
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO CONVENE A BABY
BONDS WORKING GROUP.

1 WHEREAS, intergenerational poverty undermines social and
2 economic wellness; and

3
4 WHEREAS, according to the 2009 paper "Childhood and
5 Intergenerational Poverty: The Long-Term Consequences of Growing
6 up Poor" by Robert L. Wagmiller, Jr., and Robert M. Adelman,
7 "individuals who grow up in poor families are much more likely
8 to be poor in early adulthood"; and

9
10 WHEREAS, Hawaii's high cost of living makes overcoming
11 intergenerational poverty difficult for working families; and

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13 WHEREAS, according to the National Low Income Housing
14 Coalition's 2023 Out of Reach study, a minimum wage employee
15 must work one hundred seven hours per week to afford a one-
16 bedroom rental home at fair market rent in Hawaii; and

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18 WHEREAS, the same study also found that a worker must earn
19 \$41.83 per hour to afford a two-bedroom rental unit without
20 being cost burdened; and

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22 WHEREAS, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's living
23 wage calculator estimates a livable wage for a Hawaii resident
24 who is a single adult and has no children to be \$27.33 per hour
25 and a single adult with one child to be \$51.83 per hour; and

26
27 WHEREAS, longstanding systemic inequality and its continued
28 effect on government policy has created unacceptable outcomes
29 across the spectrum of child well-being for children in
30 communities of color, including but not limited to Native



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1 Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, Filipino, Black, Hispanic,
2 Asian, and immigrant households; and

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4 WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic fallout
5 further exacerbated entrenched disparities for children of color
6 and their families; and

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8 WHEREAS, in 2021, Connecticut became the first state to
9 pass an initiative that invests directly in children born into
10 poverty known as "baby bonds"; and

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12 WHEREAS, the program sets aside funds for each baby born in
13 Connecticut whose birth is covered by Medicaid, with those funds
14 to be held, managed, and invested by the Connecticut Office of
15 the Treasurer; and

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17 WHEREAS, when participating children reach adulthood, they
18 are eligible to claim funds to be used for buying a home, paying
19 for higher education or job training, starting a business, or
20 saving for retirement; and

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22 WHEREAS, Connecticut's baby bonds program is designed to
23 narrow the wealth gap and spur long-term economic growth for
24 Connecticut's families and economy; and

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26 WHEREAS, a baby bonds program could significantly alleviate
27 intergenerational poverty in Hawaii; now, therefore,

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29 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
30 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
31 Session of 2024, the Senate concurring, that the Department of
32 Human Services is requested to convene a working group to
33 consider the creation of a baby bonds program for Hawaii; and

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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
36 to consist of the following members:

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38 (1) The Director of Human Services or the Director's
39 designee, to serve as Chairperson of the working
40 group;

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42 (2) The Director of Taxation or the Director's designee;



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- 2 (3) The Director of Finance or the Director's designee;
- 3
- 4 (4) One member from the Senate, to be appointed by the
- 5 President of the Senate;
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- 7 (5) One member from the House of Representatives, to be
- 8 appointed by the Speaker of the House of
- 9 Representatives;
- 10
- 11 (6) The Executive Director of the University of Hawaii
- 12 Economic Research Organization or the Executive
- 13 Director's designee;
- 14
- 15 (7) One representative from a nonprofit public interest
- 16 organization specializing in public health, as invited
- 17 by the Chairperson;
- 18
- 19 (8) One representative from a nonprofit, public interest
- 20 organization specializing in anti-poverty policies for
- 21 low-income individuals, as invited by the Chairperson;
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- 23 (9) One representative from a nonprofit public interest
- 24 organization specializing in advocacy for children, as
- 25 invited by the Chairperson; and
- 26
- 27 (10) Other relevant stakeholders as recommended by the
- 28 working group and invited by the Chairperson; and
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30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
31 to:

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- 33 (1) Develop recommendations for a baby bonds program that
- 34 reduces intergenerational poverty and wealth
- 35 inequality in the State;
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- 37 (2) Suggest eligibility criteria for a baby bonds program
- 38 operated by the State;
- 39
- 40 (3) Coordinate with other stakeholders, agencies, and
- 41 programs within and outside of the State that are



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1 working to implement baby bonds programs or reduce
2 intergenerational poverty; and

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4 (4) Perform an analysis of the Connecticut baby bonds
5 program to determine what aspects of the program may
6 be beneficial to incorporate into a baby bonds
7 initiative for Hawaii; and

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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
10 to submit a report of its findings and recommendations,
11 including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later
12 than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session
13 of 2025; and

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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
16 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Lieutenant
17 Governor, Director of Human Services, Director of Taxation,
18 Director of Finance, and Executive Director of the University of
19 Hawaii Economic Research Organization.

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OFFERED BY:



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