (1) Identify the causes and circumstances surrounding each child's death;
- (2) Identify risk factors in order to recommend the development of policies, strategies, and resources to prevent future child deaths; and
- (3) Establish a statewide data collection effort to facilitate the child death review process.

The responsibilities of Child Death Review Council include recommending policy and legislative changes, facilitating training programs, and increasing public awareness through educational activities. Through the Hawaii Child Death Review System, the State already has the authority to do much of what the bill proposes.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 909 HD 1.