

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 14 2025RE: S.B. No. 1609
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Health and Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 1609 entitled:

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

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent 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 referred by the Department at a negotiated rate and schedule.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Human Services, Department of Community Services of the City and County of Honolulu, Early Childhood Action Strategy, AAUW of Hawaii, Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and six individuals.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Executive Office on Early Learning.

Your Committee finds that in the first quarter of fiscal year 2022-2023, more than fifteen thousand families with children under the age of thirteen received subsidies from the Child Care Connection Hawaii Program to help them afford child care services. Your Committee further finds that child care center providers can



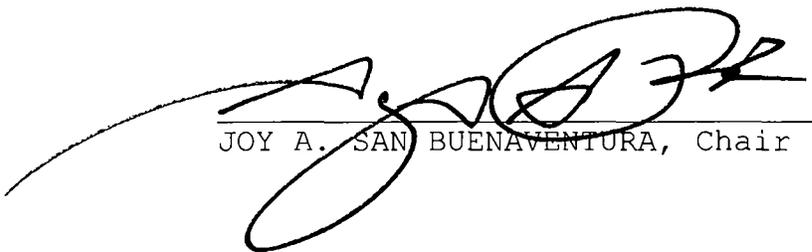
face disruptions in services and possible closure when their operating costs are funded by tuition fees because their revenues depend on ever-changing enrollment figures rather than a stable source of funding. This measure ensures a more reliable funding stream for child care providers while improving access to child care for working families across the State.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting language to provide that the Department of Human Services shall not contract with a child care center under the Early Learning Services Contract Program if the center is part of, owned by, or operated by a private educational institution and the awarding of the contract would violate article X, section 1, of the Hawaii State Constitution;
- (2) Inserting an effective date of December 31, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) 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 S.B. No. 1609, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1609, 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



