THE SENATE
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026
STATE OF HAWAII

S.B. NO. 2125 S.D. 1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TEACHER LICENSING.

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

SECTION 1. Section 302A-804, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

"(b) The department's powers and duties under this subpart shall be limited to:

(1) Hiring, except in emergency situations as described in this chapter, licensed teachers to teach in their fields of licensing;

(2) Reporting data annually to the board about the supply of, and demand for, teachers in department schools, including the identification of shortage areas, out-of-field teaching assignments, number of classrooms without a licensed teacher for a quarter or more, numbers of teachers teaching out-of-field, numbers and types of courses and classes taught by out-of-field teachers, and numbers and types of students taught by out-of-field teachers;

(3) On an emergency and case-by-case basis, hiring unlicensed individuals; provided that:

(A) A list of the names, work sites, teaching assignments, and progress toward licensing of these individuals shall be reported to the board and any changes shall be updated on a monthly basis by the department;

(B) There are no properly licensed teachers for the specific assignments for which the individuals are being hired; and

(C) No individual may be employed by the department on an emergency basis for more than [~~three~~] five years; provided that in the case of a declaration of a state of emergency pursuant to section 127A-14, the board, pursuant to its powers in section 302A-803(a)(18), may extend the [~~three-year~~] five-year period by authorizing an extension to complete licensing requirements. During this time, the individual shall demonstrate active pursuit of licensing in each year of employment[~~.~~] through continuous and

verifiable progress toward satisfying licensing requirements, including enrollment in an approved teacher education program, completion of relevant coursework, mentorship, application of necessary credentials, or other method approved by the board;

(4) Submitting an annual report to the board documenting:

(A) The number of emergency hires in department schools by subject matter areas and by school;

(B) The reasons and duration of employment for the emergency hiring enumerated in subparagraph (A); and

(C) The department's efforts to address the shortages described in subparagraph (A); and

(5) Providing any other information requested by the board that is pertinent to its powers and duties."

SECTION 2. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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Report Title:
DOE; Teacher Licensing; Emergency Hire; Exemptions; Licensure Progress

Description:
Permits the Department of Education to hire unlicensed individuals as teachers on an emergency basis for five, rather than three, years. Requires that unlicensed teachers hired on an emergency basis make continuous and verifiable progress toward satisfying licensing requirements. (SD1)

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