

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

681

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR - 6 2009

RE: S.B. No. 1278
S.D. 2

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
President of the Senate
Twenty-Fifth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2009
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Ways and Means, to which was referred S.B. No. 1278, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to clarify the law regarding the establishment and maintenance of the two-tier junior kindergarten and kindergarten program.

More specifically, the purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Prohibit the movement of junior kindergarten and kindergarten students between tiers, except under certain circumstances;
- (2) Prohibit a junior kindergartener from directly graduating to the first grade, except under certain circumstances;
- (3) Ensure that the curriculum established for the junior kindergarten and kindergarten students is appropriate for students in each tier;
- (4) Require the Department of Education to staff junior kindergartens with qualified teachers with early childhood education backgrounds and experience and teacher aides;



- (5) Require the incorporation of the Hawaii preschool content standards for four-year-olds and content and performance standards for kindergarten students;
- (6) Appropriate funds for the implementation of a junior kindergarten program that achieves a student to teacher ratio of ten-to-one and not greater than fifteen-to-one;
- (7) Appropriate funds for teacher professional development; and
- (8) Appropriate funds for a permanent educational specialist to focus on early childhood education issues.

Your Committee received one written comment on this measure. The written comment may be reviewed on the Legislature's website.

Your Committee finds that the two-tier junior kindergarten and kindergarten program was established with the requirement that a developmentally appropriate curriculum be implemented for each tier to address the differing skills and needs of four- and five-year-olds. Further, your Committee finds that the two-tier program has not been clearly established for the junior kindergarten tier. Your Committee also finds that it is important to provide junior kindergarten students with a curriculum that specifically addresses their needs, including qualified teachers with early childhood education background and experience.

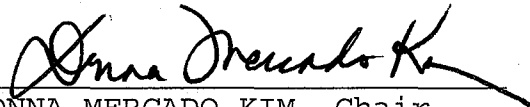
Your Committee amended this measure by:

- (1) Deleting the appropriation for and references to the implementation of a junior kindergarten program that endeavors to achieve a certain student to teacher ratio;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 2070, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Ways and Means that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 1278, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1278, S.D. 2.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Ways and Means,



DONNA MERCADO KIM, Chair



