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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CIVIC EDUCATION.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that a thriving democracy  
2 depends on an engaged, informed, and empowered citizenry. Yet  
3 the systems that sustain democratic participation--critical  
4 thinking, media literacy, collaborative problem-solving, and  
5 knowledge of governmental processes--must be intentionally  
6 cultivated. For students, education received in middle school  
7 or intermediate school is a pivotal period in which young people  
8 form lasting understandings of their role in public life and  
9 their connection to community, government, and aina. To meet  
10 this moment, the State's public schools require stable,  
11 dedicated resources that expand opportunities for students to  
12 develop civic knowledge and the habits of democratic  
13 participation.

14           The legislature further finds that existing funding  
15 structures do not adequately support the development of civic  
16 knowledge for students. Civic education is often reliant on  
17 uneven school-level capacity, discretionary funds, or short-term



1 grants that cannot sustain long-range program design. These  
2 structural gaps limit access to experiential civic learning,  
3 professional development for social studies teachers, and  
4 curriculum aligned with the State's civic-mission priorities.  
5 Without a reliable funding mechanism, the State's obligation to  
6 prepare young people for informed participation in our shared  
7 governance is weakened, and disparities in civic opportunity  
8 widen.

9 The legislature also finds that to address the systemic  
10 challenges that impede the pursuit of civic knowledge, a special  
11 fund dedicated solely to advancing civic education in the  
12 State's public middle and intermediate schools is needed. By  
13 establishing a permanent, purpose-restricted funding source, the  
14 legislature affirms that civic education is a core public good  
15 essential to the health of our democratic systems and will  
16 ensure that every middle and intermediate school student in  
17 Hawaii, regardless of geography, income, or school resources,  
18 has meaningful access to high-quality civic-learning  
19 opportunities that prepare them to participate fully in the life  
20 of the State's democracy.



1           Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to strengthen  
2 Hawaii's civic infrastructure by establishing a civic education  
3 grant program and civic education trust fund and dedicating  
4 their use exclusively to support civic education in Hawaii's  
5 public middle and intermediate schools.

6           SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
7 amended by adding two new sections to be appropriately  
8 designated and to read as follows:

9           "§302A-A Civic education grant program; establishment;  
10 administration. (a) There is established within the department  
11 for administrative purposes a civic education grant program, to  
12 be administered by the department's office of curriculum and  
13 instructional design, to support public middle and intermediate  
14 schools in providing civic education to students through  
15 department-approved programming that shall be integrated within  
16 existing social studies curricula.

17           (b) Applications for grants shall be made to the  
18 department. At a minimum, the applicant shall:

19           (1) Provide a detailed plan outlining the scope,  
20 objectives, and projected impact of the project or



- 1           projects and a clear breakdown of how grant funds will  
2           be used;
- 3           (2) Agree to use state funds exclusively for the purposes  
4           of this program;
- 5           (3) Indicate capability to properly use the grant for the  
6           purpose of the grant program;
- 7           (4) Comply with all applicable federal and state laws  
8           prohibiting discrimination against any person on the  
9           basis of race, color, national origin, religion,  
10           creed, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, or  
11           any other characteristic protected under applicable  
12           federal or state law;
- 13           (5) Agree not to use state funds for purposes of  
14           entertainment or perquisites;
- 15           (6) Comply with other requirements as the department may  
16           prescribe;
- 17           (7) Comply with all applicable federal, state, and county  
18           statutes, rules, and ordinances;
- 19           (8) Agree to indemnify and save harmless the State of  
20           Hawaii and its officers, agents, and employees from  
21           and against any and all claims arising out of or



1           resulting from activities carried out or projects  
2           undertaken with funds provided hereunder and procure  
3           sufficient insurance to provide this indemnification  
4           if requested to do so by the department; and

5       (9) Agree to make available to the department all records  
6           the applicant may have relating to the grant to allow  
7           state agencies to monitor the applicant's compliance  
8           with this subsection.

9       (c) Grant awards shall be funded by the civic education  
10       trust fund established pursuant to section 302A-B; provided that  
11       no grant shall be awarded without the approval of a social  
12       studies educational specialist pursuant to section 302A-B(d).

13       (d) Each participating school shall submit an annual  
14       report to the department no later than December 1 of each year  
15       on how awarded grant funds were used to further civic education,  
16       including updates or status reports on the following:

17       (1) Implementation of civic education programming and  
18           curriculum;

19       (2) Teacher development; and



1       (3) Progress in meeting any evaluation metrics for civic  
2       education programming as established by the  
3       department.

4       (e) The department shall compile the reports received from  
5       participating schools pursuant to subsection (d) into one report  
6       and submit the report to the legislature no later than twenty  
7       days prior to the convening of each regular session.

8       (f) The department may adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91  
9       necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.

10       **§302A-B Civic education trust fund; established.** (a)

11       There is established within the state treasury a civic education  
12       trust fund to be administered by the office of curriculum and  
13       instructional design of the department.

14       (b) The civic education trust fund shall consist of:

15       (1) Any appropriations made by the legislature;

16       (2) Grants, gifts, and donations from public sources,  
17       including federal funding, or private sources; and

18       (3) Interest or other income earned from the investment of  
19       moneys in the fund.

20       (c) The department shall expend moneys in the civic  
21       education trust fund exclusively to support civic education



1 programming, curriculum implementation, teacher professional  
2 development, and student civic-learning opportunities in public  
3 middle and intermediate schools, including through the provision  
4 of funding for grants under the civic education grant program  
5 established pursuant to section 302A-A.

6 (d) Expenditures from the civic education trust fund shall  
7 be approved by a social studies educational specialist, as  
8 designated by the superintendent.

9 (e) The department shall submit an annual report on the  
10 civic education trust fund to the legislature no later than  
11 twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session. The  
12 report shall include:

- 13 (1) Expenditures from and contributions to the trust fund  
14 during the preceding fiscal year; and  
15 (2) Results and outcomes achieved from expenditures from  
16 the trust fund.

17 (f) Moneys deposited into or appropriated to the trust  
18 fund shall remain available until they are obligated or until  
19 the trust fund is terminated. If the trust fund is terminated,  
20 all funds, including interest or other income earned from the



1 investment of moneys in the fund, shall be transferred to the  
2 general fund."

3 SECTION 3. In codifying the new sections added by section  
4 2 of this Act, the revisor of statutes shall substitute  
5 appropriate section numbers for the letters used in designating  
6 the new sections in this Act.

7 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

8 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



# S.B. NO. 2754 S.D. 1

**Report Title:**

Department of Education; Civic Education; Public Middle Schools;  
Public Intermediate Schools; Civic Education Grant Program;  
Civic Education Trust Fund; Reports

**Description:**

Establishes a Civic Education Grant Program to provide support to public middle and intermediate schools in providing civic education to students through department approved programming. Establishes a Civic Education Trust Fund. Requires reports to the Legislature. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD1)

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