

MAR 07 2025

SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO UNDERTAKE PRELIMINARY EDUCATION, OUTREACH, AND VACCINATION DRIVE EFFORTS AT SCHOOLS IN HAWAII WITH VACCINATION RATES UNDER FIFTY PERCENT, PRIORITIZING SCHOOLS WITH VACCINATION RATES UNDER THIRTY PERCENT, BEGINNING AT THE START OF THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR.

1 WHEREAS, high vaccination rates are essential to
2 maintaining public health through herd immunity and preventing
3 the outbreak of eradicable diseases such as measles and
4 smallpox; and

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6 WHEREAS, the State recognizes the Department of Health's
7 essential work in keeping Hawaii's communities safe and healthy;
8 and

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10 WHEREAS, data from the Department of Health shows a
11 concerning drop in vaccination rates across the State's public,
12 charter, and private schools, with some private schools having
13 non-vaccination rates in excess of sixty percent; and

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15 WHEREAS, in the 2023-2024 school year, students who either
16 have no immunization record or are missing some immunizations
17 are more than triple the number of students receiving religious
18 exemptions, at 17.09 percent of all students; and

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20 WHEREAS, the State recognizes increasing community access
21 to vaccines as an essential part of any public health plan to
22 increase vaccination rates; and

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24 WHEREAS, the State further recognizes that a program of
25 increasing vaccination availability must be complemented by
26 community engagement and education about the safety and efficacy
27 of vaccines; and
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1 WHEREAS, multiple studies have shown that outreach and
2 education on the safety and efficacy of vaccines have led to
3 increased vaccination rates; and
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5 WHEREAS, a program of student education and vaccination
6 clinics carried out by the City of Seattle to increase
7 coronavirus disease 2019 vaccination was successful at
8 increasing levels of vaccination by an average of 8.8 percent
9 over a six-month period; and
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11 WHEREAS, when a public-private partnership in Washington
12 launched a vaccination campaign called "Immunity Community", it
13 was successful in reducing rates of vaccine hesitancy among
14 parents by almost ten percent over a period of three years; and
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16 WHEREAS, Michigan launched a public-private partnership
17 education program called "I Vaccinate" and achieved a twelve
18 percent increase in teen vaccination rates statewide, using
19 techniques such as parent-to-parent messaging, the maintenance
20 of a public website, and engagement through a social media
21 profile; and
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23 WHEREAS, a vaccination education program similar to that in
24 other states but adapted to Hawaii's unique cultural context
25 would be beneficial to the public health of all residents of
26 Hawaii; now, therefore,
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28 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
29 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025,
30 that the Department of Health is urged to undertake preliminary
31 education, outreach, and vaccination drive efforts at schools in
32 Hawaii with vaccination rates under fifty percent, prioritizing
33 schools with vaccination rates under thirty percent, beginning
34 at the start of the 2025-2026 school year; and
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is
37 urged to partner with the Department of Education to develop a
38 plan for a long-term program to counter vaccine hesitancy and
39 increase vaccination rates across Hawaii's schools; and
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41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is
42 requested to submit a report on the development of the long-term



1 program to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to
2 the convening of the Regular Session of 2026; provided that the
3 report include recommendations on the funding and any
4 administrative restructuring needed to effectively carry out the
5 program; and

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7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
8 Resolution be transmitted to the Superintendent of Education and
9 Director of Health.

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12 OFFERED BY:

Kal Rhoads

