
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

12
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

17
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

21
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



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

3
4 WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic fallout
5 further exacerbated entrenched disparities for children of color
6 and their families; and

7
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

11
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

16
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

21
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

25
26 WHEREAS, a baby bonds program could significantly alleviate
27 intergenerational poverty in Hawaii; now, therefore,

28
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

34
35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
36 to consist of the following members:

- 37
38 (1) The Director of Human Services or the Director's
39 designee, to serve as Chairperson of the working
40 group;
41
42 (2) The Director of Taxation or the Director's designee;
43
44 (3) The Director of Finance or the Director's designee;



- 1
- 2 (4) The Chief Executive Officer of the Office of Hawaiian
- 3 Affairs or the Chief Executive Officer's designee;
- 4
- 5 (5) One member from the Senate, to be appointed by the
- 6 President of the Senate
- 7
- 8 (6) One member from the House of Representatives, to be
- 9 appointed by the Speaker of the House of
- 10 Representatives;
- 11
- 12 (7) The Executive Director of the University of Hawaii
- 13 Economic Research Organization or the Executive
- 14 Director's designee;
- 15
- 16 (8) One representative from a nonprofit public interest
- 17 organization specializing in public health, as invited
- 18 by the Chairperson;
- 19
- 20 (9) One representative from a nonprofit, public interest
- 21 organization specializing in anti-poverty policies for
- 22 low-income individuals, as invited by the Chairperson;
- 23
- 24 (10) One representative from a nonprofit public interest
- 25 organization specializing in advocacy for children, as
- 26 invited by the Chairperson; and
- 27
- 28 (11) Other relevant stakeholders as recommended by the
- 29 working group and invited by the Chairperson; and
- 30

31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
32 to:

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



1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21

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

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

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

