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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO BULLYING.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1 **PART I**

2 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that all students have  
3 the right to, fully participate in the educational process free  
4 from bullying and cyberbullying. A safe and civil environment  
5 in school is necessary for students to learn and to meet high  
6 academic standards. Bullying and cyberbullying, like other  
7 disruptive or violent behaviors, inhibit a student's ability to  
8 learn and a school's ability to educate students in a safe  
9 environment. It is imperative that all schools and youth-  
10 serving agencies in the State establish and maintain clear and  
11 consistent policies and procedures to address such behavior. In  
12 addition, because students learn by example, school  
13 administrators, faculty, staff, parents, guardians, and  
14 volunteers should be expected to demonstrate appropriate  
15 behavior, treat others with civility and respect, and refuse to  
16 tolerate bullying and harassment.

17 The purpose of this Act, therefore, is to require all  
18 youth-serving agencies, public schools, and public charter



1 schools that receive state or county funding to adopt, maintain,  
2 monitor, and enforce policies and procedures related to all  
3 forms of bullying and cyberbullying to protect youth in the  
4 State. This Act is not intended to apply to private schools  
5 except to the extent they receive state funding.

6 **PART II**

7 SECTION 2. The Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended by  
8 adding a new chapter to be appropriately designated and to read  
9 as follows:

10 **"CHAPTER**

11 **BULLYING PREVENTION**

12 **§ -1 Definitions.** As used in this chapter, unless the  
13 context clearly indicates otherwise:

14 "Agency" means any state or county government entity that  
15 provides services, activities, or privileges to youth.

16 "Alternative discipline" means disciplinary action other  
17 than suspension or expulsion from school that is designed to  
18 correct and address the root causes of a student's specific  
19 misbehavior while retaining the student in class or school, or  
20 restorative school practices to repair the harm done to



1 relationships and persons from the student's misbehavior.

2 "Alternative discipline" includes but is not limited to:

3 (1) Meeting with the student and the student's parents or  
4 guardians;

5 (2) Reflective activities, such as requiring the student  
6 to write an essay about the student's misbehavior;

7 (3) Counseling;

8 (4) Anger management classes;

9 (5) Health counseling or intervention;

10 (6) Mental health counseling;

11 (7) Participation in skills building and resolution  
12 activities, such as social-emotional cognitive skills  
13 building, resolution circles, and restorative  
14 conferencing;

15 (8) Community service; and

16 (9) In-school detention or suspension, which may take  
17 place during lunchtime, after school, or on weekends.

18 "Bullying" means any severe, pervasive, or persistent act  
19 or conduct, whether physical, electronic, or verbal, that:

20 (1) May be based on a youth's actual or perceived race;  
21 sex, including gender identity or expression; sexual



1 orientation; color; religion; ancestry; or disability;  
2 or any other distinguishing characteristic; or on a  
3 youth's association with a person, or group with any  
4 person, who has one or more of the actual or perceived  
5 foregoing characteristics; and

6 (2) Can be reasonably predicted to:

7 (A) Place the youth in reasonable fear of physical  
8 harm to the youth's person or property;

9 (B) Cause a substantially detrimental effect on the  
10 youth's physical or mental health;

11 (C) Substantially interfere with the youth's academic  
12 performance or attendance; or

13 (D) Substantially interfere with the youth's ability  
14 to participate in, or benefit from, the services,  
15 activities, or privileges provided by an agency  
16 or grantee.

17 "Disability" means the state of having a physical or mental  
18 impairment that substantially limits one or more major life  
19 activities, having a record of such an impairment, or being  
20 regarded as having such an impairment. "Disability" does not



1 include alcohol or drug use that impairs a person's activities  
2 or threatens the property or safety of others.

3 "Electronic communication" means a communication  
4 transmitted by means of an electronic device, including a  
5 telephone, cellular phone, computer, tablet, pager, or video or  
6 audio recording.

7 "Employee" means an individual who performs a function for  
8 an agency or grantee and receives compensation for the  
9 performance of that function.

10 "Gender identity or expression" includes a person's actual  
11 or perceived gender, as well as a person's gender identity,  
12 gender-related self-image, gender-related appearance, or gender-  
13 related expression, regardless of whether that gender identity,  
14 gender-related self-image, gender-related appearance, or gender-  
15 related expression is different from that traditionally  
16 associated with the person's sex at birth.

17 "Grantee" means an entity or contractor of an entity that,  
18 on behalf of the State or a county, or through the use of state  
19 or county funds, provides services, activities, or privileges to  
20 youth.



1 "Party" means a person accused of bullying, a target of  
2 bullying, or a parent or guardian of either a person accused of  
3 bullying or a target of bullying.

4 "Sexual orientation" means having a preference for  
5 heterosexuality, homosexuality, or bisexuality, having a history  
6 of any one or more of these preferences, or being identified  
7 with any one or more of these preferences. "Sexual orientation"  
8 shall not be construed to protect conduct otherwise proscribed  
9 by law.

10 "Youth" means an individual who is enrolled in a public  
11 school, including a public charter school, or who accesses the  
12 services or programs provided by an agency or grantee or an  
13 individual who is receiving special education services from a  
14 public school.

15 **§ -2 Bullying prevention policy.** (a) Each agency and  
16 grantee shall adopt a bullying prevention policy to be enforced:

- 17 (1) On its property;
- 18 (2) At sponsored functions;
- 19 (3) On its transportation or transportation it sponsors;
- 20 and



1 (4) Through electronic communication to the extent that  
2 the communication is directed at a youth and meets the  
3 definition of bullying under section -1.

4 (b) Each agency and grantee's policy shall include at a  
5 minimum:

6 (1) The definition of bullying as set forth in section  
7 -1;

8 (2) A statement prohibiting bullying;

9 (3) A statement that prohibits retaliation against any  
10 person who reports or witnesses incidents of bullying;

11 (4) A statement that the policy applies to participation  
12 in functions sponsored by the agency or grantee;

13 (5) An expected code of conduct;

14 (6) A list of the consequences, including alternative  
15 discipline approaches, that can result from an  
16 identified incident of bullying, which are designed  
17 to:

18 (A) Appropriately correct the bullying behavior;

19 (B) Prevent another occurrence of bullying or  
20 retaliation;

21 (C) Protect the target of the bullying; and



- 1 (D) Be flexible so that they can be applied to each  
2 incident individually and varied in method and  
3 severity based on the nature of the incident,  
4 developmental age of the person bullying, and any  
5 history of problem behavior from the person  
6 bullying;
- 7 (7) A procedure for reporting bullying or retaliation for  
8 reporting an act of bullying, including for reporting  
9 bullying anonymously; provided that no formal response  
10 shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous  
11 report;
- 12 (8) A procedure for prompt investigation of reports of  
13 violations of its policy and of complaints of bullying  
14 or retaliation, including the name and contact  
15 information of the person responsible for  
16 investigating reports;
- 17 (9) A procedure for prompt notification to the parent or  
18 guardian of the student alleged to have committed an  
19 act of bullying and the parent or guardian of the  
20 student targeted by the alleged act; provided that if  
21 an administrator or director of the agency or grantee





1 believes, in the administrator or director's  
2 professional capacity, that contacting the parent or  
3 guardian would endanger the health or well-being of a  
4 student, the administrator or director may delay such  
5 contact as appropriate; and

6 (10) An appeal process for a party who is not satisfied  
7 with the outcome of an initial investigation.

8 **§ -3 Bullying prevention programs.** Following the  
9 adoption of a bullying prevention policy, each agency and  
10 grantee shall:

11 (1) Establish an annual bullying prevention program for  
12 youth, which shall align with established health  
13 education standards;

14 (2) Inform youth in age appropriate language about their  
15 right to be free from bullying and discrimination in  
16 public accommodations and education and of the  
17 remedies available for a violation of their rights  
18 under chapter 489 and this chapter; and

19 (3) Provide annual training on bullying prevention to all  
20 employees and volunteers who have significant contact  
21 with youth.



1           **§ -4 Retaliation, reporting, and immunity.** (a) An  
2 employee, volunteer, or youth shall not retaliate against a  
3 victim or witness of bullying or a person who reports bullying.

4           (b) An employee or volunteer who has witnessed bullying in  
5 violation of a bullying prevention policy, or has reliable  
6 information that a person has been subject to bullying in  
7 violation of a bullying prevention policy, shall promptly report  
8 the incident or information to the person designated by the  
9 agency or grantee as responsible for investigating the reports.

10           (c) An employee, volunteer, or youth who promptly and in  
11 good faith reports an incident of, or information on, bullying  
12 in compliance with a bullying prevention policy developed  
13 pursuant to section -2 shall be immune from a cause of action  
14 for damages arising from the report.

15           **§ -5 Reporting.** (a) Each agency and grantee shall  
16 provide to the governor, by a date determined by the governor,  
17 an annual report including the aggregate incidents of bullying  
18 and any other information the governor determines is necessary  
19 or appropriate.

20           (b) The governor shall:



- 1           (1) By September 1, 2016, and biennially thereafter,  
2           review the programs, activities, services, and  
3           policies of each agency or grantee to determine their  
4           effectiveness and determine whether the agency or  
5           grantee is in compliance with this chapter; and  
6           (2) Report findings to the legislature by December 31 of  
7           each year that a report is due, along with an  
8           assessment of the current level and nature of bullying  
9           in agencies, educational institutions, and grantees;  
10          an evaluation of the sufficiency of funding for  
11          bullying prevention programs; and any recommendations  
12          for legislative, policy, or programmatic changes to  
13          better address bullying in the State."

14          SECTION 3. (a) There is established a bullying prevention  
15          task force within the department of education for administrative  
16          purposes only.

17          (b) The task force shall consist of eleven members, to be  
18          appointed by the governor, and shall include community  
19          representatives and representatives from the agencies and  
20          grantees that will be affected by this Act, including teachers,  
21          administrators, school mental health professionals, parents and



1 legal guardians, direct service providers, clergy, advocates,  
2 the judiciary, law enforcement, and youth. In constituting the  
3 task force, the governor shall ensure that the membership is  
4 geographically and socioeconomically diverse.

- 5 (c) The task force shall:
- 6 (1) Provide guidance to the governor regarding the  
7 implementation of this Act;
  - 8 (2) Publicize a model policy containing each component  
9 required by chapter , Hawaii Revised Statutes,  
10 within one hundred eighty days of the effective date  
11 of this Act;
  - 12 (3) Assist agencies and grantees in developing policies in  
13 accordance with chapter , Hawaii Revised Statutes;
  - 14 (4) Compile and make available to each agency and grantee  
15 a list of free or low-cost methods for establishing  
16 the bullying prevention programs required under  
17 chapter , Hawaii Revised Statutes;
  - 18 (5) Review for compliance the bullying prevention policies  
19 of each agency and grantee within ninety days of their  
20 receipt;



1 (6) Create resources and hold events to help inform  
2 employees, parents, and youth about the requirements  
3 of this Act; and

4 (7) Create guidelines to assist the governor in evaluating  
5 the effectiveness of established bullying prevention  
6 policies.

7 (d) Members of the task force shall serve without  
8 compensation; however, the department of education shall provide  
9 the task force with the resources and staff support necessary  
10 for the accomplishment of their duties.

11 (e) The task force shall be dissolved two years after its  
12 initial meeting; provided that the governor, in the governor's  
13 discretion, may grant a one-year extension.

14 SECTION 4. Each agency and grantee subject to chapter ,  
15 Hawaii Revised Statutes, shall, in coordination with the  
16 bullying prevention task force established by section 3 of this  
17 Act, adopt the bullying prevention policy required by chapter  
18 , Hawaii Revised Statutes, established by section 2 of this  
19 Act within one year of the effective date of this Act, and shall  
20 submit their policies to the task force for review.

21 **PART III**



1 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general  
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
3 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2015-2016 and  
4 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
5 year 2016-2017 for resources and staff support necessary for the  
6 accomplishment of the duties of the bullying prevention task  
7 force established by section 3 of this Act.

8 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
9 of education for the purposes of this Act.

10 **PART IV**

11 SECTION 6. This Act does not affect rights and duties that  
12 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were  
13 begun before its effective date.

14 SECTION 7. If any provision of this Act, or the  
15 application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held  
16 invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or  
17 applications of the Act that can be given effect without the  
18 invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions  
19 of this Act are severable.

20 SECTION 8. This Act shall take effect on January 7, 2059;  
21 provided that section 5 shall take effect on July 1, 2015.



**Report Title:**

Bullying; Child Safety; Appropriation

**Description:**

Requires state and county agencies and grantees that serve youth to adopt bullying prevention policies. Establishes a task force to assist the Governor with bullying prevention policies in the State. Appropriates funds. Effective 1/7/2059. (SD2)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

