

JAN 17 2025

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO PUPIL TRANSPORTATION.

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

1       SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State is  
2 currently experiencing a critical shortage of school bus  
3 drivers, which has significantly impacted the State's ability to  
4 provide reliable and efficient student transportation services,  
5 particularly in rural areas and on the neighbor islands.

6       The legislature further finds that the office of the  
7 governor issued an emergency proclamation relating to school bus  
8 services on August 2, 2024, to mitigate this pressing issue by  
9 enabling greater flexibility in student transportation services.

10 The proclamation temporarily suspends certain state laws to  
11 expedite the hiring of qualified drivers, streamline the  
12 certification process, and allow the use of alternative  
13 vehicles, including motorcoaches and smaller passenger vans, to  
14 address the immediate transportation needs of students. These  
15 measures are designed to ensure that schools can maintain safe  
16 and consistent transportation options for students despite the  
17 ongoing driver shortage. Innovative solutions, such as those



1 included in the governor's emergency proclamation, are necessary  
2 to address the growing demand for student transportation and  
3 ensure that all students have access to safe, timely, and  
4 efficient methods of getting to school.

5 The legislature also finds that while emergency  
6 proclamations are essential for immediate action, legislation is  
7 needed to codify sustainable, structured, and democratically  
8 validated solutions to the State's pressing bus driver shortage.

9 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to authorize  
10 individuals who possess a commercial driver's license with a  
11 passenger "P" endorsement to provide pupil transportation  
12 student services without also possessing a school bus "S"  
13 endorsement in certain circumstances.

14 SECTION 2. Section 286-181, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
15 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

16 "(b) The department of transportation shall grant  
17 exemptions for the use of vehicles other than school vehicles  
18 when the department finds that compliance with this section is:

19 (1) Impractical due to the unavailability of school  
20 vehicles; [~~or~~]

21 (2) Impractical due to economic factors[~~or~~]; or



1       (3) Impractical due to the unavailability of school bus  
2           drivers.

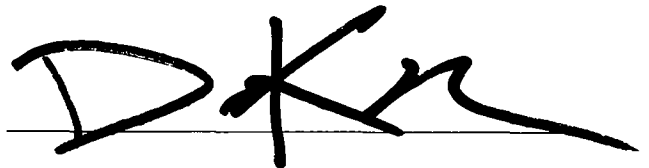
3 No exemption shall be granted for the qualifications of  
4 individuals driving a bus as defined in section 286-2 and [~~such~~]  
5 these individuals shall meet school vehicle driver  
6 qualifications~~[.]~~; provided that commercial driver's license  
7 holders shall possess a passenger "P" endorsement, but shall not  
8 be required to also hold a school bus "S" endorsement."

9       SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
10 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

11       SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY:

A large, bold, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D.K.N.', is written over a horizontal line.

# S.B. NO. 835

**Report Title:**

Department of Transportation; Department of Education; Pupil Transportation; School Bus Services

**Description:**

Authorizes individuals who possess a commercial driver's license with a passenger "P" endorsement to provide pupil transportation student services without also possessing a school bus "S" endorsement in certain circumstances.

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

