

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 502 -08

Honolulu, Hawaii

Feb 15, 2008

RE: H.B. No. 3072  
H.D. 2

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2008  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Labor & Public Employment, to which was referred H.B. No. 3072, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE HAWAII HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this bill is to assist the state in meeting the challenges of a global economy by improving access to, and the quality of, higher education. Specifically, this bill expands the State Post-Secondary Education Commission as follows:

- (1) Renames it the Hawaii Higher Education Commission (Commission);
- (2) Removes the members of the Board of Regents and broadens the Commission's membership to include representatives of public and private institutions of higher education, government, and business;
- (3) Provides for the initial appointment and election of the Commission's chair;
- (4) Allows for the Commission to receive funds from other sources to carry out its mandated functions;



- (5) Requires the Commission to propose and manage a program to provide incentives for individuals wishing to obtain higher education;
- (6) Authorizes the Commission to evaluate elementary and secondary public schools in the state, including their ability to prepare students for post-secondary education;
- (7) Authorizes the Commission to review and recommend policies that increase the rate of students pursuing post-secondary education; and
- (8) Specifies that the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) and the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations are to assist in the Commission's efforts.

DBEDT and an individual testified in support of this bill. The Department of Education (DOE) did not support the bill as currently drafted. The University of Hawaii commented on this measure.

Hawaii is facing increased challenges to meet the ever changing demands of a global economy. Today, many employers require their employees to have some form of postsecondary education for their business to compete in the complex national and international markets. This has changed the way education is looked at since a high school diploma, or even a bachelor's degree, is no longer a standard by which to judge an individual's employability. Amending the membership of the Commission and empowering it with additional authority to carry out its mission is a first step in preparing Hawaii's residents to meet the needs of a challenging world.

However, your Committee notes the concerns raised by DOE that giving the Commission the authority to evaluate elementary and secondary public schools in the state is in direct conflict with the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Education. Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by deleting this function of the Commission.

Additionally, this measure has been amended by:

- (1) Changing its effective date to July 1, 2059, to encourage further discussion; and



- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Labor & Public Employment that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 3072, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to the Committee on Finance in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 3072, H.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Labor & Public  
Employment,



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ALEX M. SONSON, Chair



