
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY
STUDY ON CONVERTING HARD COVER TEXT BOOKS TO E-BOOKS FOR
USE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

1 WHEREAS, textbook shortages continue to be an issue for
2 many Hawaii schools; and
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4 WHEREAS, the average weight of a backpack in middle school
5 can be as much as twenty pounds, and some doctors recommend that
6 individuals never carry more than ten per cent of their body
7 weight to avoid injury; and
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9 WHEREAS, some schools do not have enough textbooks to allow
10 students to bring them home to study; and
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12 WHEREAS, textbooks typically cost between \$60 and \$90 each,
13 and even when there are enough books for each student in a
14 class, they can sometimes be too valuable to be allowed to leave
15 the classroom; and
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17 WHEREAS, an insufficient number of textbooks in a classroom
18 can cripple the teacher's ability to teach and the student's
19 ability to learn; and
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21 WHEREAS, maintaining updated textbooks for every public
22 school student in the State would cost tens of millions of
23 dollars; and
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25 WHEREAS, even when textbooks are relatively current, they
26 cannot provide a complete curriculum, and teachers must
27 supplement their lesson plans with handouts on the latest
28 research; and
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30 WHEREAS, the academic landscape has expanded to include a
31 range of resources that were technologically impossible a few



1 years ago, and the traditional textbook may no longer be
2 considered as central to a curriculum as it once was; and

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4 WHEREAS, e-books are text documents that have been
5 converted and "published" in a digital format that display on
6 specialized reading devices or computers; and

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8 WHEREAS, e-books can be stored and read on laptops, pocket
9 computers, and e-book reading devices for access at any time,
10 and a gigabyte of computer chip storage space can contain two
11 hundred illustrated reference books, three hundred fifty legal
12 volumes, or about two thousand five hundred six hundred-page
13 novels; and

14
15 WHEREAS, e-books can present text in a more user-friendly
16 style than traditional books, be electronically read aloud, and
17 can allow users to adjust text size, bookmark a page, take notes
18 within a book, highlight portions of the text, add drawings,
19 look up definitions, search within the text, and copy and paste
20 selected text to other programs; and

21
22 WHEREAS, converting textbooks to an e-book format would
23 make textbooks accessible to students who are blind or visually
24 impaired without the necessity of converting the print format to
25 braille; and

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27 WHEREAS, e-book software could be updated more often and at
28 lower costs to schools over time; and

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30 WHEREAS, e-books can be considered stronger, dynamic,
31 interactive versions of traditional textbooks that use computer
32 programs that can respond in real time to a student's work with
33 personalized feedback, thereby tailoring and improving the
34 learning experience to meet the individual needs of the student;
35 and

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37 WHEREAS, these online textbooks can provide on-demand
38 suggestions, guided solutions, quizzes, and multiple problem
39 examples and explanations; and

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41 WHEREAS, e-books allow students to learn at their own pace,
42 without the time pressure or fear of answering incorrectly in
43 front of their peers, which can be present in a group learning
44 situation; and



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2 WHEREAS, there are many online libraries and organizations
3 that make available a large number of e-books for little or no
4 cost; and
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6 WHEREAS, e-books permit teachers to work more effectively
7 with a range of students, allowing faster learners to forge
8 ahead while giving other students more time to grasp certain
9 concepts; now, therefore,
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11 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
12 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009, the
13 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
14 Education is requested to conduct a feasibility study on
15 converting hard cover text books to e-books for use in public
16 schools; and
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study shall include a
19 review of accessibility features for students who are blind or
20 visually impaired; and
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22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study shall include
23 feedback from individuals who are blind or visually impaired
24 regarding the use of e-books and screenreader technologies to
25 ensure accessibility for all students; and
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27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study shall include, but
28 not be limited to, considerations of cost and computer
29 accessibility; and
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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education
32 shall report its findings and recommendations, including cost
33 estimates, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to
34 the convening of the Regular Session of 2010; and
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
37 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Superintendent of
38 Education.
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