

MAR 16 2026

SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, IN COORDINATION WITH THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO TRANSITION THE SCHOOL BUSES USED FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION TO ELECTRIC BUSES TO EXPAND THE BENEFITS ALREADY DEMONSTRATED IN OTHER PLACES.

1 WHEREAS, section 225P-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, directs
2 the State to sequester more atmospheric carbon and greenhouse
3 gases than emitted within the State as quickly as practicable,
4 but no later than 2045; and

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6 WHEREAS, section 226-18(2), Hawaii Revised Statutes,
7 directs increased energy security and self-sufficiency through
8 reduction and ultimate elimination of the State's dependence on
9 imported fuels for electrical generation and ground
10 transportation; and

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12 WHEREAS, section 225P-8, Hawaii Revised Statutes, directs
13 the State to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve zero
14 emissions across all transportation modes, including ground
15 transportation and interisland sea and air transportation, and
16 each department, board, and commission to incorporate these
17 goals into their plans and take actions necessary to achieve
18 them; and

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20 WHEREAS, in the 2024 to 2025 school year, the Oakland
21 Unified School District partnered with Zum to deploy seventy-
22 four electric school buses, creating the first fully electrified
23 fleet of a major United States school district; and

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25 WHEREAS, the Oakland transition to electric school buses
26 has already produced noticeable benefits, including electric
27 buses with expected lifespans twice those of traditional fossil
28 fuel school buses, reductions in cost for fuel, maintenance, and
29 related expenses, and has opened the door to additional revenue
30 for the school district by providing power from the buses back
31 to the electric grid in peak periods of high demand; and

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1 WHEREAS, Oakland's new generation of school buses were
2 specifically designed to be safer, easier to operate, and have
3 cleaner air within each bus, eliminating the exposure of
4 students to noxious fumes present in traditional buses; and
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6 WHEREAS, the switch to electric buses has also resulted in
7 more students arriving to school on time and overall higher
8 student attendance, as students and parents are able to better
9 plan by tracking each bus online in real time and receive
10 automatic notifications when a student is dropped off, enabling
11 parents to better rely on school bus transportation and freeing
12 their schedules for work and other responsibilities; and
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14 WHEREAS, Oakland's transition to electric school buses is
15 reducing greenhouse gas emissions by approximately twenty-five
16 thousand metric tons annually and returning approximately 2.1
17 gigawatt-hours of electricity to the grid each year, enough to
18 power hundreds of homes during peak demand; and
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20 WHEREAS, Oakland's electric school bus fleet has also
21 become an invaluable tool for disaster response, as each
22 electric school bus is a giant battery on wheels which is able
23 to provide immediate mobile emergency power and support to any
24 community in the event of a disaster such as a hurricane or
25 wildfire; and
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27 WHEREAS, since 2015 the laws of the State have directed
28 state departments to begin transitioning to electric
29 transportation and exploring innovative transportation
30 technologies for public services that can produce numerous
31 benefits; now, therefore,
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33 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
34 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,
35 that the Department of Education, in coordination with the Board
36 of Education, is urged to develop a plan to transition the
37 school buses used for public transportation to electric buses to
38 expand the benefits already demonstrated in other places; and
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40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education and
41 Board of Education and any other appropriate stakeholders are
42 requested to meet and collaborate with school districts, such as



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1 the Oakland Unified School District, which have already made the
2 transition to electric school buses to evaluate the potential
3 benefits for the State; and

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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education and
6 Board of Education are requested to develop a plan to transition
7 to electric school busses to maximize benefit to the students,
8 parents, and people of the State; and

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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education and
11 the Board of Education are requested to submit a report of their
12 findings and any recommendations, including a proposed
13 implementation plan, to the Legislature no later than twenty
14 days before the convening of the Regular Session of 2027; and

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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
17 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Superintendent of
18 Education, and Chairperson of the Board of Education.

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OFFERED BY: _____

