

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

980

Honolulu, Hawaii

March 15, 2013

RE: S.B. No. 1095
S.D. 2
H.D. 1

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 S.B. No. 1095, S.D. 2, entitled:

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

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to improve educational outcomes in the State by providing a comprehensive structure for the delivery of early childhood education. Specifically, this measure establishes the Early Childhood Education Program to prepare young children for school and provide them with access to high-quality early childhood education that addresses their physical, cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional development.

The Governor, Department of the Attorney General, Department of Human Resources Development, Department of Human Services, Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Public Safety, University of Hawaii, Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu, Office of the Mayor of Hawaii County, Hawaii Association of Independent Schools, Chaminade University of Honolulu, Community Children's Councils, Child & Family Service, Aloha United Way, Atherton Family Foundation, Castle & Cooke Hawai'i, Harold K.L. Castle Foundation, Colliers International-Hawaii, Early Learning Advisory Board, First Insurance Company of Hawaii, Good Beginnings Alliance, Hawaii Business Roundtable, Hawai'i Construction Alliance, Hawai'i

SB1095 HD1 HSCR EDN HMS 2013-2727



P-20, Hawai'i Pacific Health, Hui for Excellence in Education, Kamehameha Schools, The Pacific Resource Partnership, Hawai'i Association for the Education of Young Children, Central Pacific Bank, Special Education Advisory Council, Parents for Public Schools of Hawai'i, PHOCUSED, Kaneohe Ranch Company, Hui Mākua o Kawaiaha'o, The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii, and over a hundred concerned individuals supported this measure. The Board of Education supported the intent of this measure. IMUA Alliance, 'Aha Pūnana Leo, Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture, and several concerned individuals supported this measure with amendments. The Hawaii Catholic Conference, Hawaii Catholic Schools, and a concerned individual opposed this measure. The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii, Faith Based Early Learning Coalition, Hawaii Baptist Early Education Association, and a concerned individual provided comments.

Your Committee finds that early childhood education plays a critical role in determining a child's future success, and there is a clear disparity between children who have access to such education and those who do not. In many cases, this access is a determining factor in whether or not a child enters kindergarten ready to learn.

Unfortunately, even with an increasingly healthy economy, Hawaii's high cost of living prevents many families from gaining access to high-quality early learning experiences for their children. As one of only eleven states that does not publicly fund some type of early childhood education program, it is incumbent upon the State to consider a means by which to ensure that all of Hawaii's youngest residents have the opportunity to develop their innate talent and capacity. It is imperative that all students have the opportunity to enter kindergarten equipped with the skills necessary to maximize their public education experience.

Your Committee finds that this measure provides the framework for a publicly-funded early childhood education program that takes advantage of existing resources and infrastructure to help mitigate and eventually eliminate the achievement gap in Hawaii's public schools. By investing in early childhood education, the State will realize both near- and long-term returns as teachers spend less time on remedial education and discipline and more time helping their students reach their fullest potential.



Additionally, your Committee acknowledges that Hawaii's context for early learning is unique, in that it includes early childhood education delivered in the Hawaiian language and through traditional Hawaiian instruction. Should this measure move forward, your Committee respectfully encourages consideration of how procedures and guidelines may be included to allow the participation of early childhood education programs delivered through Hawaiian medium education.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that eligible providers with which the Executive Office on Early Learning is authorized to contract include private providers of early childhood education;
- (2) Specifying that the Early Childhood Education Program is required to prepare children to actively participate in society, in addition to preparing children for school;
- (3) Specifying that the high-quality early childhood education provided through the program must be focused on equity;
- (4) Changing its effective date to upon approval; and
- (5) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for clarity, consistency, and style.

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 S.B. No. 1095, S.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1095, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Judiciary.

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



ROY M. TAKUMI, Chair



