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H.B. NO. 536

A Bill for an Act Relating to Human Services.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. Over ten years ago, the legislature had the foresight to recognize the importance of early childhood education and care. Act 367, Session Laws of Hawaii 1989, required the department of education to plan for voluntary statewide early education to be delivered by private providers whenever possible. The department was to adopt standards for curriculum, facilities, teacher training, and methods for encouraging the involvement of parents and guardians. Additionally, provisions were made for parents and guardians who opt for home care to utilize early childhood education resources.

Current research findings validate the legislature's wisdom. Recent research reveals that infants' brains develop earlier and more rapidly than previously understood, and that the early years of a child are most crucial in the child's cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development. A growing body of research indicates that good early childhood education and care programs can lead to school success, reduced delinquency and crime, and better job opportunities and productivity in both the short- and long-term.

Additionally, neuroscience research in early brain development, as well as studies in early child development, affirm not only the tremendous opportunities for

preventive work with children and families, but also the predictable, costly consequences of not doing so.

The legislature finds that the good beginnings alliance, established by Act 77, Session Laws of Hawaii 1997, is a public-private partnership charged with the responsibility to improve early childhood outcomes through the development of quality early childhood education and care and related family support services. Specifically, the good beginnings alliance must develop policy recommendations concerning all aspects of a coordinated early childhood education and care system, including coordination strategies, resource development, and advocacy, more particularly described in the good beginnings early childhood education and care master plan. The good beginnings alliance is a demonstration project and is scheduled to be repealed on June 30, 2001.

The legislature further finds that H.C.R. No. 120, 1998, established a joint legislative committee on early childhood education and care to encourage the development and implementation of policies that integrate early childhood education, care, protection, and health services.

After two years of discussions and presentations on the status of the state-wide early childhood education and care system, the joint legislative committee found that the components of a quality system of care are in place, and that the good beginnings alliance is truly the link and focal point for policy development, disbursement of public funds, and implementation of early childhood community plans. The joint legislative committee recommended that, among other things, the legislature make the good beginnings alliance a permanent coordinating structure that cuts across existing social service systems to coordinate early childhood services for families with young children.

The legislature believes that through the good beginnings alliance, it will be able to continue to monitor the development of a coordinated system that is dedicated to enhancing and developing early childhood education and care services.

The purpose of this Act is to:

- (1) Extend the life of the good beginnings alliance to 2010;
- (2) Expand the membership of the interdepartmental council; and
- (3) Expand the representation of the good beginnings alliance board of directors.

SECTION 2. Act 77, Session Laws of Hawaii 1997, is amended as follows:

1. By amending subsection (a) of section -2 of the chapter established in section 2 of the Act to read:

“(a) A corporation may qualify under section -1[.]; provided that the board of directors of the corporation shall consist of not more than [nine] fourteen members, chosen as follows:

- (1) One member appointed by the interdepartmental council established under section -4 shall serve as an ex-officio voting member;
- (2) One member shall represent each county of the State, except the county of Kalawao, to represent the various community councils established in a respective county under section -3;
- (3) One member representing the general business community;
- (4) One member representing the general philanthropic community;
- (5) One member representing the early childhood education and care professional community; [and]
- (6) One member representing consumers of early childhood education and care services[.];
- (7) One member representing the University of Hawaii;
- (8) One member representing the American Academy of Pediatrics;
- (9) One member representing the early intervention community;

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(10) One member representing an early childhood resource and referral agency; and

(11) One member representing head start.”

2. By amending section -4 of the chapter established in section 2 of the Act to read:

“§ -4 **Interdepartmental council.** There shall be a temporary interdepartmental council convened by the office of the governor for the special purpose of assisting the corporation in the implementation of its duties as delineated in the good beginnings early childhood education and care master plan. The governor shall appoint:

- (1) The superintendent of education;
- (2) The director of human services;
- (3) The director of health;
- (4) The director of labor and industrial relations;
- (5) The governor’s special assistant for children and youth; [and]
- (6) The director of business, economic development, and tourism;
- (7) One member from the general business community; and
- (8) One member from the general philanthropic community,

to serve as members of the interdepartmental council. The governor’s special assistant for children and youth shall serve as the presiding chairperson.”

SECTION 3. Act 77, Session Laws of Hawaii 1997, is amended by amending section 3 to read as follows:

“SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval and shall be repealed on June 30, [2001] 2010.”

SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved April 27, 2000.)