2019 Hawaii Children’s Policy Agenda

Hawaii Children’s Action Network (HCAN) is building a unified voice for Hawaii’s children by using strategic communications, public education and advocacy to effect change. Collaboration on the Hawaii Children’s Policy Agenda serves as a starting point to ignite awareness of, bring together support for, and amplify the advocacy for pro-child policies.

This Agenda reflects the input of HCAN Community Champions Members who are committed to improving the lives of Hawaii’s children by promoting public policy changes that benefit their health, safety, education and economic security. Hawaii Children’s Action Network respects the diversity, expertise, perspectives and priorities within this community of advocates and is honored to advance the work of our peers in children’s advocacy. HCAN supports all of the items within the Children’s Policy Agenda.

The Agenda contains bills and resolutions that will be introduced in the 2019 Hawaii State Legislative Session and represent the top priority issues of our community champion members. Under each initiative listed, there is a lead organization that serves as the primary point of contact for advocacy.

The Agenda is organized into the following categories affecting kids and families:

- Economic Security and Equity for Children
- Family Strengthening
- Health and Wellness
- Child Safety and Welfare
- Education
ECONOMIC SECURITY AND EQUITY

All children live in families that can provide for their needs and invest in their future

Initiative: Bill establishing a family leave insurance program in Hawaii to provide 16 weeks of partial wage replacement, based on a sliding scale.
Lead: Working Families Coalition

40% of Hawaii’s children live in households with a high housing cost burden

Initiative: Bill to eliminate the Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) tax loophole to increase revenue for affordable housing, schools, roads, or other community needs.
Lead: ALICE Policy Hui

Hawaii’s children rank 30th nationally in economic well-being

Initiative: Bill to expand the existing Hawaii Dependent Care Tax Credit by raising the amount of the tax credit and increasing the income limits used to calculate a family’s benefit amount so that low-income families can receive a more meaningful benefit.
Lead: Hawaii Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance

Initiative: Bill to raise the minimum wage to a livable wage, eliminate the tip credit, and automatically adjust for cost of living.
Lead: Raise Up Hawaii

Initiative: Bill to allow SNAP recipients to get double credit when using their SNAP benefits to purchase Hawaii-grown fresh produce.
Lead: Hawaii Public Health Institute, Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law & Economic Justice
STRENGTHENING HAWAII’S FAMILIES

Children and families deserve support so they can thrive

Initiative: Two staff positions for the Hawaii State Commission on Fatherhood.
Lead: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Initiative: $257,000 request for Zero to Three Court staff and program support.
Lead: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Preserving the relationship between a child and their incarcerated parent alleviates children’s mental health issues and anxiety, facilitates a smoother reentry for the parent upon release, and reduces recidivism rates

Initiative: Resolution to form a working group on establishing visitation centers at correctional facilities to improve visitation by children of incarcerated persons.
Lead: Blueprint for Change

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

All children are born healthy, grow healthy and have access to affordable, comprehensive, and high-quality care

Initiative: Bill requiring licensure for school psychologists.
Lead: Hawaii Association of School Psychologists

Initiative: Bill establishing a licensing and regulatory process for midwifery.
Lead: Midwives Alliance of Hawaii

Initiative: Bill banning the sale of flavored tobacco products in the state of Hawaii.
Lead: Hawaii Public Health Institute

Initiative: Bill requiring restaurants to replace sugary drinks with water or milk in kids’ meals as the default option.
Lead: Hawaii Public Health Institute

Initiative: Request funding for the telehealth portal within the Hawaii State Department of Health.
Lead: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Hawaii has the 3rd highest rate of vape use among high school students in the nation

Initiative: Bill identifying Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) as eligible for Developmental Disabilities services.
Lead: Hawaii FASD Action Group
CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

All children are safe in their homes and communities from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence

Initiative: Bill clarifying that health insurance providers must cover clinical victim support services as a benefit of their plans.
Lead: The Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Initiative: Bill eliminating status offenses for youth (e.g., truancy, runaway, beyond parental control).
Lead: Hawaii Youth Services Network

It is estimated that 1 in 10 children will become the victims of child sexual abuse by the time they reach age eighteen

Initiative: Bill establishing a housing homeless youth pilot project; funding for street outreach; funding for drop-in centers for homeless youth on neighbor islands; safe place for youth pilot program.
Lead: Hawaii Youth Services Network
35 states have passed Erin’s Law to require public schools to implement a child sexual abuse prevention educational curriculum.

Initiative: Bill establishing a multidisciplinary working group to establish a program for the consistent delivery of sexual violence prevention (Erin’s Law) to students in grades pre-K through 12.

Lead: The Sex Abuse Treatment Center

EDUCATION

All children have access to high quality child care, early learning and education to reach their academic potential.

Initiative: Bills to establish a new dedicated, sustainable funding source to adequately support our public schools above the current funding level.

Lead: Hawaii State Teachers Association

Initiative: Bill to appropriate funds for transportation and food services for charter schools.

Lead: Hawaii Public Charter Schools Network
Initiative: $18 million to fund twenty-two new public pre-K classrooms, additional staff, and associated operational costs, with the capacity to increase service to over 800 children.
Lead: Hawaii Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance

Initiative: Bill adjusting the sliding scale for family copays and child care provider reimbursement rates under the Preschool Open Doors and Child Care Connections child care subsidy programs.
Lead: Early Childhood Action Strategy, Hawaii Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance

Initiative: Bill to expand afterschool REACH program.
Lead: Hawaii Afterschool Alliance

Initiative: Bill to appropriate funds for charter school facilities.
Lead: Hawaii Public Charter Schools Network

Only 32% of Hawaii’s 4th graders are proficient or above proficient in reading
The average cost of full-time center-based early learning in Hawaii is $9,553 but can exceed $13,000 per year for infant care.

**Initiative:** $4 million dollars to sustain the 18 charter school pre-K classrooms across the state serving approximately 360 children, including 7 Native Hawaiian immersion and culture-based pre-K charter schools.

**Lead:** ALICE Policy Hui, Hawaii Public Charter Schools Network, Hawaii Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance

---

**Hawaii Children’s Action Network**

Hawaii Children’s Action Network is a movement fighting for children and their families. We advocate for laws and policies that keep our children safe, healthy and ready to learn so they can thrive.

Our mission is to build a unified voice educating and advocating for Hawaii’s children. We are honored to be the convener and coordinator of the pro-child organizations, coalitions and individuals who participated in this Agenda.

**Contact Information**

Hawaii Children’s Action Network  
850 Richards Street, Suite 201  
Honolulu, HI 96813

info@hawaii-can.org | www.hawaii-can.org

---

**Hawaii Children’s Action Network Community Champion Members**

**Organizations**

- ALICE Policy Hui
- AlohaCare
- American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawaii Chapter
- Blueprint for Change
- Early Childhood Action Strategy
- Easter Seals Hawaii
- EPIC ‘Ohana, Inc.
- Family Hui Hawaii
- Family Programs Hawaii
- Family Support Hawaii
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Action Group
- Hawaii Afterschool Alliance
- Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action
- Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law & Economic Justice
- Hawaii Association of School Psychologists
- Hawaii Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance
- Hawai’i Keiki: Healthy & Ready to Learn
- Hawaii Maternal & Infant Health Collaborative
- Hawai’i Pacific Health
- Hawaii PTSA
- Hawaii Public Charter Schools Network
- Hawai’i Public Health Institute
- Hawaii State Teachers Association
- Hawaii Youth Services Network
- Hawai’i Women in Filmmaking
- Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawaii
- Imua Family Services
- Kamehameha Schools
- Midwives Alliance of Hawaii
- Parents And Children Together (PACT)
- Parents for Public Schools Hawai’i
- PATCH Hawaii
- PHOCUSED
- Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii
- Project Vision Hawaii
- Raise Up Hawai’i
- The Learning Coalition/He’e Coalition
- The Sex Abuse Treatment Center
- University of Hawaii - Center on the Family
- Waianae Coast Early Childhood Services

**Individuals**

- Stephanie Batzer  Quin Ogawa
- Katie Bennett  David Okumura
- Liz Chun  Robert Peters
- JoAnn Farnsworth  Jeannine Souki
- Elizabeth McFarlane  Erica Yamauchi