

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

578

Honolulu, Hawaii

**FEB 13**, 2025

RE: H.B. No. 861  
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. 861 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Designate student transportation as critical infrastructure and a critical service for Hawaii's public education system;
- (2) Require school bus contracts to include minimum standards, performance metrics, and accountability requirements to ensure the reliability and efficiency of student transportation services; and
- (3) Require school bus contracts to include proactive planning and oversight mechanisms to prevent service disruptions and enhance contractor accountability.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Transportation; Hawai'i State Teachers Association; Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus; Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization; Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!; and five individuals. Your Committee received

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testimony in support of the intent of this measure from the Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Education.

Your Committee finds that reliable student transportation is a critical component of ensuring equitable access to education for all students in the State. Your Committee notes that in recent years, disruptions in school bus services have severely impacted families and communities, leaving students stranded and unable to attend school consistently.

Your Committee further finds that while the Department of Education includes performance metrics, penalties, and some contingency planning in its contracts with student transportation providers, these provisions are largely reactive and fail to address systemic issues. Your Committee believes that proactive measures, including robust contingency planning, stricter accountability mechanisms, and clear performance standards are necessary to prevent future cancellations, ensure consistent service, and restore public trust in the State's school transportation system.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the effective date to July 1, 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 H.B. No. 861, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 861, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.



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

  
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JUSTIN H. WOODSON, Chair



