

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 219

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 11 2025

RE: S.B. No. 527
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred S.B. No. 527 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) positions within the Civil Rights Compliance Branch of the Department of Education; and
- (2) Appropriate funds.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Education, Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission, Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, and one individual.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from one individual.

Your Committee finds that Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) ensures equity in educational settings by prohibiting discrimination based on sex. Presently, the Department of Education operates a Civil Rights Compliance Branch to address various protected class investigations,



accommodation requests, training, and support for schools and administrative offices. According to the testimony of the Department of Education, there are fifteen equity specialists. However, as each equity specialist is assigned to a specific geographic region, caseloads may not be distributed equally. Providing additional support to the Civil Rights Compliance Branch will allow for timely responses to discrimination allegations, investigations, and accommodation requests to make public educational environments safer. Therefore, this measure addresses current workload needs of the Department of Education while ensuring equity in public education.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the appropriations to unspecified amounts;
- (2) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

Your Committee notes that this measure, as amended, contains unspecified appropriation amounts. Should your Committee on Ways and Means choose to deliberate on this measure, your Committee respectfully requests that it consider inserting an appropriation amount of \$779,520 for the establishment of five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) equity specialist positions; provided that \$155,904 is allocated for each position; and \$20,000 for materials and supplies for the five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) equity specialist positions.

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. 527, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 527, 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



