

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1213

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 13, 2025

RE: S.B. No. 1609
S.D. 1
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 S.B. No. 1609, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO CHILD CARE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to require the Department of Human Services to establish and implement an Early Learning Services Contracts Program to make available a designated number of seats at licensed infant and toddler child care centers and family child care centers for families who are eligible for a federally funded child care subsidy through the Department.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Human Services; Early Learning Board; Parents And Children Together; Early Childhood Action Strategy; AAUW of Hawaii; Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!; and six individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Executive Office on Early Learning.

Your Committee finds that Hawaii faces a severe shortage of affordable child care, particularly for infants and toddlers. Many families encounter long waitlists and limited choices, while child care providers struggle with financial instability due to fluctuating enrollment and inadequate subsidy reimbursements.

2025-2518 SB1609 HD1 HSCR HMSO



This measure establishes an Early Learning Services Contracts Program through the Department of Human Services, ensuring stable funding for child care providers and helping working families access safe, reliable care for their children.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that the Early Learning Services Contracts Program is authorized, but is not required, to provide contracts for at least one full classroom at one licensed infant and toddler child care center and one licensed group child care center per county;
- (2) Sunsetting the Early Learning Services Contracts Program on June 30, 2028; and
- (3) 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 S.B. No. 1609, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1609, S.D. 1, 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



