

JAN 23 2015

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that investing in public
2 school capital improvements is essential to fulfill the State's
3 mandate to provide quality education for Hawaii's students.
4 Providing a quality education is almost impossible without
5 providing comfortable, adequately-appointed facilities for the
6 delivery of instruction. Capital improvement projects that have
7 gone unfunded include not only improved parking lots and
8 athletic facilities, but absolute essentials such as elevators
9 and chair lifts to accommodate persons with disabilities,
10 roofing, security projects, telecommunications installations,
11 new classroom buildings, and air conditioning. Air
12 conditioning, a given for most state agencies, is still absent
13 from most of Hawaii's public schools. This improvement alone
14 would go a long way toward improving air quality for students
15 and teachers, improving learning conditions overall, and
16 bolstering school security.



1 The legislature further finds that poor physical building
2 conditions are detrimental to student achievement and teacher
3 performance. The United States Department of Education has
4 reported, using decades of research across several different
5 states, that when other factors are accounted for, students
6 housed in substandard school buildings achieve approximately 5
7 per cent below students in school buildings in fair condition
8 and about 11 per cent below students in school buildings in
9 excellent condition. The same report notes that teachers are
10 also impacted by poor facilities. Low quality facilities,
11 inability to control climate, and poor acoustics all translate
12 to low morale, concern for safety, lack of job satisfaction, and
13 feelings of ineffectiveness.

14 The legislature further finds that capital improvements can
15 help schools reach Hawaii department of education goals set in
16 the strategic plan and strive hi performance system standards,
17 and the United States Department of Education's race to the top
18 initiative. All of these initiatives are focused on boosting
19 student achievement through individual efforts, teacher
20 achievement, and community supports. They involve collecting
21 data, implementing new curricula, evaluating educators,



1 providing incentives, and targeting struggling schools for
2 intensive supports. The research has shown that another way to
3 improve student achievement and teacher effectiveness is by
4 providing students and teachers with a comfortable, well-
5 maintained, secure environment. A 2005 study of New York
6 schools found higher suspension rates, lower attendance, and
7 lower test scores among students in unsatisfactory buildings. A
8 national study published in 2008 found that students are
9 sensitive to a school's ambience and that the school's physical
10 condition was associated with problem behaviors in students. A
11 2009 study found a direct association between the physical
12 disorder of a school building and social disorder among
13 students. And finally, a 2009 study in Texas found that for
14 every 10 per cent reduction in the use of portable facilities,
15 test scores increased by eleven points, and for every 10 per
16 cent increase in deferred maintenance, average test scores
17 decreased by 0.61 point. School improvements will remove these
18 unnecessary blocks to student success and teacher morale.
19 Bringing school facilities up to par eliminates that variable in
20 student achievement over which students, teachers, and parents
21 have no control. As teachers, administrators, and parents do



1 all they can to inspire achievement among students, the State
2 must meet those efforts with adequate funding for school
3 improvement.

4 The purpose of this Act is to provide funding for
5 department of education backlogged capital improvement projects.

6 SECTION 2. The director of finance is authorized to issue
7 general obligation bonds in the sum of \$100,000,000 or so much
8 thereof as may be necessary and the same sum or so much thereof
9 as may be necessary is appropriated for fiscal year 2015-2016
10 for the purpose of funding department of education backlogged
11 capital improvement projects.

12 SECTION 3. The appropriation made for the capital
13 improvement projects authorized by this Act shall not lapse at
14 the end of the fiscal biennium for which the appropriation is
15 made; provided that all moneys from the appropriation
16 unencumbered as of June 30, 2018, shall lapse as of that date.

17 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2015.

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INTRODUCED BY:

Therese Chun Garcia



S.B. NO. 485

Report Title:

Department of Education; Capital Improvement Projects; General
Obligation Bonds; Appropriation

Description:

Authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds and
appropriates funds for department of education capital
improvement projects.

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not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

