

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 05

, 2025

RE: H.B. No. 626
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred H.B. No. 626 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to appropriate funds to the Department of Education to expand the Ho'ākea Program.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Education; Mayor of the County of Hawai'i; one member of the Hawai'i County Council; Department of Parks and Recreation of the County of Hawai'i; Kingdom Pathways; Mālama Learning Center; Mālama 'Āina Foundation; Hui O Wa'a Kaulua; Ka'ala Farm; La'i'ōpua 2020; Kuleana Coral Restoration; Maui Hulia Foundation; and numerous individuals.

Your Committee finds that the Department of Education's Ho'ākea: Mauka to Makai Navigating our Future Program is designed to educate students by integrating core educational concepts in math, science, social studies, civics, leadership, language, and literacy with cultural practices and traditions in 'āina and community settings, with lesson plans integrating environmental stewardship, climate change, Native Hawaiian practices, responsibility to care for community, total well-being, and a sense



of place. The Ho'ākea Program has reached over three thousand two hundred students and nearly one thousand three hundred teachers and engaged more than fifty organizations across Hawaii. Your Committee recognizes that the Department of Education cannot meet the increasing demand from schools for 'āina-based learning experiences with existing resources. This measure will provide the Department of Education with sufficient funding and enable the Department to triple engagement with the Ho'ākea Program by 2027.

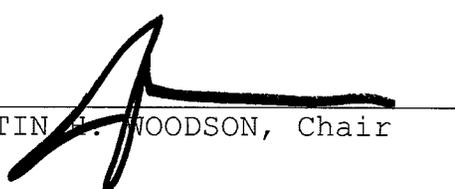
Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the amount appropriated to an unspecified amount;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Finance, should it choose to deliberate on this measure, to consider an appropriation amount of \$3,500,000 for funding for the Ho'ākea Program.

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 H.B. No. 626, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 626, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

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



JUSTIN A. WOODSON, Chair



Record of Votes of the Committee on Education

Bill/Resolution No.: HB626	Committee Referral: EDN, FIN	Date: 1/30/25		
<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. LA CHICA, Trish (VC)	/			
3. AMATO, Terez	/			
4. EVSLIN, Luke A.	/			
5. GARRETT, Andrew Takuya	/			
6. KAPELA, Jeanne				X
7. KILA, Darius K.	/			
8. OLDS, Ikaika	/			
9. SAYAMA, Jackson D.	/			
10. MURAOKA, Christopher L.	/			
11. SOUZA, Kanani	/			
TOTAL (11)	10			1
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. <div style="text-align:center; font-size: small;">committee acronym(s)</div>				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature: <u>Trish La Chica</u>				
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