

MAR 06 2020

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH A FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A PLAN TO MAKE COMPLETION OF A FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID A STATEWIDE GRADUATION REQUIREMENT BEGINNING IN THE 2022-2023 ACADEMIC YEAR.

1 WHEREAS, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid is a
2 form completed by current and prospective post-secondary
3 education students seeking undergraduate or graduate education
4 in the United States to determine eligibility for federal
5 financial aid; and

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7 WHEREAS, federal financial aid options include need-based
8 aid such as federal Pell Grants, as well as unsubsidized
9 Stafford loans that may be available to students regardless of
10 income or other circumstances; and

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12 WHEREAS, in 2018, certain eligible Hawaii students could
13 have claimed \$10,000,000 in federal Pell Grant moneys, had they
14 completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, but this
15 federal financial aid instead went unclaimed; and

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17 WHEREAS, students who do not complete the Free Application
18 for Federal Student Aid may rely instead on private student
19 loans that often have high interest rates and lack the consumer
20 protections included with federal student loans; and

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22 WHEREAS, completion of the Free Application for Federal
23 Student Aid is also the leading indicator of college enrollment,
24 and there is ample evidence that increased financial aid results
25 in positive outcomes, including college completion; and

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27 WHEREAS, in 2016, in response to more than fifty percent of
28 Louisiana high school seniors not completing the necessary
29 paperwork, the State of Louisiana began requiring completion of



1 the Free Application for Federal Student Aid as a prerequisite
2 for graduation; and
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4 WHEREAS, as of 2019, Louisiana is ranked first in the
5 nation for completion of the Free Application for Federal
6 Student Aid among high school seniors, having an eighty-two
7 percent completion rate; and
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9 WHEREAS, in recent years, Hawaii's Free Application for
10 Federal Student Aid completion rate has remained close to sixty
11 percent; and
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13 WHEREAS, the Department of Education has set a goal to have
14 ninety percent of Hawaii high school seniors complete the Free
15 Application for Federal Student Aid in the 2019-2020 academic
16 year; and
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18 WHEREAS, increasing completion of the Free Application for
19 Federal Student Aid will benefit Hawaii students and families,
20 and may result in long-term benefit to the State through
21 increased educational achievement and a corresponding increase
22 in economic growth and stability; now, therefore,
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24 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
25 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2020, the House of
26 Representatives concurring, that the Department of Education is
27 requested to establish a Free Application for Federal Student
28 Aid Working Group to develop and implement a plan to make
29 completion of a Free Application for Federal Student Aid a
30 statewide graduation requirement beginning in the 2022-2023
31 academic year; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
34 requested to include in this plan an option to waive the
35 requirement, provided that any waiver require an acknowledgement
36 of the purpose of and opportunities provided through completion
37 of a Free Application for Federal Student Aid; and
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39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Free Application for
40 Federal Student Aid Working Group comprise the following:



- (1) The Chair of the Senate Committee on Education, or the Chair's designee, who is requested to serve as co-chair of the Working Group;
- (2) The Chair of the House of Representatives Committee on Lower and Higher Education, or the Chair's designee, who is requested to serve as co-chair of the Working Group;
- (3) The Superintendent of Education, or the Superintendent's designee;
- (4) The Chairperson of the Board of Education, or the Chairperson's designee;
- (5) The President of the University of Hawaii, or the President's designee;
- (6) A representative from the University of Hawaii Community College System, to be selected by the University of Hawaii Vice President for Community Colleges;
- (7) The Executive Director of Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education, or the Executive Director's designee;
- (8) A Department of Education complex area superintendent, to be selected by the Superintendent of Education;
- (9) A Department of Education principal, to be selected by the Superintendent of Education;
- (10) A Department of Education school counselor, to be selected by the Superintendent of Education;
- (11) A representative of the nonprofit sector, to be invited by the Speaker of the House of Representatives to be a member of the Working Group;
- (12) A representative of the Hawaii Association for College Admission Counseling, to be invited by the President of the Senate to be a member of the Working Group;



1 (13) A representative of the philanthropic community, to be
2 invited by the Speaker of the House of Representatives
3 to be a member of the Working Group;
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5 (14) A representative of the business community, to be
6 invited by the President of the Senate to be a member
7 of the Working Group; and
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9 (15) Any other member deemed necessary by the Working
10 Group; and
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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education
13 provide administrative support to the Free Application for
14 Federal Student Aid Working Group; and
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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in developing a plan to make
17 completion of a Free Application for Federal Student Aid a
18 statewide graduation requirement, the Free Application for
19 Federal Student Aid Working Group is requested to consider the
20 following:
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22 (1) Resources that are available or may be necessary,
23 including public-private partnerships, to ensure
24 successful implementation of the state plan;
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26 (2) Strategies to ensure that the waiver option is simple
27 and unconditional;
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29 (3) Approaches to establish regional pilot programs,
30 whether by complex area or island, including
31 consideration of the feasibility of these approaches;
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33 (4) Strategies to better support students through the
34 college application process, including providing
35 necessary guidance for students to enroll in college
36 and continue with success once the Free Application
37 for Federal Student Aid is completed;
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39 (5) Procedures to protect family privacy, particularly for
40 undocumented immigrant families, and to support
41 schools to provide hardship waivers for students
42 having unresponsive parents; and



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(6) Any other issue deemed necessary by the Working Group;
and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested to submit to the Legislature, the Superintendent of Education, and each complex area superintendent, a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2021; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Superintendent of Education, Chairperson of the Board of Education, President of the University of Hawaii, Vice President for Community Colleges of the University of Hawaii, Executive Director of the Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education, and President of the Hawaii Association for College Admission Counseling.

OFFERED BY:

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DK

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[Signature]

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