

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 30 , 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2125
S.D. 1
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 Labor, to which was referred S.B. No. 2125,
S.D. 1, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO TEACHER LICENSING,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Authorize the Department of Education to hire unlicensed individuals as teachers on an emergency basis for five years, rather than three years; and
- (2) Require that unlicensed teachers hired on an emergency basis make continuous and verifiable progress toward satisfying teacher licensing requirements.


Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the University of Hawai'i System; Department of Education; Executive Office on Early Learning; Hawai'i State Teachers Association; The Legal Clinic; Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights; Roots Reborn; Teacher Lounge; and six individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board.



Your Committee finds that the State continues to face persistent teacher shortages, particularly in hard-to-fill subject areas, early learning classrooms, and neighbor island schools, resulting in ongoing reliance on emergency hires to maintain instructional continuity. The existing three-year limit for emergency hire permits does not adequately reflect the practical challenges of completing licensure requirements while teaching full-time, including limited access to approved preparation programs, testing constraints, and workforce pipeline barriers. Your Committee believes that providing a longer, clearly defined pathway with accountability for demonstrated progress toward licensure will improve teacher retention, stabilize classrooms, and support the development of a fully licensed and prepared educator workforce for Hawaii's public schools.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Labor that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2125, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance.

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



JACKSON D. SAKAMA, Chair



