

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

EDWIN H. SNIFFEN
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

Deputy Directors
Nā Hope Luna Ho'okele
DREANALEE K. KALILI
TAMMY L. LEE
CURT T. OTAGURO
ROBIN K. SHISHIDO

Thursday, April 15, 2026
10:05 a.m.
State Capitol, 430

SCR31
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, IN COORDINATION
WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TO EVALUATE AND RECOMMEND
IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LICENSING, TRAINING, AND WORKFORCE PIPELINE
FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS IN THE STATE.

House Committee on Transportation

The Department of Transportation (DOT) supports SCR31. This resolution appropriately requests that the DOT, in coordination with the Department of Education, evaluate and recommend improvements to the licensing, training, and workforce pipeline for school bus drivers in the State of Hawaii.

The resolution addresses critical challenges facing the school transportation system, including persistent shortages of qualified drivers, service disruptions, and inequitable access to education for students in rural and neighbor island communities.

The DOT recognizes the importance of improving access to commercial driver's licensing (CDL), especially in geographically isolated areas where testing availability and scheduling capacity remain significant barriers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this resolution.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 04/15/2026

Time: 10:05 AM

Location: 430 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: TRN

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SCR31, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TO EVALUATE AND RECOMMEND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LICENSING, TRAINING, AND WORKFORCE PIPELINE FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS IN THE STATE.

Purpose of Bill: Requesting The Department Of Transportation, In Coordination With The Department Of Education, To Evaluate And Recommend Improvements To The Licensing, Training, And Workforce Pipeline For School Bus Drivers In The State.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) would like to provide comments on SCR 31 requesting the Department of Transportation (DOT), in coordination with the Department, to evaluate and recommend improvements to licensing, training, and workforce pipeline for school bus drivers.

While the Department supports the resolution's intent to partner with DOT to streamline licensing procedures and strengthen coordination between the Departments, it is important to acknowledge that the primary challenge is not regulatory complexity but a persistent lack of willing applicants.

Even with an efficient licensing and training system, recruitment will remain difficult due to limited applicants interested in this position. Current school bus contractors already focus their efforts on hiring and retention, such as increased compensation, more predictable schedules, retention incentives, and targeted recruitment strategies. These will likely have a far greater impact on stabilizing the workforce than procedural changes alone.

The Department appreciates the Legislature's attention to this issue and thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide comments on SCR 31.

**DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA LAWELAWE KUPA
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

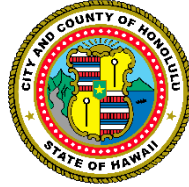
ADMINISTRATION

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RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA

KIMBERLY M. HASHIRO
DIRECTOR
PO'O

MEGAN JOHNSON
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O



April 13, 2026

The Honorable Darius K. Kila, Chair
The Honorable Tyson K. Miyake, Vice Chair
and Members of the House Committee on Transportation
State Capitol, Conference Room 430
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the House Committee on Transportation:

SUBJECT: S.C.R. No. 31 - Requesting the Department of Transportation, in Coordination with the Department of Education, to Evaluate and Recommend Improvements to the Licensing, Training, and Workforce Pipeline for School Bus Drivers in the State

HEARING: Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 10:05 a.m.

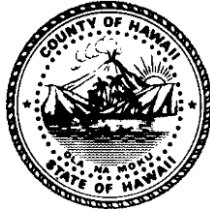
The City and County of Honolulu, Department of Customer Services (CSD) respectfully offers testimony in **support** of S.C.R. No. 31 for your committee's consideration. Pursuant to Section 6-402 of the Revised Charter of the City and County of Honolulu, CSD Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) administers the motor vehicle driver licensing program for the island of O'ahu.

CSD supports this resolution because it provides a meaningful opportunity to strengthen Hawai'i's workforce while maintaining appropriate licensing standards. For this reason, the Department of Customer Services **supports** S.C.R. No. 31 and thanks you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Kimberly M. Hashiro
Director

C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor



William V. Brilhante, Jr.
Managing Director

Merrick Nishimoto
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i ~ Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • Phone (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
Phone (808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

Testimony of
C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor, County of Hawai'i

Before the House Committee on
Transportation
Rep. Darius Kila, Chair
Rep. Tyson K. Miyake, Vice Chair

Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 10:05 a.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 430 & Videoconference

In consideration of
Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 31
Requesting the Department of Transportation, in coordination with the Department of Education, to evaluate and recommend improvements to the licensing, training, and workforce pipeline for school bus drivers in the state.

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the Committee on Transportation,

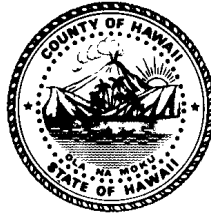
Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 31.

As Mayor of the County of Hawai'i, I see firsthand the essential role that reliable school transportation plays in ensuring our keiki have equitable access to education, especially in our island's rural communities. Persistent shortages of qualified school bus drivers have directly impacted students and families, leading to route cancellations, service disruptions, and increased barriers to regular school attendance.

The challenges facing our school bus workforce, including limited access to commercial driver's licensing, a complex credentialing process, and geographic inequities, are particularly acute on the neighbor islands. Addressing these barriers is critical to recruiting and retaining the drivers we need to safely transport our keiki.

I respectfully urge support for this measure to strengthen interagency coordination, improve licensing and training pathways, and expand opportunities for those interested in serving as school bus drivers.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 31.



HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

County of Hawai'i
West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

April 13, 2026

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Rep. Darius K. Kila, Chair

Rep. Tyson K. Miyake, Vice Chair

RE: **Support for SCR31**, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TO EVALUATE AND RECOMMEND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LICENSING, TRAINING, AND WORKFORCE PIPELINE FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS IN THE STATE.

Hearing: **April 15, 2026 at 10:45 a.m.**

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I strongly support S.C.R. No. 31 and its request for a comprehensive evaluation of the State's school bus driver licensing, training, and workforce pipeline.

Hawai'i County faces unique transportation challenges due to its size, rural character, and dispersed communities. Many students rely heavily on school bus services to access public education. Ongoing shortages of qualified school bus drivers have resulted in service disruptions that directly impact student attendance, family stability, and overall educational equity.

This measure appropriately recognizes that the issue is not simply one of recruitment, but of systemic barriers within the current licensing and training framework. Limited access to commercial driver's licensing, especially on neighbor islands, testing delays, and coordination challenges between state agencies and private contractors all contribute to workforce shortages.

By requesting a coordinated evaluation, this resolution creates an opportunity to identify practical, achievable improvements. Expanding access to testing, strengthening partnerships with community colleges and workforce development programs, and better aligning licensing pathways with workforce needs are all important strategies that merit careful consideration.

I also support the emphasis on interagency collaboration and stakeholder engagement. Addressing these challenges will require coordination across state departments, counties, transportation providers, and workforce partners to ensure solutions are both effective and responsive to community needs.

Improving the school bus driver pipeline will help ensure that students across Hawai'i—particularly in rural and underserved areas—have reliable and consistent access to education.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of S.C.R. No. 31. I respectfully urge your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,



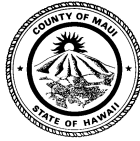
HOLEKA GORO INABA, Ed.D.,
Council Chair, District 8, North Kona

HGI.wpb

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

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Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez
Shane M. Sinenci
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins



Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

April 14, 2026

TO: The Honorable Darius K. Kila, Chair
House Committee on Transportation

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF APRIL 15, 2026; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SCR 31, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TO EVALUATE AND RECOMMEND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LICENSING, TRAINING, AND WORKFORCE PIPELINE FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS IN THE STATE.**

I **support** this measure to request the Department of Transportation, in coordination with the Department of Education, to evaluate and recommend improvements to the licensing, training, and workforce pipeline for school bus drivers in the State.

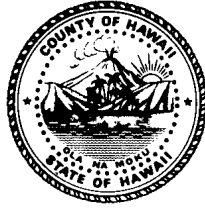
The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **support** this measure for the following reasons:

1. Reliable school transportation is critical to ensuring consistent access to education, particularly for students in rural and neighbor island communities where transportation options are limited.
2. The ongoing shortage of qualified school bus drivers has resulted in route cancellations and service disruptions that negatively impact students and families, especially those with limited alternatives.
3. This measure takes a coordinated and practical approach by identifying barriers in licensing, training, and workforce development, and by seeking solutions that can strengthen the long-term pipeline of qualified drivers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jennifer Kagiwada
Council Member District 2 South Hilo



Office: (808) 961-8272
jennifer.kagiwada@hawaiicounty.gov

HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 2

25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

DATE: April 14, 2026
TO: House Committee on Transportation
FROM: Jennifer Kagiwada, Council Member
Council District 2
SUBJECT: SCR31/SR27

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Committee Members,

I strongly support SCR31/SR27. Hawaii's ongoing school bus driver shortage has created serious and inequitable barriers to students' access to education, particularly for families in rural and neighbor island communities where school bus routes are delayed, reduced, or eliminated altogether. Additionally, traffic concerns are compounded due to a lack of bus options for families, which impacts everyone.

The bus driver shortages disproportionately impact working families, kūpuna caregivers, and students who rely on school bus transportation as their primary means of getting to and from school. System-level obstacles such as limited local access to licensing and training opportunities make it especially difficult for neighbor island residents to enter and remain in the profession. Without coordinated statewide support, these disparities will continue to widen, leaving already underserved communities without reliable and safe student transportation. We need quick action and solutions for this ongoing problem.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenn Kagiwada".

Jenn Kagiwada