

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

197

Honolulu, Hawaii

February 7, 2013

RE: H.B. No. 853

Honorable Joseph M. Souki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Seventh State Legislature
Regular Session of 2013
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred H.B. No. 853 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE X, SECTION 1, OF THE HAWAII STATE CONSTITUTION TO PERMIT THE APPROPRIATION OF PUBLIC FUNDS FOR PRIVATE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to ensure that Hawaii's children receive the early foundation and support necessary to avoid remedial training and achieve success in their future educational endeavors by proposing an amendment to the Hawaii State Constitution to permit the appropriation of public funds for private early childhood education programs.

The Governor, Department of Human Services, Department of the Attorney General, Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii Business Roundtable, the Education Division of Chaminade University of Honolulu, Kamehameha Schools, Child & Family Service, Teacher Education Coordinating Committee, the Community Children's Councils, Hawai'i Association for the Education of Young Children, Imua Alliance, Special Education Advisory Council, Hawaii Association of Independent Schools, and several concerned individuals supported this bill. The Hawaii State Teachers Association opposed this measure. The Department of Education, Department of Health, and Good Beginnings Alliance provided comments.

HB853 HSCR EDN HMS 2013-1756



Your Committee on Education finds that in an increasingly competitive and global environment, it is imperative that Hawaii's children be given every opportunity to thrive. As extensive research has shown, 85 percent of a child's brain development occurs before age five, making these early years, and access to early learning opportunities, crucial to future success. Nevertheless, statistics show that the majority of students in three-quarters of Department of Education kindergarten classrooms in the 2012-2013 school year did not start school with the basic skills necessary to succeed. Your Committee strongly believes that such glaring disparity can be addressed by a state commitment and investment in quality early learning opportunities.

Hawaii is one of only eleven states that does not have a state-funded early education program. Your Committee would like to emphasize that while currently, not all Department of Education elementary school campuses have the necessary resources to implement preschool programs to accommodate all young children eligible to participate, there exists a robust network of private early education providers willing and able to partner with the State to ensure that all Hawaii's keiki, regardless of means, receive the best possible foundation upon which to be successful. This cannot be accomplished without the State's firm commitment.

Your Committee finds, though, that the Hawaii State Constitution prohibits the appropriation of public funds for the support or benefit of private education institutions, limiting the State's ability to take advantage of the infrastructure, experience, and expertise that already exists in the private sector. This measure, then, proposes a narrowly-defined amendment to the state constitution for the public's approval aimed at permitting the appropriation of public funds for private early education programs. This would allow the formation of public-private partnerships for early childhood education programs while ensuring that the Legislature has the sole authority to define and oversee such programs.

Additionally, your Committee emphasizes that the constitutional amendment proposed by this measure is specifically and narrowly designed to fund early education programs that are not available through the current Department of Education public school system. It is not intended in any way to interfere with the State's funding of public, kindergarten through twelfth grade, education and will not result in any public funds being used for private, kindergarten through twelfth grade, education.



As such, your Committee strongly believes this measure serves the best interests of Hawaii's youth and the State as whole, and respectfully recommends that it continue to move forward in the legislative process.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Education that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 853 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to the Committee on Judiciary.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Education,



ROY M. TAKUMI, Chair



State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
The Twenty-seventh Legislature

Record of Votes of the Committee on Education

Bill/Resolution No.: HB 853	Committee Referral: EDN, JUD, FIN	Date: 2/1/13		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
EDN Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. TAKUMI, Roy M. (C)	/			
2. OHNO, Takashi (VC)	/			
3. AQUINO, Henry J.C.	/			
4. CHOY, Isaac W.	/			
5. HANOHANO, Faye P.				/
6. ICHIYAMA, Linda	/			
7. NAKASHIMA, Mark M.	/			
8. TAKAI, K. Mark	/			
9. CHEAPE, Lauren Kealohilani				/
10. FALE, Richard Lee		/		
TOTAL (10)	7	1	0	2
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. committee acronym(s)				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature: <u> Takashi Ohno </u>				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				