

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

199

Honolulu, Hawaii

February 7, 2013

RE: H.B. No. 864
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 H.B. No. 864 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 Education, Department of Human Services, University of Hawaii, Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu, Chaminade University of Honolulu, the Education Division of Chaminade University of Honolulu, Hawaii State PTSA, Good Beginnings Alliance, Hawaii Business Roundtable, Hawaii Association of Independent Schools, Teacher Education Coordinating Committee, Hawai'i Association for the Education of Young Children, the Community Children's Councils of Hawaii, Hui for Excellence in Education, Special Education Advisory Council, Child & Family Service, and many concerned individuals supported this bill. The

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Department of Health and several concerned individuals provided comments.

Your Committee finds that early childhood education plays a critical role in determining a child's future success and there is clear disparity between those 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 accessing quality early learning experiences for their children. As one of only eleven states that does not publicly fund some type of early 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 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.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Requiring, rather than authorizing, the Executive Office on Early Learning to adopt rules, and requiring that those rules be adopted in accordance with chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes; and
- (2) 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 H.B. No. 864, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 864, 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



