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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO RECOGNIZE AND REMEDY  
STATEWIDE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION INEQUITIES BY INCREASING  
AND PRIORITIZING SCHOOL BUS SERVICES FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN  
FROM LOW- TO MODERATE-INCOME FAMILIES.

1           WHEREAS, the United States Constitution requires that all  
2 children be given equal educational opportunities regardless of  
3 their race, ethnicity, religion, sex, socioeconomic status, or  
4 citizenship; and

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6           WHEREAS, access to safe and efficient transportation to and  
7 from school is a fundamental part of public education's mission  
8 to ensure all children have access to equal educational  
9 opportunities; and

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11           WHEREAS, a lack of school transportation services leads to  
12 tardiness, absenteeism, and poor educational performances and  
13 outcomes for schoolchildren; and

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15           WHEREAS, students on the free or reduced meals program who  
16 rely on receiving school meals are also negatively impacted by  
17 lack of transportation services because an absence or tardy  
18 could mean students missing crucial meals; and

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20           WHEREAS, parents and guardians without reliable  
21 transportation often must make difficult choices to ensure their  
22 child can get to and from school, including having their child  
23 stay with a relative or close family friend, resulting in  
24 disruptions to the child's home life; and

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26           WHEREAS, higher income families have the resources to  
27 transport their children to and from school on time, which  
28 dramatically decreases the likelihood of tardiness and  
29 absenteeism, resulting in better student performances; and



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2 WHEREAS, using personal vehicles to transport children to  
3 and from school increases traffic congestion in communities and  
4 delays families from completing their household and financial  
5 responsibilities on time; and

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7 WHEREAS, while school bus route shortages existed before  
8 the current pandemic, COVID-19 has reduced the size of the  
9 school bus driver workforce by fifteen percent and has resulted  
10 in the suspension of at least thirty statewide school bus  
11 routes; and

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13 WHEREAS, these critical statewide school bus service  
14 disruptions, specifically on the neighbor islands, widen the  
15 equity gap between low- and high-income families and contribute  
16 to learning loss amongst students who are chronically absent or  
17 tardy; and

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19 WHEREAS, previous attempts to remedy the lack of school bus  
20 services, such as the Hele-On partnership with Hawaii County  
21 public schools to provide students with free monthly bus passes,  
22 have proven to be inadequate, unsafe for unaccompanied  
23 elementary schoolchildren, take longer than traditional school  
24 bus routes, and still transport students to school late; and

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26 WHEREAS, to ensure children have equal opportunities to  
27 attend public school, it is urgent that the Department of  
28 Education increase school bus routes and services, particularly  
29 on neighbor islands and in rural areas; now, therefore,

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31 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
32 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
33 of 2022, the Senate concurring, that the Department of Education  
34 is urged to remedy transportation inequity by increasing more  
35 school bus routes, with priority given to the creation of routes  
36 that serve students from low- to moderate-income families; and

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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is  
39 urged to hire more school bus drivers to help remedy the lack of  
40 school bus service, especially on the neighbor islands and in  
41 rural areas; and



# H.C.R. NO. **50**

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
2 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the  
3 Board of Education and Interim Superintendent of Education.  
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OFFERED BY: *Nicole E. Lowen*

MAR - 9 2022

