

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

257

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 10 , 2025

RE: H.B. No. 692
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Human Services & Homelessness, to which was referred H.B. No. 692 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE PRESCHOOL OPEN DOORS PROGRAM,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Expand the Preschool Open Doors Program's eligibility criteria; and
- (2) Repeal the requirement that Preschool Open Doors Program providers be accredited.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of the Lieutenant Governor; Department of Human Services; Executive Office on Early Learning; Early Learning Board; Department of Community Services of the City and County of Honolulu; Indivisible Hawai'i; American Association of University Women of Hawaii; Early Childhood Action Strategy; PATCH Hawaii; Aloha United Way; Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!; Keiki O Ka 'Āina Family Learning Centers; Holy Nativity School; Chamber of Commerce Hawaii; Kamehameha Schools; and numerous individuals.

2025-1376 HB692 HD1 HSCR HMSO



Your Committee finds that Hawaii is facing a child care crisis, with the demand for quality, affordable early learning programs far exceeding available capacity. Many families struggle to find openings for their young children, particularly for infants and toddlers, leaving parents with difficult choices between economic hardship or placing children in informal care settings that may lack developmentally appropriate learning opportunities. This measure enables more parents and caregivers to participate in the workforce by reducing financial barriers to early learning programs, which will help their children receive the early childhood development and learning experiences critical to lifelong well-being.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that the Preschool Open Doors Program shall continuously serve children who are in the three years prior to kindergarten entry until they enter kindergarten;
- (2) Clarifying the types of child care programs that are eligible to participate in the Preschool Open Doors Program;
- (3) Specifying that a parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the Preschool Open Doors Program may share in the costs of the Program through a copayment based on need, rather than an amount of up to one dollar;
- (4) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (5) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Human Services & Homelessness that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 692, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 692, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Human Services &
Homelessness,



LISA MARTEN, Chair



