

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 07 2025

RE: S.B. No. 1300
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 Education, to which was referred S.B. No. 1300 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO SCHOOL MEALS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to appropriate funds to the Department of Education for meal subsidies for students whose families are classified as asset limited, income constrained, employed (ALICE) households.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Education, State Public Charter School Commission, Department of Research and Development of the County of Hawai'i, Hawai'i State Teachers Association, Hawai'i Youth Services Network, Hawaii Food Industry Association, Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, Education Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, Hawai'i Foodbank, Maui Food Bank, Green Party of Hawai'i, Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, and ten individuals.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of the Attorney General and one individual.

Your Committee finds that the physical and mental well-being of students is of paramount importance. Presently, the Department of Education utilizes reimbursements from the federal government



to provide free and reduced-price lunches to qualified students. However, students whose families are classified as asset limited income constrained, employed (ALICE) may not qualify for free and reduced-price lunches despite continuing to struggle with ensuring their children have proper nutrition. Therefore, this measure ensures all students can avoid missing meals during the school day.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting language requiring the Department of Education to adopt administrative rules to provide a lower rate or free meals to students based on their economic need;
- (2) Changing the appropriation to an unspecified amount;
- (3) Amending section 1 to reflect its amended purpose;
- (4) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (5) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

Your Committee notes that this measure, as amended, contains an unspecified appropriation amount. While the Department of Education had an initial appropriation request of \$10,000,000 in its testimony at the public hearing on this measure, \$11,700,000 reflects the trust cost of providing free meals to students whose families are classified as ALICE households. Should your Committee on Ways and Means choose to deliberate on this measure, your Committee respectfully requests that it consider inserting an appropriation amount of \$11,700,000 for the Department of Education to offer free meals to students whose families are classified as ALICE households.

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. 1300, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1300, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.



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



MICHELLE N. KIDANI, Chair



