
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TEACHER HOUSING.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that approximately ten
2 per cent of the State's teachers switch schools, relocate, or
3 leave the profession each year. Only fifty to sixty per cent of
4 current teachers have been at their school for five years or
5 more. Chronic teacher turnover forces the department of
6 education to rely on emergency hires and substitute teachers to
7 fill vacancies. The legislature further finds that teacher
8 recruitment and retention are especially difficult at
9 hard-to-staff schools.

10 The legislature additionally finds that Hawaii's high cost
11 of living is a significant contributing factor in the department
12 of education's teacher recruitment and retention efforts.
13 According to a WalletHub study, Hawaii ranked fifty-first out of
14 fifty states and the District of Columbia for starting teacher
15 salary and median teacher salary, adjusted for cost of living.

16 The purpose of this Act is to alleviate the financial
17 burden on teachers and improve teacher recruitment and retention



1 by establishing a teacher housing assistance program to provide
2 housing vouchers to qualified full-time teachers who are
3 employed by the department of education or a charter school and
4 teach at a hard-to-staff school, as determined by the
5 department, including public charter schools.

6 SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
7 amended by adding a new section to part III, subpart E, to be
8 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

9 "§302A- Teacher housing assistance program. (a) There
10 is established a teacher housing assistance program to be
11 administered by the department to provide housing vouchers to
12 eligible teachers. If the number of applications exceeds the
13 number of available housing vouchers, housing vouchers shall be
14 provided to eligible teachers through a lottery process.

15 (b) A housing voucher provided under this section shall be
16 used for:

- 17 (1) Rent for the eligible teacher's primary residence;
- 18 (2) Mortgage payments for the eligible teacher's primary
19 residence; or



1 (3) Down payment on residential real property; provided
2 that the property shall be the eligible teacher's
3 primary residence.

4 (c) Upon the establishment of the teacher housing
5 assistance program, the department shall develop application
6 processes, procedures, and forms necessary to implement and
7 maintain the program. The department shall work with the state
8 public charter school commission to develop a process to verify
9 that an eligible charter school teacher satisfies the criteria
10 listed in subsection (i).

11 (d) Applications for housing vouchers shall be made to the
12 department and contain the information required by rules adopted
13 by the department. At a minimum, the applicant shall:

14 (1) Be an eligible teacher;

15 (2) Agree to use state funds exclusively for the purposes
16 of this section;

17 (3) Indicate capability to properly use the voucher for
18 the purposes of this section;

19 (4) Comply with other requirements as the department may
20 require;



1 (5) Comply with all applicable federal, state, and county
2 laws, rules, and ordinances;

3 (6) Agree to indemnify and save harmless the State and its
4 officers, agents, and employees from and against any
5 and all claims arising out of or resulting from the
6 use of vouchers pursuant to this section, and procure
7 sufficient insurance to provide this indemnification
8 if requested to do so by the department; and

9 (7) Agree to make available to the department all records
10 the applicant may have relating to the voucher, to
11 allow state agencies to monitor the applicant's
12 compliance with this section.

13 (e) If a voucher recipient fails to satisfy the work
14 requirements in accordance with subsection (i)(4), the recipient
15 shall repay the total amount of voucher funds received as a loan
16 repayable to the department. The repayment shall be subject to
17 the terms and conditions set by the department, including
18 circumstances under which recipients may be eligible for
19 deferment or forgiveness due to hardship or inability to secure
20 employment and potential fees relating to the collection of
21 delinquent repayment.



1 (f) Voucher funds repaid by the voucher recipient pursuant
2 to subsection (e) shall be deposited into the teachers' housing
3 revolving fund established pursuant to section 302A-833.

4 (g) In accordance with chapter 103D, the department may
5 enter into written contracts with collection agencies to collect
6 delinquent repayment of vouchers owed to the department pursuant
7 to subsection (e). A collection agency that enters into a
8 written contract with the department to collect delinquent
9 voucher repayments pursuant to this section may collect a fee
10 from the debtor in accordance with the terms of, and up to the
11 amounts authorized in, the written contract.

12 (h) The department may adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91
13 to effectuate the purpose of this section.

14 (i) For the purposes of this section, "eligible teacher"
15 means a person who:

- 16 (1) Is a full-time teacher;
- 17 (2) Has taught at a public school or public charter school
18 in the State for at least one year before the
19 application date;
- 20 (3) Is employed by the department or a public charter
21 school;



- 1 (4) Commits to teach at a hard-to-staff school, as
- 2 determined by the department, or a public charter
- 3 school for no less than five consecutive years;
- 4 (5) Resides in the State;
- 5 (6) Does not own, operate, rent, or control any
- 6 residential real property in addition to the eligible
- 7 teacher's primary residence for which the housing
- 8 voucher is sought; and
- 9 (7) Has a household income below eighty per cent of the
- 10 area median income."

11 SECTION 3. Section 302A-833, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
 12 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

13 "(b) The revolving fund may be used by the department of
 14 education for any and all of the purposes of teachers' housing,
 15 including the ~~[planning,]~~:

16 (1) Planning, construction, maintenance, and operation of
 17 teachers' housing~~[, as well as for the salaries];~~

18 (2) Teacher housing assistance program pursuant to section
 19 302A- ; and

20 (3) Salaries of the necessary personnel in charge
 21 thereof."



1 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the teachers'
2 housing revolving fund the sum of \$ or so much thereof
3 as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the provision
4 of housing vouchers through the teacher housing assistance
5 program established by this Act.

6 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
7 education for the purposes of this Act.

8 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
9 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

10 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 31, 2055.



H.B. NO. 2122
H.D. 1
S.D. 1

Report Title:

DOE; Teacher Housing Assistance Program; Teacher Recruitment and Retention; Teachers' Housing Revolving Fund; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Teacher Housing Assistance Program to be administered by the Department of Education to provide housing vouchers to certain eligible teachers. Appropriates funds out of the Teachers' Housing Revolving Fund. Effective 7/31/2055. (SD1)

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