

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 04, 2020

RE: H.B. No. 2421  
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Thirtieth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2020  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services & Homelessness, to which was referred H.B. No. 2421 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE HAWAII'I SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to ensure that the needs of deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind students in the State are met by statutorily establishing the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind and an independent governance structure for the school.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from five individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Education, Department of the Attorney General, and one individual.

Your Committee notes the concerns raised in testimony by individuals in the deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind community that there has been a lack of administrators within the Department of Education who are experienced and knowledgeable in deaf education and fluent in American Sign Language. This lack of expertise and other concerns have raised questions about whether the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind is being adequately managed. A comprehensive approach that seeks to change the culture and direction of the school is necessary to optimize



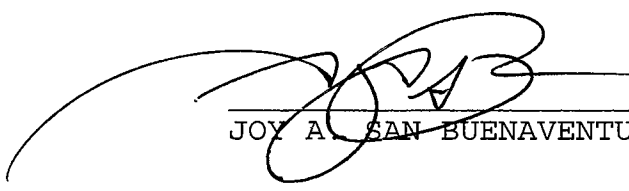
services, supports, and other educational opportunities for students in the State who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind. Although the School for the Deaf and Blind has served children in Hawaii for over 100 years, this measure statutorily establishes an independent governance structure for the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind, which will enable the school to more appropriately meet the needs of deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind students.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Requiring policy decisions of the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind Board of Trustees to be consistent with the policies of the Board of Education;
- (2) Clarifying that the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind has served children of Hawaii for over 100 years;
- (3) Changing its effective date to December 31, 2059, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) 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 Human Services & Homelessness that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2421, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2421, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Lower & Higher Education.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Human Services &  
Homelessness,

  
JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



