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HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF UPDATING "HAWAI'I SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND" TO "HAWAI'I SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF" TO REDUCE CONFUSION AND IDENTIFY WHERE STUDENTS WHO ARE BLIND MAY ACCESS APPROPRIATE RESOURCES AND SERVICES.

WHEREAS, the Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind, located in the Kapahulu district of Honolulu, is a Department of Education public school serving students who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind; and

WHEREAS, although historically students who were blind attended the Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind, for many years the school has limited enrollment to students who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind and who use American Sign Language for communication; and

WHEREAS, many students in Hawai'i who are both hearing and blind attend mainstream schools in their local districts or other schools of their choice; and

WHEREAS, blindness is no longer a basis to attend the Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind; and

WHEREAS, the Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind today primarily serves students who are deaf or hard of hearing whose primary language is American Sign Language; and

WHEREAS, currently, all students who are hearing and blind in the State attend their home schools with support services with teachers of the visually impaired; and

WHEREAS, the Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind currently serves as an identifiable office within the Department of Education that provides resources and services for students who are blind, such as a library of Braille and enlarged print

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books, assistive devices, orientation and mobility services, and Braille training; and

WHEREAS, the name of the school describes its student population and that its education program includes blind children and adults, which may generate confusion; and

WHEREAS, this confusion may create an obstacle to accessing important education and education-related services for blind children and adults in Hawai'i; and

WHEREAS, in order to change the school name, Board of Education Policy 301-8 requires that the Complex Area Superintendent recommend the name of the school, in consultation with the school principal, to the Superintendent, who will recommend the name of the school to the Board of Education for approval; now, therefore,

 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2019, the Senate concurring, that the Department of Education is requested to explore the possibility of updating "Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind" to "Hawai'i School for the Deaf" to reduce confusion; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education consider identifying a separate office or section within the Department where students who are blind may access appropriate resources and services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Superintendent of Education, Principal of the Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind, Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind Community Council, Administrator of the Hawai'i Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Hawai'i Association of the Blind.

OFFERED BY:

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