

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 17 , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1840
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred H.B. No. 1840 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to require the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board to develop an alternative pathway for a visiting international educator permit aligned to the duration of the educator's J-1 visa program.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Education; State Health Planning and Development Agency; The Legal Clinic; Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights; League of Women Voters of Hawaii; Roots Reborn; Teacher Lounge; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board.

Your Committee finds that the BridgeUSA J-1 visa program, administered by the United States Department of State, offers foreign teachers an opportunity to teach in accredited schools in the United States servicing students in grades kindergarten through twelve. Since its implementation, the J-1 visa program has been of great success, bringing in 365 internationally



certified educators, primarily from the Philippines, to serve in 101 public schools statewide.

Your Committee further finds that the State's existing licensing rules hinder the full potential of prospective teachers for the J-1 visa program. The State's existing licensure reciprocity policies also do not adequately recognize the international qualifications of J-1 teachers. By requiring the Hawaii Teachers Standards Board to develop an alternative licensing pathway for these teachers, this measure will ensure that the State recognizes and benefits from having highly qualified internationally certified educators.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

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. 1840, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1840, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce.

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



JUSTIN H. WOODSON, Chair



