

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

3777

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 14 , 2023

RE: H.B. No. 540

H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred H.B. No. 540 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to require the Department of Education to provide free lunch to all enrolled students beginning with the 2023-2024 school year.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Education, Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Hawaii State Teachers Association, Hawai'i Public Health Institute, Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law & Economic Justice, Hawai'i Hunger Action Network, AlohaCare, Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus, and six individuals.

Your Committee finds that student success demands a nourished body. Without a proper meal, students may face cases of chronic hunger, leading to achievement gaps, illness, increased absenteeism, behavioral problems, and misdiagnosed learning disabilities. This measure will provide universal free school lunches to all students to ensure each student's wellness through receiving a meal in school.

2023-1552 HB540 HD1 HSCR HMSO



Your Committee notes that over seventy thousand public school students eat free or reduced-price meals in the State, yet only forty percent eat school breakfasts. Your Committee believes that providing universal breakfast for all students in the State will encourage more students to eat breakfast and improve their attendance, behavior, academic performance, and achievement.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Requiring the Department of Education to provide free breakfast to all enrolled students beginning with the 2023-2024 school year;
- (2) Requiring all public charter schools to provide free breakfast and lunch to all enrolled students beginning with the 2023-2024 school year;
- (3) Directing the appropriation amount to the Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs for the total plate costs associated with providing universal free school breakfasts and lunches in Department of Education schools and public charter schools after federal funding has been accounted;
- (4) Changing its effective date to June 30, 3000; and
- (5) 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 Education that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 540, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 540, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.



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



JUSTIN H. WOODSON, Chair



