

WRITTEN COMMENTS

Date: 02/28/2012

Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2654,SD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Prohibits the DOE from transferring funds from EDN 100 to any other program.

Department's Position:

The Department is **opposed** to this bill.

The Department appreciates the amendments made to this bill as introduced to address many of the concerns raised in our previous testimony on this measure. The concern that remains is this measure would prohibit the Department from transferring funds from EDN 100. If the Department lacked this ability to transfer funds from the EDN 100 program in the current fiscal year the Department would have been unable to transfer a portion of the savings created by the use of the federal Education Jobs grant to meet the shortfall in the Student Transportation budget in EDN 400 or the Skilled Nursing program shortfall in EDN 150. First introduced in Congress on June 30, 2010 the Education Jobs grant was signed into law on August 10, 2010. This grant was awarded to assist school districts in maintaining educational and related services during the period of economic recovery. Federal guidelines require that these funds be directly expended for salaries of school level employees, and by design did not impose restrictions on how the savings realized by the school systems budgets could be used. After consulting with the Administration and the Legislature the Department has maintained Skilled Nursing and Student Transportation services this fiscal year with a transfer of general funds from EDN 100 to EDN 150 and 400. Without this flexibility the options available to the Department would have been to seek an emergency appropriation or immediately and drastically reduce services.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.