
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that civic engagement
2 provides an opportunity for residents to become involved with
3 improving their local communities and neighborhoods. In 2021,
4 the Hawaii supreme court enacted Rule 23 to establish the
5 commission to promote and advance civic education (PACE
6 commission). One of the main functions of the PACE commission
7 is to provide leadership, oversight, and initiatives to increase
8 civic education in the community and at schools, increase
9 citizens' knowledge about government, and promote informed
10 participation in government and democracy in the State.

11 The legislature further finds that the public access room,
12 an office under the legislative reference bureau, provides the
13 public with information, equipment, facilities, and services to
14 assist in research activities, educational outreach, and public
15 engagement related to work with the legislature. The
16 legislature additionally finds that the public access room is
17 well-positioned to further civic engagement between the



1 legislature and students in the State through educational
2 partnerships, such as the Hawaii P-20 partnerships for
3 education. However, the public access room currently lacks
4 resources to provide outreach services beyond its current
5 efforts.

6 In addition, the legislature finds that civic education
7 prepares students to participate in the public and political
8 lives of their communities. Teaching students about the
9 importance of civic engagement through civic education helps
10 develop critical thinking skills that are vital to the
11 functioning of a democratic nation, including how to recognize
12 social problems, evaluate possible solutions to problems,
13 separate evidence-based claims from opinions, and act upon what
14 is learned. As a means to increase access to civic education,
15 the legislature finds that this measure addresses an issue of
16 statewide concern.

17 The legislature further finds that according to the US
18 Elections Project, in the 2022 general election, forty-four
19 states had a higher voter turnout percentage than Hawaii. The
20 legislature also finds that cultivating social and political
21 engagement among students through civic education is an



1 important strategy to increase voter turnout and citizen
2 engagement over the long term.

3 The legislature additionally finds that in 2018, the board
4 of education adopted the Hawaii core standards in social
5 studies. These core standards outline the content, concepts,
6 and inquiry skills students need to reason, wonder, and think
7 about the vastness and richness of the human condition. The
8 Hawaii core standards in social studies also integrate and
9 encompass the democratic values, civility, and global
10 perspective needed to support the development of critical
11 thinking and habits of mind that are the hallmark of a mature,
12 community-minded citizen. The standards are also premised upon
13 a rigorous and relevant K-12 social studies experience.
14 However, the legislature finds that the department of education
15 has not engaged in systematic teacher training on the new
16 standards or addressed the paucity of culturally appropriate
17 materials for historical and civic education.

18 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

19 (1) Require the public access room to establish and
20 maintain an outreach and engagement program for
21 primary, secondary, post-secondary, and community



- 1 education and provide funding for two full-time
2 equivalent (2.0 FTE) positions to assist in
3 effectuating this requirement;
- 4 (2) Require the department of education and university of
5 Hawaii to assign appropriate staff to coordinate with
6 the public access room with respect to the outreach
7 and engagement program;
- 8 (3) Establish and fund two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE)
9 permanent civic education resource teacher positions
10 within the department of education; and
- 11 (4) Appropriate funds to the department of education to
12 increase access to civic education in Hawaii's public
13 school system.

14 SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended by adding a new section to part II, subpart C, to be
16 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

17 "§302A- Coordination with the public access room;
18 outreach and engagement. The department shall assign
19 appropriate staff to coordinate with the public access room with
20 respect to the outreach and engagement program described in
21 section 21G-2(a)."



1 SECTION 3. Chapter 304A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by adding a new section to part II, subpart G, to be
3 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

4 "§304A- Coordination with the public access room;
5 outreach and engagement. The university shall assign
6 appropriate staff to coordinate with the public access room with
7 respect to the outreach and engagement program described in
8 section 21G-2(a)."

9 SECTION 4. Section 21G-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
10 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

11 "(a) There is established in the state capitol a public
12 access room in which members of the public shall be allowed to
13 utilize various equipment, services, and facilities to enhance
14 their ability to participate in the legislative process. As
15 part of its duties, the public access room shall establish and
16 maintain an outreach and engagement program for primary,
17 secondary, post-secondary, and community education."

18 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general
19 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
20 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 to



1 establish two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) positions within
2 the public access room.

3 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the legislative
4 reference bureau for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 6. There is appropriated out of the general
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
7 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for
8 the expansion of civic education in public schools, including
9 professional development and classroom resources related to the
10 Hawaii core standards in social studies, and the establishment
11 of two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) permanent civic education
12 resource teacher positions.

13 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
14 education for the purposes of this Act.

15 SECTION 7. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of
16 the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37-91 and 37-93,
17 Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the
18 appropriations contained in H.B. No. , will cause the state
19 general fund expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be
20 exceeded by \$ or per cent. In addition, the
21 appropriations contained in this Act will cause the general fund



1 expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be further
2 exceeded by \$ or per cent. The combined total
3 amount of general fund appropriations contained in only these
4 two Acts will cause the state general fund expenditure ceiling
5 for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be exceeded by
6 \$ or per cent. The reasons for exceeding the
7 general fund expenditure ceiling are that:

- 8 (1) The appropriations made in this Act are necessary to
9 serve the public interest; and
- 10 (2) The appropriations made in this Act meet the needs
11 addressed by this Act.

12 SECTION 8. New statutory material is underscored.

13 SECTION 9. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

Civic Engagement; Educational Outreach and Engagement Program;
Resource Teacher; DOE; LRB; PAR; Appropriations; Expenditure
Ceiling

Description:

Requires the Public Access Room to establish and maintain an outreach and engagement program for primary, secondary, post-secondary, and community education. Requires the Department of Education and University of Hawaii to assign appropriate staff to coordinate with the public access room for the outreach and engagement program. Establishes two full-time equivalent permanent civic education resource teacher positions. Appropriates funds to the Legislative Reference Bureau for two full-time equivalent positions to assist in effectuating this requirement. Appropriates funds to the Department of Education for the expansion of civic education in the public schools. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

