

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 499

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 17 2023

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

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2023  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

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

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

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Appropriate funds to the Department of Education to provide public high school and charter school students with bus passes;
- (2) Require the Department of Education to collect certain data on city bus pass usage for public high school and charter school students; and
- (3) Require an annual report to the Legislature.

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, Education Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, Ulupono Initiative, and five individuals.

Your Committee finds that while the Department of Education is authorized to provide transportation to students to and from



school for students in grades kindergarten through twelve, a bus driver shortage has led to significant lapses in transportation services. In other jurisdictions, student free-fare transportation on public transportation led to higher attendance rates and increases in grade point averages. Additionally, student free-fare transportation also provides free access to public transit for students who commute to and from jobs, visit friends, and run errands.

Your Committee further finds that presently, the Department of Education distributes an average of six hundred city bus passes per month. However, students who qualify must meet strict demographic eligibility requirements, including an active departmental identification number. By simplifying the eligibility requirement, the State can provide increased transportation options to high school students across the State. This measure appropriates funds to the Department of Education to offer student transportation through a city bus pass for public high school and charter school students to offer free, reliable public transportation options.

Your Committee has amended this measure by making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

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, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 971, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

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

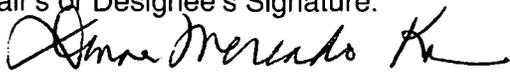


MICHELLE N. KIDANI, Chair



The Senate  
 Thirty-Second Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Education**  
**EDU**

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:		
SB971	EDU, WAM	2/13/23		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313		
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
KIDANI, Michelle N. (C)	/			
KIM, Donna Mercado (VC)	/			
KANUHA, Dru Mamo				/
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim"	/			
FEVELLA, Kurt	/			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>			<b>1</b>
Recommendation:				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature:				
				
Distribution:				
Original	Yellow	Pink	Goldenrod	
File with Committee Report	Clerk's Office	Drafting Agency	Committee File Copy	

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes