

Honolulu, Hawaii

, 2026

**FEB 12**

RE: H.B. No. 1997  
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. 1997 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES,"  
begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Authorize the inclusion of language addressing individualized accommodations and supports during emergency situations and evacuations in individualized education programs for students with disabilities; and
- (2) Require the Department of Education to provide guidance to Department schools on how to support individualized education program teams in addressing the individualized accommodations and supports.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawai'i State Council on Developmental Disabilities; Hawaii Disability Rights Center; BAYADA Behavioral Health; and one individual. Your Committee received testimony in support of the intent of this measure from the Department of Education.

Your Committee finds that students with disabilities may require individualized accommodations or supports during



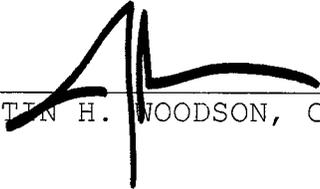
emergencies or evacuations, and these needs are not always adequately addressed in existing school-level emergency planning. Your Committee further finds that ensuring the safety of students with disabilities during emergency situations and evacuations is a critical component of providing an equitable and inclusive educational environment and will strengthen emergency preparedness across Department of Education schools.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Specifying that the school, rather than the school's educational officers, shall provide support to the applicable individualized education program team in developing the individualized accommodation and support language during emergency situations and evacuations; and
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000.

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. 1997, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1997, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Public Safety.

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

  
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JUSTIN H. WOODSON, Chair



