

MAR 11 2022

SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO
ADDRESS THE STATE'S SCHOOL BUS DRIVER SHORTAGE.

1 WHEREAS, the availability of school bus service is
2 essential to student attendance; and

3
4 WHEREAS, school bus service is particularly crucial for
5 families who live in rural and remote areas and students who
6 come from socioeconomically disadvantaged communities; and

7
8 WHEREAS, the United States of America is currently
9 experiencing a national school bus driver shortage; and

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11 WHEREAS, the school bus driver shortage followed the start
12 of the COVID-19 pandemic, when the transition to virtual
13 learning caused a mass exodus of bus drivers who became sick
14 with the COVID-19 virus, were furloughed from their jobs, or
15 decided to quit; and

16
17 WHEREAS, according to an August 2021 survey by the National
18 Association for Pupil Transportation, seventy-eight percent of
19 the 1,500 responding school districts reported being in the
20 midst of a worsening bus driver shortage crisis, with fifty-one
21 percent describing their shortage issues as "severe" or
22 "desperate"; and

23
24 WHEREAS, the national bus driver shortage has also impacted
25 Hawaii, which has caused dozens of bus routes to be temporarily
26 suspended and left families scrambling to find alternative ways
27 to transport their children to school; and

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29 WHEREAS, in August of 2021, the Department of Education
30 reported being short by one hundred drivers out of six hundred
31 fifty total positions, amounting to a shortage rate of over
32 fifteen percent; and

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1 WHEREAS, states and school districts across the country
2 have taken steps to relieve the school bus driver shortage,
3 including through the provision of financial incentives; now,
4 therefore,

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6 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
7 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2022,
8 that the Department of Education is urged to convene a working
9 group to address Hawaii's school bus driver shortage; and

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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent of
12 Education, or the Superintendent's designee, is requested to
13 serve on the working group; and

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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
16 requested to invite the following to serve as members of the
17 working group:

- 18
19 (1) The Chairperson of the Board of Education, or the
20 Chairperson's designee;
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22 (2) The Director of Transportation, or the Director's
23 designee;
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25 (3) A representative of the Department of Transportation
26 Services of the City and County of Honolulu;
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28 (4) A representative of the Department of Public Works of
29 the County of Hawaii;
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31 (5) A representative of the Transportation Agency of the
32 County of Kauai; and
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34 (6) A representative of the Department of Transportation
35 of the County of Maui; and
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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
38 requested to invite representatives from Ground Transportation
39 Inc.; Roberts Hawaii; and any other transportation company who
40 the Department of Education contracts with to provide school bus
41 service in the State; and
42



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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
2 to submit a report of its findings and recommendations regarding
3 school bus service, including any proposed legislation, to the
4 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
5 the Regular Session of 2023; and

6
7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
8 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of
9 Education; Interim Superintendent of Education; Director of
10 Transportation; Director of Transportation Services of the City
11 and County of Honolulu; Director of Public Works of the County
12 of Hawaii; Executive of the Transportation Agency of the County
13 of Kauai; Director of Transportation of the County of Maui;
14 President of Ground Transportation, Inc.; and Chief Executive
15 Officer of Roberts Hawaii.

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OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. S. L.', written over a horizontal line.