



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 25, 2019

TO: The Honorable Representative Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
House Committee on Human Services and Homelessness

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **HCR 172 – URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO CONDUCT
A FEASIBILITY STUDY REGARDING THE EXPANSION OF THE MAXIMUM
NUMBER OF CHILDREN CARED FOR IN A STATE-LICENSED FAMILY CHILD
CARE HOME FROM SIX TO TEN CHILDREN**

Hearing: Wednesday, March 27, 2019, 8:30 a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this resolution to find ways to increase available licensed child care, and offers comments.

PURPOSE: This resolution requests the department to conduct a feasibility study regarding the expansion of the maximum number of children cared for in a state-licensed family child care home from six children to ten children and to submit a report to the Legislature of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2020.

The primary focus of the DHS child care licensing program is on the health and safety of all children in child care. DHS comments that existing county ordinances conflict with increasing the maximum number of children in care at a registered family child care home. DHS does not have the internal expertise to do a feasibility study on the different county processes, building codes or infrastructural impact of an increase in the maximum number of children in care at a registered family child care home. DHS would require an appropriation for contract services to conduct such a study.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this resolution.

HCR-172

Submitted on: 3/25/2019 9:19:30 AM

Testimony for HSH on 3/27/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kendall Harris	The Green Preschool	Support	No

Comments:

I have 2 children who both attend an in home preschool and have greatly benefited from this environment. I love the individual attention they get in this calm environment.

I support HCR172 because it allows for preschools in the home to expand to a reasonable size, with proper support.

I want to amend the resolution to include allowing "day care providers" to hire assistants on the island of Oahu as providers on other islands can. This is a safety issue.

HCR-172

Submitted on: 3/25/2019 3:59:15 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/27/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Pualani Ramos	The Green Preschool in Kailua	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha,

Thank you for hearing HCR172. I am a Hawaii State Certified Preschool teacher and a certified Waldorf Early Childhood Educator.

I work from my home and am licensed as a “day care provider”, but my program is run as a preschool, The Green Preschool in Kailua. I modeled my school after the many “little schools” that are in the Portland, OR metropolis. In Oregon, these little schools provide a significant and unique niche in Early Childhood Education. However, the licensing rules in Oregon are amenable to such programs.

Our state has a patchwork of rules over seen by different agencies which are not consistent with each other and do not promote the creation of Little Schools in the home.

Some of these same rules actually create potentially unsafe situations in home daycare.

HCR172 asks for a feasibility study to raise the number of children under the basic childcare license from 6 to 10 per day. Raising the number of children will allow for a reasonable amount of children to create a good class size and provide the teacher with a reasonable income and allow her to hire an assistant. It will encourage professionalism in home daycare.

An important amendment to this Resolution is to enable all day care providers on all islands to be able to hire an assistant if they choose to with 6 children per day, or be obliged to if the numbers are allowed to rise from 6 a day to 10 a day.

HCR172 originated from HB1225 which was a comprehensive bill, based on the tried and true licensing rules in Oregon, that not only provide for an increase in numbers of children per day under the basic childcare license, but define curriculum and safety requirements . This increase was designated for preschool aged children only. It also mandated that an assistant must be present for programs that have more than 6 children per day. (The bill was not heard by the Interstate Commerce Committee and so died.)

At this time, day care providers on O'ahu, cannot hire assistants because of City and County Land Use Ordinance Sec. 21-5.350 Department of Planning and Permitting, 2003 that prohibits childcare providers from hiring people to work with them in their homes. The designation is home day care and there for the providers must work with family members only. They can have a substitute for a limited time, in case of personal illness or a family emergency.

On neighbor islands this rule does not apply and home daycare providers can hire assistants if they choose to. They can have people who are not household members working with them in their home daycare programs.

As nearly as I can tell, the said ordinance is mostly concerned with the unsightliness of extra cars in neighborhoods. The same ordinance prohibits us from displaying ANY sign that identifies our presence. So we are licensed and providing a community service, but we cannot let anyone passing by know where we are.

There was a much publicized and unfortunate case in which a young child, Peyton Valiente, suffered severe head injury while in a day care home. The daycare home was licensed, but true to the present rules, only family members where in the home at the time of the abuse and therefore were not compelled to testify against each other. So there was no conviction in that case and it was never discovered how the injuries occurred.

Day care homes are much safer if the providers can hire qualified people who have had background checks and proper first aid training.

The city and county ordinance that prevents hiring of assistants on only the island of Oahu creates a serious safety issue. I am amazed that this ordinance has been in place for so long especially after the Valiente case which occurred in 2015. I can't understand why DHS or some other of the many agencies public or private that promote the safety and welfare of young children, have not fixed this inconsistency.

I hope that HCR172 passes and at least there will be a study regarding increasing the number of children in qualified day care homes, with the possibility of creating more preschool seats for young children in a home environment, with qualified teachers, solid curriculums, with **qualified assistants**.

I am so sorry that HB1225 did not make it this year as it would have fixed the problem of hiring assistants and the safety concerns around that, straight away. From what I understand, state law will supersede city and county ordinances. It would have made it possible for daycare providers on all islands to hire assistants sooner than later.

For now, at least we can amend HCR172 to address this issue and look into creating better licensing rules. **Rules that increase the number of preschool aged children in programs that are designed for preschool aged children and run by professionals, from 6 to up to 10 children per day.** This will not solve the problem of not enough preschool seats, but it could make a significant contribution to solving the problem with proper the support of better licensing rules.

There are some 600 licensed in home daycares in Hawaii. Some of these daycares would take advantage of new rules I am sure.

Little schools in a home environment create an intimate and loving space for children, supporting them though individualized learning and providing harmonious interactions with peers. I am a much better teacher in a small school. We need to create more little schools.

This is the second year I have come to the legislature with my concerns. Last year Representative Cynthia Thielan introduced HB1679, which also didn't go anywhere.

I am sorry, for the sake of the children of Hawaii, that I am not very good at lobbying the legislature. Clearly it is not one of my skills. However, you folks are legislators. Passing bills and resolutions are your skills. I hope for the sake of our keiki you will pass HCR 172.

Mahalo,

Pualani

HCR-172

Submitted on: 3/24/2019 7:51:34 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/27/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sierra Dew	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My child attends a wonderful preschool program in a home. A smaller school setting can provide children who may need more individual support an environment to thrive. This type of setting can also tailor learning to students needs more effectively. I support HCR172 because it allows for preschools in the home to expand to a reasonable size, provided that there is space to do so and with proper support. There needs to be a resolution to include allowing "day care providers" to hire assistants on the island of Oahu as providers on other islands can. This is a safety issue. Licensed litte schools in the home should also be able to display a sign on the outside of their facility as at the moment city and county ordinance forbids this.

Thank you,

Sierra Dew

HCR-172

Submitted on: 3/24/2019 8:30:43 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/27/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Heather Wawrzenski	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My daughter has been attending The Green Preschool in Kailua for almost 2 years now. The preschool is a small school in a home. I feel so fortunate to have found such a gem. From the very first day my daughter, who 2 years ago was very shy and attached to me, was ok with me leaving her. It is such an inviting, warm environment.

I looked into several different preschool programs and locations before choosing this type of setting. I would leave the tours feeling that it wasn't a good fit for a three year old every time until the Green Preschool. Being in a home setting allows the teacher so much room to think out of the box. For example, they are able to learn number concepts while baking bread in the kitchen. Or learn about nature by gardening in the backyard. There are no desks or computer stations. The kids are moving and learning through play. My daughter has absolutely flourished in this environment, and now that she is older, is ready to start school and has the foundation needed to succeed. She has a fantastic imagination and love for all things music. I feel it would have had to be reigned in in a traditional classroom setting. The Green Preschool environment was able to work with it while also teaching her how to stay present and focused.

I support HCR172 because it allows for more preschools in the home to expand to a reasonable size, with the help of a hired assistant, thus allowing more families the option of this setting. Therefore I support amending the resolution to include allowing "day care providers" to hire assistants on the island of Oahu as providers on other islands can. This is a safety issue.

I would also like licensed little schools in the home to be able to display a sign on the outside of their facility.

I am so grateful that my daughter was able to attend a small preschool in this setting. I only hope it can become accessible to more children in the future.

Heather Wawrzenski

HCR-172

Submitted on: 3/24/2019 8:42:49 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/27/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sharlyn Maciel	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

I am writing this testimony to support The Green Preschool and it is my absolute pleasure to share the wonderful experience we have had since becoming a part of this program. My son Christian has been with The Green Preschool since October 2017 and he has developed immensely in a small intimate setting. His social skills, language, imagination, fine motor skills and creativity have flourished so much in such a short amount of time, I know that the care and attention he receives at The Green Preschool has truly helped foster his development.

I am a military wife and mother of four children ranging in age from 4 - 16 years of age. We have experienced different moves to various parts of the country and we have tried many different preschools for all my children. I feel that a small preschool environment gives children not only the exposure to both educational and social skills but it also allows for an environment where their emotional needs can be nurtured as well. The attachment, consistency and close bond that my son receives in a small environment is something I hope that other children can experience during their preschool years. It gives them the foundation of trust, comfort, guidance and intimacy that is necessary for them to grow into confident, well-adjusted school age children.

HCR172 would help fully support the real benefits of "little schools" in a daycare setting. I support HCR172 because it allows for preschools in the home to expand to a reasonable size, and with proper support by hiring assistants, it allows for a safer environment while still providing a warm setting where the children would receive hands on attention and care. In addition, in order for the community to recognize the benefits of licensed litte schools in the home the provider should be able to display a sign on the outside of their facility.

I hope that you will truly consider the real benefits of "little schools" in the home because the early toddler years lay an important foundation for what happens next for our children. The foundation of early childhood shouldn't be taken lightly and I feel that it lies in the quality of care. Please consider making changes for the sake of the children.

Sincerely,

Sharlyn Maciel (Mother)

HCR-172

Submitted on: 3/25/2019 1:18:01 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/27/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ashley L Shawbell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Ashley Shawbell and my son, Owen, attends the Green Preschool Kailua which is an in home preschool. We chose this setup for our son because we felt the small intimate setting would be the best learning environment for him. He is sometimes overwhelmed by large groups of children and will act out but in a smaller environment where everyone is friends he has no issues playing well with others and following instruction. It helps that the Auntie who runs Green Preschool knows all the children, including our son, very well as it is such a small setting. She is able to tailor activities to their individual personalities which is such a wonderful way for our keiki to learn.

I support HCR172 because it allows for preschools in the home to expand to a reasonable size, and gives more opportunity for other parents such as ourselves to offer this wonderful learning experience to their children.

I also would like to amend the resolution to include allowing "day care providers" to hire assistants on the island of Oahu as providers on other islands can. This is a safety issue as if something were to happen to the one provider she could have the assistant take over or if one child needs extra support and is having a tough day then more 1:1 time can be provided. It also allows for one person to prepare meals or upcoming crafts while the other is keeping a watchful eye over the children. Additionally allowing a pathway for these in-home preschools to run with assistants reduces the amount of illegal in home preschools which have proven detrimental as they are not regulated in any way.

I also think that these "little" schools in the home should be able to display a sign indicating their location on the home to help future parents find the location and also help out approved alternate guardians pick up children when the parent cannot.

Our son has thrived in the small school in a home setting and we are so happy that he has a safe and nourishing environment to help him develop his own unique personality and also respect the land around him. My husband and I sincerely appreciate your taking the time to evaluate this bill and it's positive impact on the keiki of Hawaii. Mahalo

HCR-172

Submitted on: 3/25/2019 10:25:41 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/27/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Fred Klemmer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

We have a 3 year old and we searched far and wide to find a preschool program that meets our high standards for our what we want for our child. He got accepted into several programs, including some accredited schools. We chose the Green School home preschool program for him because it offers our son all the benefits of having our child in a school while also offering the benefits of being a home-based program. However current law makes this very hard for the person who runs the program. We support HCR 172 because it would allow the Green School to expand to a reasonable size to be able to provide everything the children need in a preschool program.

HCR-172

Submitted on: 3/25/2019 11:15:49 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/27/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
maddy lamoreaux	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

I volunteer at a preschool program in a home called the Green Preschool. I fully support HCR172 because it allows for preschools in the home to expand to a reasonable size with proper support. I want to amend the resolution to include allowing "day care providers" to hire assistants on the island of Oahu as providers on other islands can. This is a safety issue. (City and County rules that can be superseded by state law.) I want licensed litte schools in the home to be able to display a sign on the outside of their facility.

HCR-172

Submitted on: 3/25/2019 10:37:45 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/27/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kamuella Klemmer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

We have a 3 year old and we searched far and wide to find a preschool program that meets our high standards for our what we want for our child. He got accepted into several programs, including some accredited schools. We chose the Green School home preschool program for him because it offers our son all the benefits of having our child in a school while also offering the benefits of being a home-based program. However current law makes this very hard for the person who runs the program. We support HCR 172 because it would allow the Green School to expand to a reasonable size to be able to provide everything the children need in a preschool program.

LATE

HCR-172

Submitted on: 3/27/2019 6:57:20 AM
Testimony for HSH on 3/27/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marissa Abadir	Individual	Support	No

Comments: