

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **3385**

Honolulu, Hawaii

**MAR 30 2026**

RE: H.B. No. 1780  
H.D. 1  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2026  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred H.B. No. 1780, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO STUDENT TRANSPORTATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the Department of Education to establish a student bus fare rate system that includes free bus passes for students who meet certain statutory requirements;
- (2) Require reports to the Legislature; and
- (3) Appropriate funds.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Hawai'i State Teachers Association, Hawai'i Public Health Institute, Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law & Economic Justice, Aloha Independent Living Hawaii, Teach for America Hawai'i, and one individual.



Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Education, Department of the Attorney General, and 350Hawaii.

Your Committee finds that access to reliable transportation presents a practical barrier that prevents many students from consistently accessing public education. Transportation is a critical factor in school attendance, academic success, and family stability. The existing student transportation services allotment system, however, relies primarily on a first-come, first-served model that may inadvertently disadvantage working families with limited time, internet access, and language resources. This measure will provide certain students facing financial hardship with free school bus transportation, thereby promoting fair access to education, reduced absenteeism, and support for families.

Your Committee acknowledges the concerns raised in testimony by the Department of the Attorney General that references throughout this measure to "free bus passes" may be misconstrued as including free municipal bus passes, in addition to free school bus passes, which is not the Legislature's intent. Therefore, amendments to this measure are necessary to address this matter.

Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting the word "school" before the phrases "bus pass" and "bus passes", where appropriate throughout the measure, including section 1 to reflect its amended purpose;
- (2) Inserting an effective date of July 31, 2055, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making a technical, nonsubstantive amendment for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Education that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1780, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1780, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Education,



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DONNA MERCADO KIM, Chair



