

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1339

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 24 2023

RE: H.B. No. 261
H.D. 1
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Health and Human Services, to which was referred H.B. No. 261, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the Department of Human Services to establish a Child Care Accreditation Program to assist licensed and registered child care providers in obtaining accreditation;
- (2) Authorize the use of the Child Care Grant Program Special Fund for Child Care Accreditation Program grants;
- (3) Extend the deadlines by which existing Preschool Open Doors Program service providers shall commence the accreditation process and obtain accreditation;
- (4) Appropriate funds for the Child Care Accreditation Program, including funding for the establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) position; and



- (5) Appropriate funds into and out of the Child Care Grant Program Special Fund for the Child Care Accreditation Program.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Executive Office on Early Learning, Early Learning Board, Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, Early Childhood Action Strategy, Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, Parents and Children Together, Rainbow Family 808, and ten individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition from one individual. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Human Services and Department of the Attorney General.

Your Committee finds that the Preschool Open Doors Program is the State's school readiness program that serves low- to moderate-income families whose children will be eligible for kindergarten in the following school year. The program provides critical subsidies for income-eligible families sending their children to a licensed preschool during the year prior to kindergarten entry. To ensure that children participating in the program are receiving certain levels of care, existing law requires service providers who have not obtained accreditation from a national early learning accrediting organization by July 1, 2022, to start the accreditation process no later than July 1, 2024, and be accredited by July 1, 2029. However, the effects of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic have delayed this process for many child care providers. This measure will provide the additional time and funds needed for child care providers to obtain the necessary accreditation.

Your Committee acknowledges the testimony of the Department of Human Services raising concerns over the inability of child care facilities to maintain sufficient staff levels due to the continuing economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and requesting that the accreditation requirement for service providers receiving funds from the Preschool Open Doors Program be made voluntary until the child care workforce in the State is more stabilized or subsidized. Therefore, amendments to this measure are necessary to address these concerns.

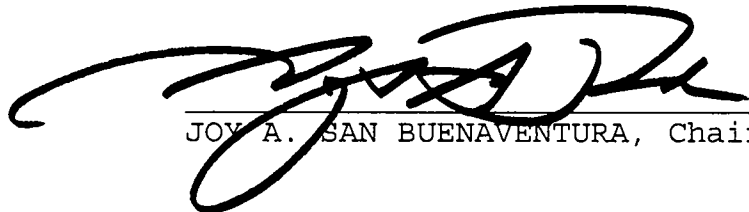
Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by:



- (1) Making the accreditation requirement for service providers receiving funds from the Preschool Open Doors Program voluntary;
- (2) Amending section 1 to reflect its amended purpose;
- (3) Inserting an effective date of June 30, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Health and Human Services that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 261, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 261, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Health and Human
Services,

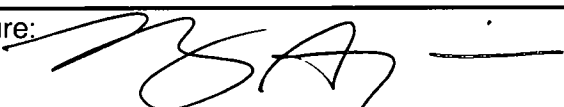


JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-Second Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Health and Human Services
HHS

Bill / Resolution No.:* <i>HR 261 HD1</i>	Committee Referral: <i>HHS, LAM</i>	Date: <i>3/20/23</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A. (C)	✓			
AQUINO, Henry J.C. (VC)	✓			
MORIWAKI, Sharon Y.	✓			
SHIMABUKURO, Maile S.L.	✓			
AWA, Brenton			✓	
TOTAL	<i>4</i>		<i>1</i>	
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink Goldenrod File with Committee Report Clerk's Office Drafting Agency Committee File Copy				

*Only one measure per Record of Votes