

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

2776

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 14 2020

RE: S.B. No. 2296
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirtieth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2020
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Education and Higher Education, to which was referred S.B. No. 2296 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to establish a working group to create a state plan to:

- (1) Make completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or an opt-out waiver a statewide graduation requirement by the 2022-2023 school year; and
- (2) Appropriate funds.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the State Public Charter School Commission, Hawaii State Teachers Association, HawaiiKidsCAN, Chamber of Commerce Hawaii, GEMAS Consulting, and thirteen private individuals. Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of Education and State of Hawaii Office of Information Practices.

Your Committees find that making FAFSA completion a graduation requirement will help ensure that high school graduates don't miss out on post-secondary educational opportunities merely because they can't afford to pay for it. Multiple financial aid options are available for students who apply, including federal



grants, loans, and work-study. Encouraging students to apply by making it a graduation requirement will help dispel the common misconception students have that they won't qualify for available aid. Your Committees recognize the important role of public education in providing support for students and their families in completing applications for post-secondary education.

Your Committees further find that the Department of Education has established a working group, including representatives from the Department's Data Governance and Analysis, Communications, and Student Services Branches and the Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education, tasked with providing a statewide approach to increasing awareness and completion rates of FAFSA. Your Committees find this existing entity to be an appropriate vehicle for addressing the purpose and intent of this measure.

Your Committees further find that the working group should be expanded to include a representative from the non-profit sector to bring a community-based perspective to the group's efforts. Your Committees strongly urge the working group to take into consideration the needs of both public and private universities, as well as those of the philanthropic community.

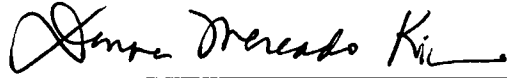
Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Assigning the tasks of this measure to a preexisting Department of Education working group on FAFSA;
- (2) Adding a representative of the nonprofit sector to the working group;
- (3) Adding consideration of the needs of both the public and private universities, as well as those of the philanthropic community; and
- (4) Deleting the section making an appropriation.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Education and Higher Education that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2296, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2296, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Education and
Higher Education,



DONNA MERCADO KIM, Chair



MICHELLE N. KIDANI, Chair



