
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO REPORT ON THE SHORT- AND LONG-TERM COSTS OF NOT CONDUCTING THE SYSTEMATIC HEARING AND VISION PROGRAM, AND REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION TO PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES ON ACCESS TO COMPREHENSIVE VISION AND HEARING EXAMINATIONS.

1 WHEREAS, many visual skills are necessary for successful
2 learning in the modern classroom and skill deficiencies in this
3 area may contribute to poor academic performance; and
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5 WHEREAS, the relationship between poorly developed visual
6 skills and poor academic performance is not widely understood
7 among students, parents, teachers, administrators, and public
8 health officials; and
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10 WHEREAS, typical vision evaluations and screenings only
11 test for a few of the necessary learning-related visual skills
12 such as distance acuity (i.e., 20/20 eyesight, stereo vision,
13 and muscle balance), which leaves most visual skill deficiencies
14 undiagnosed; and
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16 WHEREAS, children with mild hearing impairment to profound
17 hearing loss, as well as young students with central auditory
18 processing deficiencies, often experience extreme learning
19 difficulty in their educational environment; and
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21 WHEREAS, early identification of hearing impairment or
22 hearing loss has been shown to increase access to the spoken
23 language and has allowed more children to enter the mainstream
24 of education; and
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26 WHEREAS, forty per cent of children with hearing loss have
27 additional disorders such as impaired cognition, learning



1 disabilities, and sensory integration dysfunction -- behaviors
2 that are frequently overlooked by parents, educators,
3 physicians, and speech-language pathologists; and
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5 WHEREAS, the Department of Education does not require
6 vision or hearing examinations for students entering the public
7 school system; and
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9 WHEREAS, with the demands of the No Child Left Behind Act,
10 a heavy burden is placed on teachers and administrators to
11 effectively educate students with undiagnosed vision and hearing
12 deficits; and
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14 WHEREAS, section 321-101, Hawaii Revised Statutes,
15 establishes a systematic hearing and vision program conducted by
16 the Department of Health to detect and identify hearing and
17 vision deficiencies in school children; and
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19 WHEREAS, the Department of Health and the Department of
20 Education are authorized, as part of the systematic hearing and
21 vision program, to conduct information campaigns on vision
22 conservation and the prevention of hearing loss and blindness;
23 and
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25 WHEREAS, because funding has not been made available to the
26 program, the Legislature is interested in the short- and long-
27 term costs of not conducting the systematic hearing and vision
28 program; now, therefore,
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30 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
31 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
32 Session of 2007, the Senate concurring, that the Department of
33 Health is requested to report to the Legislature on the short-
34 and long-term costs of not implementing section 321-101, Hawaii
35 Revised Statutes, which establishes a systematic hearing and
36 vision program; and
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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health and
39 the Department of Education are requested to develop an action
40 plan to disseminate information to public school students and
41 their families on access to comprehensive vision and hearing
42 examinations; and
43



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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 2 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the
 3 Director of Health, the Chairperson of the Board of Education,
 4 and the Superintendent of Education.
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OFFERED BY:

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