

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 23 2015

RE: H.B. No. 820
H.D. 2
S.D. 1

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim
President of the Senate
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2015
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred H.B. No. 820, H.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to establish the Executive Office on Early Learning Pre-kindergarten Program to provide high-quality early childhood education to the children of Hawaii.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Human Services, State Public Charter School Commission, Hawaii Teacher Standards Board, Early Learning Advisory Board, Hawaii State Teachers Association, Hui for Excellence in Education, Good Beginnings Alliance, IMUAlliance, Hawaii State AFL-CIO, Aloha United Way, Chamber of Commerce Hawaii, PHOCUSED, Special Education Advisory Council, Americans for Democratic Action Hawaii, Aha Punana Leo, Democratic Party of Hawaii, and one hundred fifty-four individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Education.

Your Committee finds that quality early childhood education is important for the social, cognitive, emotional, and physical development of children. Studies have shown that early childhood education prepares children for success in school and beyond.



Despite the well-known advantages of early childhood education programs, many children are unable to attend due to the high cost of such programs. This measure will make early childhood education more widely accessible, especially to many at-risk and underserved children who currently have no access to pre-kindergarten programs.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Adding language that authorizes the Department of Education to grant geographic exceptions for children to attend pre-kindergarten outside their assigned service area, as the Department of Education deems appropriate, and requires the Department of Education to grant requests for geographic exception to attend a pre-kindergarten in another service area if the request is based on the employment location of the parent or guardian of the student;
- (2) Clarifying that the Executive Office on Early Learning Pre-kindergarten Program will incorporate high quality standards that align with the Hawaii early learning and development standards, which align with Department of Education standards, state content and performance standards, and general learner outcomes for grades kindergarten to twelve rather than with Common Core standards;
- (3) Inserting language defining "underserved children" as those not qualified to attend other early childhood education programs and whose family income is no more than two hundred fifty percent of the federal poverty level, and deleting language in the definition regarding family circumstances; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

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. 820, H.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 820, H.D. 2, S.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.



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



MICHELLE N. KIDANI, Chair



