

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 14 2025

RE: S.B. No. 426
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Higher Education and Education, to which was referred S.B. No. 426 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AN EARLY LEARNING APPRENTICESHIP GRANT PROGRAM,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to establish an Early Learning Apprenticeship Grant Program, to be administered by the University of Hawaii, to assist publicly- or privately-run early learning program service providers to participate in state- and federally-approved early learning apprenticeship programs.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Human Services, Early Learning Board, Executive Office on Early Learning, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, University of Hawai'i System, Department of Community Services of the City and County of Honolulu, Keiki O Ka Aina Family Learning Centers, AAUW of Hawaii, Early Childhood Action Strategy, Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, Commit to Keiki, and numerous individuals.

Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of the Attorney General.

Your Committees find that despite the growing demand for well-trained early learning professionals, the field is



experiencing a shortage of workers. Your Committees recognize that it is necessary to support the recruitment, retention, and professional development of early learning professionals as doing so will bolster the workforce that supports the State's youngest children and working families. Your Committees further find that registered apprenticeship programs are proven models that create skilled workforces tailored to the specialized needs of their respective industries while fostering economic growth. This measure establishes an Early Learning Apprenticeship Grant Program to address the shortage of early learning professionals in the State, which will improve educational outcomes and support the State's working families.

Your Committees note that to establish and implement the Early Learning Apprenticeship Grant Program, the University of Hawaii estimates that an appropriation of \$14.5 million is needed for fiscal year 2025-2026 and an appropriation of \$15 million is needed for fiscal year 2026-2027. Should your Committee on Ways and Means choose to deliberate on this measure, your Committees respectfully request that it consider appropriating these estimated amounts.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting language identifying it as a law of statewide concern;
- (2) Inserting an effective date of July 31, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Higher Education and Education that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 426, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 426, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Higher Education
and Education,

Michelle N. Kidani

MICHELLE N. KIDANI, Chair

Donna Mercado Kim

DONNA MERCADO KIM, Chair



