

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

488

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 20 2015

RE: S.B. No. 844
S.D. 1

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim
President of the Senate
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2015
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred S.B.
No. 844 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to establish the
Executive Office on Early Learning Pre-kindergarten Program to
provide high-quality early childhood education to the children of
Hawaii.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure
from the State Public Charter School Commission, Special Education
Advisory Council, Hawaii State Teachers Association, Aloha United
Way, Hui for Excellence in Education, Community Children's Council
of Hawaii, PHOCUSED, Hawaii State AFL-CIO, Hookakoo Corporation,
League of Women Voters of Hawaii, Chamber of Commerce Hawaii, Good
Beginnings Alliance, Kamehameha Schools, and eight individuals.
Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure
from one individual. Your Committee received comments on this
measure from the Department of Education, Department of Human
Services, and two individuals.

Your Committee finds that high-quality early childhood
education prepares children for success in school and in life.
The high cost of preschool education in Hawaii is a substantial
hurdle for many families. A state-funded pre-kindergarten program
would provide families better access to early childhood education.



Your Committee further finds that state funded pre-kindergarten programs will provide early interventions that may prevent the need for a child to receive remediation or more expensive and intensive special education or behavioral services in the future. Some studies have shown that investment in early childhood education yields future savings through reduced incarceration rates and reduced demand for welfare assistance and other social services.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

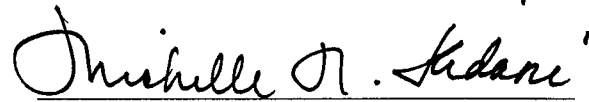
- (1) Clarifying that the Executive Office on Early Learning Pre-kindergarten Program shall be provided through the Executive Office on Early Learning which may partner with the Department of Education;
- (2) Changing the definition of "underserved children" to children who have no access to, or are not qualified to attend, other early education programs and whose family income is no more than two hundred fifty percent of the federal poverty level;
- (3) Adding language to permit the Department of Education to grant a geographic exception, allowing a child to attend a pre-kindergarten in another service area as the Department of Education deems appropriate; provided that such a request shall be granted if the request is based on the employment location of the parent or guardian of the student;
- (4) Adding an appropriation to the Department of Education to establish the Executive Office on Early Learning Pre-kindergarten Program, and specifying that the appropriation be in addition to any appropriations made in the Appropriations Act of 2015;
- (5) Making the measure effective on July 1, 2015, rather than upon approval; and
- (6) 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 Education that is attached to this report, your



Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 844, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 844, S.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Education,



MICHELLE N. KIDANI, Chair



Record of Votes
Committee on Education
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*Only one measure per Record of Votes