

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1370

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 21, 2023

RE: S.B. No. 971  
S.D. 2  
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2023  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred S.B. No. 971, S.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO STUDENT TRANSPORTATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the Department of Education to collect certain data on county bus pass usage for public high school and charter school students and report annually to the Legislature on the Department's findings and data collected; and
- (2) Appropriate funds to the Department of Education to provide bus passes for all public high school and charter school students.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Education, State Public Charter School Commission, Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, Department of Transportation Services of the City and County of Honolulu, Ulupono Initiative, Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus, and two individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Attorney General.

2023-2662 SB971 HD1 HSCR HMSO



Your Committee finds that, although the Department of Education is authorized to provide transportation to and from school for students, a bus driver shortage has led to significant lapses in transportation services. At the beginning of the 2021-2022 academic school year, the Department of Education had a shortage of one hundred bus drivers, leading to disruptions to timing and schedule consistency, consolidations, and cancellations of school bus routes. Your Committee notes that other cities in the United States offer student free-fare transportation, which reduced student excused absences and increased academic growth.

Your Committee further finds that the Department of Education currently distributes an average of six hundred bus passes per month. However, for students to qualify for a bus pass, they must meet strict demographic eligibility requirements. Your Committee believes that offering student transportation through a county bus pass for all public high school and charter school students will increase reliable transportation options and alleviate the need for additional school bus drivers.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the effective date to June 30, 3000; and
- (2) 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 Education that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 971, S.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 971, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Education,

  
JUSTIN H. WOODSON, Chair



Record of Votes of the Committee on Education

Bill/Resolution No.: <b>SB971 SD2</b>	Committee Referral: <b>EDN, FIN</b>	Date: <b>3/16/23</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
EDN Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. WOODSON, Justin H. (C)	/			
2. MARTEN, Lisa (VC)	/			
3. EVSLIN, Luke A.	/			
4. KAPELA, Jeanne	/			
5. LA CHICA, Trish	/			
6. MARTINEZ, Rose	/			
7. MATAYOSHI, Scot Z.	/			
8. PERRUSO, Amy A.				/
9. QUINLAN, Sean				/
10. TODD, Chris	/			
11. GARCIA, Diamond	/			
<b>TOTAL (11)</b>	<b>9</b>			<b>2</b>
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. committee acronym(s)				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature: <u><i>Lisa Marten</i></u>				
Distribution:    Original (White) – Committee    Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office    Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				