

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

347

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 11, 2025

RE: H.B. No. 439

H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred H.B. No. 439 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to require the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board to establish an international teaching license for certain visa holders and the criteria for obtaining the international teaching license.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Education; Hawaii Association of Filipino Educators; Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights; Oahu Filipino Community Council; Filipino Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii; Foreign Cultural Exchange Consultants LLC; Kings Church; Alliance Abroad Group; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of the Attorney General.

Your Committee finds that the BridgeUSA J-1 visa program, administered by the United States Department of State, offers foreign teachers an opportunity to teach in accredited schools in the United States servicing students in grades kindergarten through twelve. Since its implementation, the J-1 visa program

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has been of great success, especially in bringing educators from the Philippines to the State, serving in 55 public schools statewide.

Your Committee further finds that the State's existing licensing rules hinder the full potential of prospective teachers for the J-1 visa program. The State's existing licensure reciprocity policies also do not adequately recognize the international qualifications of J-1 teachers. This measure will recognize the qualifications and experience of international educators, while ensuring equitable compensation, to fully leverage the skills, knowledge, and experience of international educators.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Deleting language that would have established the criteria for obtaining an international teacher license;
- (2) Requiring the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board to establish the requirements necessary to obtain the international teacher license;
- (3) Requiring the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board to submit a report to the Legislature prior to the 2026 Regular Session on how to support international teachers teaching in the State through the J-1 visa program;
- (4) Changing the effective date to July 1, 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. 439, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 439, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce.



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



JUSTIN H. WOODSON, Chair



