

MAR 10 2026

SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE COST AND BENEFITS OF HIRING MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS FOR EVERY PUBLIC SCHOOL AND OF DISTRIBUTING GUIDELINES ON TELEHEALTH SAFE SPACES.

1 WHEREAS, there is an urgent and growing mental health
2 crisis among the youth of the United States; and

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4 WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and
5 Prevention, rates of depressive symptoms and suicidal thoughts
6 among students have increased significantly in recent years; and

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8 WHEREAS, in the State, the mental health crisis is made
9 worse by a shortage of mental health professionals; and

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11 WHEREAS, despite the use of telehealth services to make up
12 for the lack of mental health professionals, young patients
13 utilizing telehealth have declined in recent years, as reported
14 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and

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16 WHEREAS, reasons for the decline in the use of telehealth
17 services may be attributed to the absence of a safe and quiet
18 space to conduct impactful virtual sessions, especially during
19 school hours; and

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21 WHEREAS, public schools play a vital role in addressing the
22 issue of youth mental health due to their supervision over
23 students for most of the hours of the day, for most of the weeks
24 of the year; now, therefore,

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26 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
27 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,
28 that the Department of Education, in consultation with the
29 Department of Health, is urged to conduct a study on the cost
30 and benefits of hiring one mental health professional for every
31 two hundred fifty students that are enrolled in a public school
32 and one mental health professional for every public school with
33 fewer than two hundred fifty students; and



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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study is requested to include an analysis of the costs and benefits arising from the development of guidelines for the establishment and operation of safe spaces for students to access telehealth services on school property during normal school hours and from the distribution of the guidelines to each public middle and high school in the State; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is requested to submit a report of its study, including any findings, recommendations, and proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2027; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Education, Superintendent of Education, and Director of Health.

OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'ASL', written over a horizontal line.