
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TASK FORCE TO STUDY AND MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING SCHOOL SAFETY.

1 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that schools should be
2 places of safety and security for children of all ages; and
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4 WHEREAS, the tragic 2012 school shooting in Newtown,
5 Connecticut, highlights the need to re-evaluate safety
6 procedures currently in place; and
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8 WHEREAS, although the doors to the school automatically
9 locked once classes began and identification was demanded of
10 visitors, the perpetrator, a stranger to the school, was able to
11 force his way into the school, where he killed twenty children
12 and six adults; and
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14 WHEREAS, according to witnesses, school staff attempted to
15 protect students by locking classroom doors, hiding them in
16 closets, or barricading them in other rooms; and
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18 WHEREAS, in the wake of that and similar tragedies, the
19 State of Hawaii should examine ways to increase school security;
20 and
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22 WHEREAS, due to such tragedies, a number of Hawaii public
23 school teachers have requested that they have the capability to
24 lock classroom doors from the inside of a classroom, without the
25 need to open the doors; and
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27 WHEREAS, while the crimes committed at the Newtown,
28 Connecticut school shooting were particularly heinous,
29 statistics show that it is more likely that such violent acts at
30 schools tend to be perpetrated by students or individuals who
31 are already attending or working within a school; and
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33 WHEREAS, such incidents can be prevented in part through,
34 among other factors, building respect within schools, and
35 addressing student needs; and



1
2 WHEREAS, the Department of Education has a Safety Committee
3 comprised of its Superintendents, whose members meet quarterly
4 to review and discuss safety-related issues; and
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6 WHEREAS, public schools in Hawaii also have school-level
7 Safety Committees, established through the Department of
8 Education's internal policies, that are designed to meet
9 quarterly, discuss safety-related issues such as injuries,
10 drills, and emergency measures, and provide minutes of their
11 meetings to the Department's Safety, Security, and Emergency
12 Preparedness Branch; and
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14 WHEREAS, unlike other States, Hawaii has a statewide public
15 education system, which is the tenth largest public school
16 system in the nation; and
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18 WHEREAS, unlike Hawaii, large education systems in some
19 other jurisdictions have their own police forces; and
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21 WHEREAS, due to the uniqueness of Hawaii's school system,
22 cooperation between the Department of Education and county law
23 enforcement officers is crucial to the promotion of school
24 safety; now, therefore,
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26 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
27 Twenty-seventh Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
28 Session of 2013, that the Department of Education is requested
29 to establish a Task Force that will study and make
30 recommendations on the enhancement of safety in all Hawaii
31 schools; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, more specifically, the Task
34 Force is requested to study and make determinations regarding:
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- 36 (1) The effectiveness of current school safety measures
37 such as lockdowns and emergency drills;
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39 (2) Verification on whether school safety measures are
40 continuing to improve;
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42 (3) The need for the appropriation of funds toward
43 promoting school safety, with a focus on the funding
44 of the professional development of law enforcement



1 officers for the purpose of instructing them on crime
2 prevention within schools;

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4 (4) The propriety of amending relevant law to allow the
5 installation of locking mechanisms that safely lock a
6 door from the inside of a classroom;

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8 (5) The feasibility of:

9 (A) Replacing locks on existing public school
10 classroom doors with mechanisms that lock from
11 inside the classroom, whenever the existing locks
12 need to be replaced due to wear and tear, damage,
13 or other related reasons; and

14 (B) Fitting any new public school classroom doors
15 with mechanisms that lock from inside the
16 classroom;

17 provided that such a feasibility analysis is requested
18 to include, among other factors, a consideration of
19 the safety needs of students, teachers, school
20 administrators, and other school employees;

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22 (6) Whether policies on the locking of public school
23 classroom doors should be determined by a school's
24 administrators or by the Superintendent of Education;

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26 (7) Whether the duties of the Department of Education's
27 Superintendents' Safety Committee and the School
28 Safety Committees should be codified in the Hawaii
29 Revised Statutes;

30
31 (8) Whether laws should be amended in other ways to ensure
32 that preparations of schools within this State are
33 adequate in reducing student vulnerability to violent
34 crimes;

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36 (9) The propriety of an expedited procedure for private
37 schools to obtain school safety improvement funding
38 through the application process for grants and
39 subsidies established under chapter 42F, Hawaii
40 Revised Statutes; and

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42 (10) Any other issues relevant to school safety in Hawaii;
43 and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force Membership is
2 requested to include at least the following:

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- 4 (1) The Superintendent of Education, or the
5 Superintendent's designee;
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- 7 (2) The Attorney General, or the Attorney General's
8 designee;
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- 10 (3) The Director of Finance, or the director's designee;
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- 12 (4) The Chair of the Senate Committee on Education;
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- 14 (5) The Chair of the Senate Committee on Public Safety,
15 Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs;
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- 17 (6) The Chair of the House Committee on Education;
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- 19 (7) The Chair of the House Committee on Public Safety;
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- 21 (8) One representative of each of the Police Departments
22 of the Counties of Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii, and the
23 City and County of Honolulu;
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- 25 (9) One representative of each of the Fire Departments of
26 the Counties of Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii, and the City
27 and County of Honolulu;
- 28
- 29 (10) The Director of the Department of Education's Safety,
30 Security, and Emergency Preparedness Branch, or the
31 director's designee;
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- 33 (11) The Director of the Charter School Administrative
34 Office, or the director's designee;
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- 36 (12) The Executive Director of the Hawaii Association of
37 Independent Schools, or the executive director's
38 designee; and
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- 40 (13) The Superintendent of Hawaii Catholic Schools, or the
41 superintendent's designee; and
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43 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
44 requested to submit a report to the Legislature no later than



1 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
2 2014, containing the recommendations and determinations of the
3 Task Force, including any proposed legislation; and
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to
6 be dissolved on June 30, 2014; and
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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
9 Resolution be transmitted to the Board of Education, the
10 Superintendent of Education, the Attorney General, the Director
11 of Finance, the Chiefs of Police of the counties within the
12 State, the Fire Chiefs of the counties within the State, the
13 Director of the Department of Education's Safety, Security, and
14 Emergency Preparedness Branch, the Director of the Charter
15 School Administrative Office, the Executive Director of the
16 Hawaii Association of Independent Schools, and the
17 Superintendent of Hawaii Catholic Schools.
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