



Read Aloud News & Notes

SPECIAL EDITION

Please read to find out how YOU can save RAP!

Inside this issue:

Save RAP 1-2

Letters to Leaders Campaign 2

SAVE RAP!

RAA calls for community support after DHS budget cuts

The February 4th article in the *Star Advertiser* announced that the Department of Human Services must remove funds from 41 local nonprofits, including Read Aloud America. This dramatic cut was a result of DHS' need to "keep intact job training and welfare programs," the article said.

As RAA Founder and President Jed Gaines commented in the article, the cancellation of our contract with DHS is a 95% cut in RAA's funding.

RAA is determined to keep RAP operating, and we need your support.

For the last 12 years, our volunteers, sponsors, donors, and other community supporters have helped light the fire that has kept RAP going strong and that has energized its small staff. People like you have helped RAP reach *a quarter of a million* adults and children statewide!

After 112 RAP programs at 69 Hawai'i schools, we can see that our community comes together for a good cause. That's why RAP draws crowds nearing 1,000 people, as it did at Lā'ie Elementary in 2001, Waipahu Elementary in 2005, August Ahrens Elementary and Kahului Elementary in 2009, and Lihikai Elementary and Kealakehe Elementary in 2010. Already, the *first sessions* of RAP Spring 2011 have drawn 5,611 adults and children!

Let's continue in the spirit of RAP, and come together to keep it going! RAA is calling on YOU to let our leaders know how important RAP is to Hawai'i schools and your communities. Some simple ways you can help are:

- **"Letters to Leaders"** – Write a letter to Governor Abercrombie and/or to your local representative, urging them to allocate funds to RAA (see "Letters to Leaders" on next page).

(continued on pg. 2)

Did you know...

- *The first sessions of RAP Spring 2011 brought over 5,000 people together*
- *Nearly 600 school and community volunteers participated in the first sessions of RAP Spring 2011*
- *RAA- Hilo launched RAP at three schools, drawing over 1,200 people to the first sessions*
- *These accomplishments are made by hundreds of volunteers and only 12 full-time staff members*
- ***DHS HAS CUT ALL FUNDING FOR RAP – RAA NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!***

Through the fun of reading and being read-to, Read Aloud America promotes literacy, bonds families, and builds communities of lifetime readers.



Save RAP (cont'd)

Below are ways you can help save RAP!

- **Become a “FAN” of RAA’s Facebook page** here:



www.facebook.com/ReadAloudAmerica
Encourage your friends and family to do the same. The more “fans,” the better!

- **“Recycle for RAP”** – From March 1 – June 30, donate money from your family’s HI-5 recyclables to RAA. You can also encourage your local businesses to collect HI-5 items on behalf of RAP and donate the proceeds from recycling them. *Please note that RAA cannot accept HI-5 items themselves.* You can mail donations or bring them directly to your local RAP office:

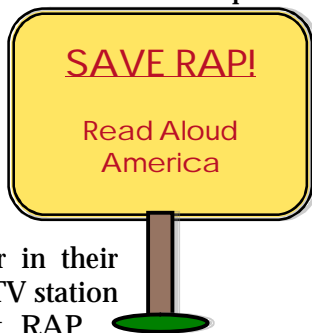


O‘ahu: 1314 S. King St. #G4, Honolulu, HI 96814

Mau: 115 E. Lipoa St. #101, Kihei, HI 96753

Big Island: 99 Aupuni St., #101-103, Hilo, HI 96720

- **Be the voice** – Make your voice heard! Get together with your neighbors and tell our leaders how important RAP is to Hawai‘i. Make “SAVE RAP” signs to stick in your yard or spray-paint a “SAVE RAP” sheet to hang in a visible spot; ask your local schools and businesses to hang “SAVE RAP” signs along fences or in their windows; call the radio or a TV station and urge them to spotlight RAP and its importance in the community; write to local newspapers and *tell your story* about what RAP means



to you.

- **Donate to RAA online!** – Go to RAA’s web site at: www.readaloudamerica.org and click on the “Donate” button to make a donation.

While we are mindful of the threat this funding cut poses to RAP, we are confident that the supporters who have been with us for 12 years or even just one year will come out in full support to ensure RAA/RAP is here for years to come. You have helped build RAP into what it is today, creating a fervent energy that has spread from Kapa‘a, Kaua‘i, to Hilo, Hawai‘i. Thank you for your support, and please call our central office at (808) 531-

Letters to Leaders campaign

Tell Hawaii’s leaders to help us save RAP!

A simple but effective way you can save RAP is by writing letters to Hawaii’s governmental leaders, particularly its U.S. Congresswomen. By receiving your letters, leaders are getting a strong message that RAP is critical to Hawaii’s community. Here is a suggestion for how to *type or handwrite* an effective letter:

1. Explain that you are writing to help save Read Aloud America’s Read Aloud Program (RAP) and urge them to allocate funds to RAA.
2. *Write from your heart.* In your own words, describe what RAP means to you and why you think it is important. You can: write about a personal experience you had at RAP; describe the energy that people experience when they come to RAP; and/or explain ways RAP has transformed your family’s life or your child’s experience in school.
3. Explain why you think cutting RAP’s funding is bad for Hawaii’s communities.
4. Close by urging them to allocate funds to RAP and thanking them for their attention.
5. Keep it to one page, address it to the appropriate address, and stick a 44¢ stamp on it. *Personally addressed and stamped envelopes are read most out of all communication government officials receive.*
6. Follow up every two weeks with an email or phone call, or keep writing letters; *repeated communication emphasizes the critical need for RAP!*

Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa’s address:

238 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Congresswoman Mazie Hirono’s address:

1410 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Governor Neil Abercrombie’s address:

State of Hawai‘i Executive Chambers
415 S. Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Local Legislators’ address:

[Insert Name]
415 S. Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Find your local representative’s name by using this web site:

<http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/site1/info/vstreet/voterinformation.asp>