
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO CONVENE A BABY
BONDS WORKING GROUP.

1 WHEREAS, intergenerational poverty undermines social and
2 economic wellness; and

3
4 WHEREAS, according to the 2009 paper "Childhood and
5 Intergenerational Poverty: The Long-Term Consequences of Growing
6 up Poor" by Robert L. Wagmiller, Jr., and Robert M. Adelman,
7 "individuals who grow up in poor families are much more likely
8 to be poor in early adulthood"; and

9
10 WHEREAS, Hawaii's high cost of living makes overcoming
11 intergenerational poverty difficult for working families; and

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13 WHEREAS, according to the National Low Income Housing
14 Coalition's 2023 Out of Reach study, a minimum wage employee
15 must work one hundred seven hours per week to afford a one-
16 bedroom rental home at fair market rent in Hawaii; and

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18 WHEREAS, the same study also found that a worker must earn
19 \$41.83 per hour to afford a two-bedroom rental unit without
20 being cost burdened; and

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22 WHEREAS, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's living
23 wage calculator estimates a livable wage for a Hawaii resident
24 who is a single adult and has no children to be \$27.33 per hour
25 and a single adult with one child to be \$51.83 per hour; and

26
27 WHEREAS, longstanding systemic inequality and its continued
28 effect on government policy has created unacceptable outcomes
29 across the spectrum of child well-being for children in
30 communities of color, including but not limited to Native
31 Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, Filipino, Black, Hispanic,
32 Asian, and immigrant households; and



1 WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic fallout
2 further exacerbated entrenched disparities for children of color
3 and their families; and

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5 WHEREAS, in 2021, Connecticut became the first state to
6 pass an initiative that invests directly in children born into
7 poverty known as "baby bonds"; and

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9 WHEREAS, the program sets aside funds for each baby born in
10 Connecticut whose birth is covered by Medicaid, with those funds
11 to be held, managed, and invested by the Connecticut Office of
12 the Treasurer; and

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14 WHEREAS, when participating children reach adulthood, they
15 are eligible to claim funds to be used for buying a home, paying
16 for higher education or job training, starting a business, or
17 saving for retirement; and

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19 WHEREAS, Connecticut's baby bonds program is designed to
20 narrow the wealth gap and spur long-term economic growth for
21 Connecticut's families and economy; and

22
23 WHEREAS, a baby bonds program could significantly alleviate
24 intergenerational poverty in Hawaii; now, therefore,

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26 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
27 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
28 Session of 2024, that the Department of Human Services is
29 requested to convene a working group to consider the creation of
30 a baby bonds program for Hawaii; and

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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
33 to consist of the following members:

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- 35 (1) The Director of Human Services or the Director's
- 36 designee, to serve as Chairperson of the working
- 37 group;
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- 39 (2) The Director of Taxation or the Director's designee;
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- 41 (3) The Director of Finance or the Director's designee;
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- 1 (4) The Chief Executive Officer of the Office of Hawaiian
2 Affairs or the Chief Executive Officer's designee;
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- 4 (5) One member from the Senate, to be appointed by the
5 President of the Senate
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- 7 (6) One member from the House of Representatives, to be
8 appointed by the Speaker of the House of
9 Representatives;
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- 11 (7) The Executive Director of the University of Hawaii
12 Economic Research Organization or the Executive
13 Director's designee;
14
- 15 (8) One representative from a nonprofit public interest
16 organization specializing in public health, as invited
17 by the Chairperson;
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- 19 (9) One representative from a nonprofit, public interest
20 organization specializing in anti-poverty policies for
21 low-income individuals, as invited by the Chairperson;
22
- 23 (10) One representative from a nonprofit public interest
24 organization specializing in advocacy for children, as
25 invited by the Chairperson; and
26
- 27 (11) Other relevant stakeholders as recommended by the
28 working group and invited by the Chairperson; and
29

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
31 to:

- 32
- 33 (1) Develop recommendations for a baby bonds program that
34 reduces intergenerational poverty and wealth
35 inequality in the State;
36
- 37 (2) Suggest eligibility criteria for a baby bonds program
38 operated by the State;
39
- 40 (3) Coordinate with other stakeholders, agencies, and
41 programs within and outside of the State that are



1 working to implement baby bonds programs or reduce
2 intergenerational poverty; and

- 3
4 (4) Perform an analysis of the Connecticut baby bonds
5 program to determine what aspects of the program may
6 be beneficial to incorporate into a baby bonds
7 initiative for Hawaii; and

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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
10 to submit a report of its findings and recommendations,
11 including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later
12 than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session
13 of 2025; and

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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
16 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor,
17 Director of Human Services, Director of Taxation, Director of
18 Finance, and Executive Director of the University of Hawaii
19 Economic Research Organization.

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