

Posted on: Sunday, January 3, 2010

## **Rainy-day fund**

### **Education, human services both critical**

It is a sad state of affairs when our elected officials choose to pit education against human services. Our government leaders should not rob the health and human services rainy-day fund to mitigate a faltering education system.

It is naive to think that just getting children back into the classroom will solve the broad challenges facing the Hawaii Department of Education. How can a child effectively learn when his/her family is falling apart? What can we expect of our youngsters in school when there is no childcare to enable mom and dad to work? We know that student learning is compromised when children have not eaten because food bank shelves are empty.

Children can only thrive in the classroom when their basic human needs are met. The rainy-day fund was established "to maintain levels of programs determined to be essential to the public health, safety and welfare" (HRS 328L-3). Education is essential to the well-being of our state, but so are health, safety and social welfare programs. The rainy-day fund was never intended to pit one critical service against another, but to shelter all needs from the storm.

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