
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AIR CONDITIONING IN SCHOOLS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that vog, or volcanic
2 smog, is a form of air pollution that occurs when volcanic
3 emissions react with moisture, oxygen, and sunlight. When
4 volcanic eruptions occur on Hawaii island, prevailing wind
5 patterns typically push vog emissions westward, where they
6 accumulate over north and south Kona. Depending on the level of
7 volcanic activity, vog can affect air quality to the point where
8 it poses significant health risks. Vog can irritate the skin,
9 eyes, nose, and throat, and can penetrate airways and the lungs,
10 which can trigger respiratory distress and induce asthma
11 symptoms. Other common symptoms of vog exposure include
12 headaches, sore throat, flu-like symptoms, and lethargy.
13 Studies about the effects of vog on residents of Hawaii island
14 show correlations between vog exposure and increased rates of
15 high blood pressure, acute bronchitis, acute airway problems,
16 asthma exacerbations and respiratory illness. Children are
17 generally more sensitive to vog than adults because children



1 have higher respiratory rates than adults, meaning they take
2 more breaths per minute. When vog levels are high, the public
3 health recommendations to reduce exposure includes staying
4 indoors with windows closed, using an air filter, and avoiding
5 outdoor activities that cause heavy breathing. However, in
6 schools without air conditioning, it can be very difficult to
7 follow these recommendations and retain a healthy learning
8 environment at the same time. Hot temperatures negatively
9 impact the ability of students to learn, and west Hawaii island,
10 and the Kona area in particular, consistently report some of the
11 hottest temperatures in the State. The coronavirus disease 2019
12 (COVID-19) pandemic has added additional challenges, where the
13 recommendations to stay outdoors or keep windows open directly
14 conflict with the recommendations regarding vog.

15 The legislature further finds that the installation of air
16 conditioning units in west Hawaii island classrooms would create
17 safer, more comfortable, and more effective learning
18 environments that would better protect students from vog and the
19 spread of COVID-19 and other pathogens. The addition of
20 filtration would help to mitigate both issues.



H.B. NO. 1935

1 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2022.

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INTRODUCED BY: Wade E. Lovew

JAN 24 2022



H.B. NO. 1935

Report Title:

DOE; Air Conditioning; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates moneys for air conditioning and filtration at Kahakai Elementary School, Kealakehe Elementary School, Kealakehe Intermediate School, and Kealakehe High School of the Department of Education.

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