

Legislative Priorities 2023

Healthy and Welcomed Births

Medicaid Professional Fees Increase: Bringing payments for professionals billing under Medicaid up to 100% of the Medicare reimbursement. This measure would address healthcare access challenges for Medicaid enrollees, and strengthen our healthcare workforce. [SB397](#) [[HB1070, 1367/SB1368,](#)]

Protecting Access to Abortion:

- Extension of protections for health care professionals who are providing reproductive health care. [SB1](#) [[HB1427/SB1, 604, 896](#)]
- ~~Creation and funding for an Abortion (Reproductive Health) Access Coordinator Office within Department of Human Services.~~ [[HB1343](#)]
- Housekeeping and strengthening of abortion statutes. *Provisions incorporated into* [SB1](#) [[HB1441/SB890](#)]

On-track Health and Development

Early Childhood Mental Health: Establishes the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Program within the Department of Health to support and build out the system of mental health services for children from birth to age five. [SB1351](#) [[HB1053](#)]

DA BUX: Funding to support Double Up Food Bucks (Hawaii healthy food incentive program), which partners with food retailers to make Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables more affordable for SNAP-EBT cardholders. [HB1248](#) [[SB1259](#)]

Full-Service Community Schools: Proposal to expand and provide funding for full-service community schools, in which schools become the hub of their community and coordinate relationships and resources to accelerate equitable outcomes in health, education, and employment. *Supported in part by* [HB69](#) [[HB55](#)]

Safe, Secure, and Nurturing Families

Malama `Ohana: Proposal for a working group through the Office of Wellness and Resilience to hold listening sessions throughout the state and have community partners work together to improve and transform the child welfare system. [SB295](#) [[HB330/SB294, 1211](#)]

Paid Family Leave: ~~Would provide wage replacement (a percentage of one's income) to eligible workers when they take time off from work to care for a seriously ill family member or themselves or to bond with a new child.~~ [[HB490/SB1007](#)]

Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit: Proposes reforms to the existing state CDCTC to provide increased benefits to a greater number of families with dependents. *Provisions incorporated into* [HB1049](#) [[HB241/SB1126](#)]

Tax Relief to Ease Cost of Living: Proposes new tax credits, improved benefits, and adjustments to tax policies to reduce the cost of living for families, teachers and low-income individuals. [HB1049](#) [[SB1347](#)]

Accessible and Quality Early Care and Learning

Infant/Toddler Child Care:

- Proposal for a two-year Infant & Toddler Child Care Worker Subsidy Pilot Program to supplement workforce wages. [HB547](#) [[HB391/SB312](#)]
- ~~Proposal for a two-year Infant and Toddler Child Care Contracted Slots Pilot Program to increase subsidy access and stabilize child care providers.~~ [[HB502/SB311](#)]

Expanding Access to Preschool:

- Expansion/enhancement of Preschool Open Doors subsidy and EOEL prek programs. [HB961](#) [[SB1023](#)]
- Funding to expand and support operational costs of public preschool classrooms, expand Family-Child Interaction Learning programs, and support the early childhood education stipend program for students. [EOEL budget ask](#)

Child Care Provider Accreditation:

Proposal for a program to support child care providers to obtain quality accreditation from a national organization and to extend the deadline by which Preschool Open Doors providers must achieve accreditation. [SB239](#) [[HB261, 583](#)]

County Representation on Early Learning Board: ~~Proposal to expand membership on the ELB to provide representation for each County and its unique needs and landscape.~~