

JAN 21 2022

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that there is a public
2 benefit from substantial investment in high-quality,
3 developmentally appropriate early learning programs. These
4 investments have been driven by significant and continuing
5 research affirming the positive effects of high-quality early
6 learning programs on the physical, cognitive, linguistic,
7 social, emotional, and economic outcomes of young children.
8 Provided with such opportunities, children are more likely to
9 succeed in kindergarten and beyond as well as grow into healthy,
10 capable, and contributing adults.

11 Longitudinal studies have also proven that high-quality
12 early learning programs are especially effective for high-risk
13 children, including low-income and otherwise disadvantaged
14 children, with great potential to alter their lifetime
15 trajectories. Well-executed and well-targeted early learning
16 programs have immediate and long-term benefits not only for the
17 children participating in the programs but also for the



1 societies in which they live, which boast higher levels of
2 educational attainment; reduced homelessness, crime, and
3 substance abuse; improved health; and better overall social and
4 economic well-being.

5 The legislature further finds that although there are pre-
6 kindergarten education programs offered throughout the State,
7 not all children have access to these programs. Also, the cost
8 of private pre-kindergarten programs is out of reach for many
9 families. Therefore, children from low-income homes that cannot
10 afford certain pre-kindergarten programs may never have access
11 nor be able reap their benefits. Therefore, it is critical to
12 have universal no cost pre-kindergarten programs so that every
13 child in the State has equal access to early learning education.

14 The purpose of this Act is to require the legislative
15 reference bureau to conduct a study on the feasibility of the
16 State establishing a universal no cost pre-kindergarten program.

17 SECTION 2. (a) The legislative reference bureau shall
18 conduct a study on the feasibility of the State establishing a
19 universal no cost pre-kindergarten program. As a part of the
20 study, the legislative reference bureau shall:



- 1 (1) Research other states that have implemented a
- 2 universal pre-kindergarten program, including how they
- 3 have addressed transportation, the provision of school
- 4 lunches, and other ancillary service for students;
- 5 (2) Research other states that have plans to or are in the
- 6 process of implementing universal pre-kindergarten
- 7 programs;
- 8 (3) Explore the potential positives and negatives of
- 9 implementing a universal pre-kindergarten program in
- 10 the State;
- 11 (4) Work with the department of education and executive
- 12 office of early learning on examining how universal
- 13 pre-kindergarten may be implemented in the State;
- 14 (5) Explain the existing pre-kindergarten programs in the
- 15 State and the efficacy of those programs;
- 16 (6) Examine how a universal pre-kindergarten program in
- 17 the State may include the following:
- 18 (A) Appropriate school staffing;
- 19 (B) Fair teacher compensation;
- 20 (C) Adequate credentialing requirements; and



(D) Staff professional development or continuing education;

(7) Discuss child assessment requirements, appropriate curriculum, and school schedules for a universal pre-kindergarten program in the State;

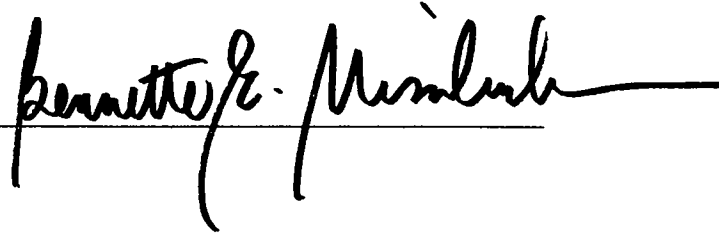
(8) Provide fiscal analysis and projections, including funding mechanisms that would be relevant to the implementation of a universal pre-kindergarten program in the State; and

(9) Propose draft legislation, if appropriate.

(b) The legislative reference bureau shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation resulting from the study pursuant to subsection (a), to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2023.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

INTRODUCED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bennett E. Mendenhall", is written over a horizontal line.



S.B. NO. 2699

Report Title:

Universal Pre-kindergarten Program; Feasibility Study;
Legislative Reference Bureau

Description:

Requires the Legislative Reference Bureau to conduct a study on the feasibility of the State establishing a universal no cost pre-kindergarten program.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

