

JAN 20 2023

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that there is currently a
2 nationwide school bus driver shortage. This shortage is
3 impacting Hawai'i, where only five hundred fifty out of seven
4 hundred school bus driver positions are adequately filled.
5 Driver shortages have resulted in the cancellation, temporary
6 suspension, and consolidation of bus routes.

7 The legislature further finds that the school bus shortage
8 negatively impacts student attendance, causes difficulties for
9 working parents who have to juggle jobs and school drop-offs,
10 intensifies traffic, and increases greenhouse gas emissions. In
11 addition, the lack of affordable school bus options has made it
12 prohibitively expensive to organize school field trips that
13 enrich student learning.

14 The legislature finds that a variety of efforts have been
15 made to address this problem, including providing for pay
16 differentials for school bus drivers in rural areas, free public
17 bus passes for public school students, and even principals and



1 administrators picking up students themselves. However, these
2 issues are particularly difficult to solve because school bus
3 transportation has been privatized.

4 The legislature further finds that the lack of school and
5 complex area control over basic student transportation also
6 makes it difficult to ensure that school bus fleets are
7 electrified in order to meet statewide climate goals.

8 The purpose of this Act is to require the department of
9 education to establish an electric school bus pilot program to
10 provide certain complex areas with ownership and control of
11 electric school buses.

12 SECTION 2. (a) The department of education shall
13 establish an electric school bus pilot program to:

14 (1) Apply for and purchase electric school buses through
15 the federal Clean School Bus Program (42 U.S.C. 16091)
16 to be owned and controlled by complex areas in need,
17 including the following complex areas:

- 18 (A) Kapa'a;
- 19 (B) Ka'u;
- 20 (C) Kealakehe;
- 21 (D) Leilehua; and



1 (E) Nānākuli; and

2 (2) Work with private and public stakeholders, including
3 the counties, to provide for the maintenance of the
4 electric school buses.

5 (b) The electric school bus pilot program shall cease to
6 exist five years from the date of receipt of electric school
7 buses by the complex areas listed under subsection (a) or on
8 December 31, 2033, whichever is earlier, at which time the
9 ownership and control of all electric school buses shall be
10 returned to the department of education for placement as
11 determined by the department of education.

12 (c) The department of education shall submit a report of
13 its findings and recommendations, including any proposed
14 legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior
15 to the convening of each regular session during the duration of
16 the pilot program.

17 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
18 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
19 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and
20 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal



1 year 2024-2025 for the department of education to establish an
2 electric school bus pilot program.

3 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
4 of education for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

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INTRODUCED BY:

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S.B. NO. 378

Report Title:

Electric School Bus Pilot Program; DOE; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the department of education to establish an electric school bus pilot program to provide certain complex areas with ownership and control of electric school buses. Appropriates funds.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

