
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CONTRACT WITH A
THIRD-PARTY CONSULTANT THAT SPECIALIZES IN SCHOOL FINANCE
TO STUDY THE ADEQUACY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING IN
HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that Article X, section 1,
2 of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii requires the State to
3 provide a statewide system of public schools; and
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5 WHEREAS, compared to other states, Hawaii is unique because
6 the State, rather than a county or local-level jurisdiction, is
7 responsible for public education; and
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9 WHEREAS, as a result, funding for public education in
10 Hawaii is primarily sourced from the general fund of the State;
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13 WHEREAS, the Legislature also finds that adequate funding
14 is crucial to provide each of Hawaii's children with high
15 quality educational opportunities; and
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17 WHEREAS, some studies find that education funding in Hawaii
18 is lagging in comparison to districts of similar size and cost
19 of living; and
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21 WHEREAS, in 2017, a Department of Business, Economic
22 Development, and Tourism analysis of real property tax in the
23 State found that Hawaii's education expenditure represents a
24 27.3 percent share of combined state and local government
25 expenditures, which is the lowest in the nation; and
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27 WHEREAS, the Legislature further finds that underfunding
28 public schools undermines the State's goal of providing a
29 quality education to all of Hawaii's children; and
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31 WHEREAS, insufficient education funding results in higher
class sizes; a lack of adequate classroom supplies; elimination



1 of arts, career, and technical education courses; budget cuts
2 for special education and English Language Learner programs; and
3 an increasing number of vacant teacher positions, among other
4 things; and

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6 WHEREAS, it is necessary to understand the amount of
7 funding needed to adequately fund public education to support
8 student learning and provide a quality education to Hawaii's
9 children; now, therefore,

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11 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
12 Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of
13 2019, that the Department of Education is requested to contract
14 with a third-party consultant to conduct a study on the adequacy
15 of public education funding in the State; and

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17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the third-party consultant
18 shall specialize in school finance and have previous experience
19 conducting studies of public education systems in multiple
20 jurisdictions; and

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22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study shall:

- 23 (1) Assess the equity of funding among schools throughout
24 Hawaii's public school system;
- 25 (2) Review school funding studies performed in other
26 states, including the 2016 study "Using the Evidence-
27 Based Method to Identify Adequate Spending Levels for
28 Vermont Schools" by Picus Odden & Associates and the
29 2007 study "Washington Adequacy Funding Study" by the
30 Educational Policy Improvement Center;
- 31 (3) Employ multiple methods to evaluate the adequacy of
32 school funding;
- 33 (4) Identify variables most closely associated with a
34 high-quality education and estimate the amount of
35 additional funding needed to provide all public school
36 students in Hawaii with an equal education
37 opportunity;
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1 (5) Compare Hawaii teacher salaries with teacher salaries
2 in school districts of similar size and cost of living
3 to determine compensation characteristics that impact
4 the Department of Education's ability to recruit and
5 retain effective teachers; and
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7 (6) Include findings, recommendations, and any proposed
8 legislation for consideration; and
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
11 requested to submit a copy of the study to the Legislature no
12 later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular
13 Session of 2021; and
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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
16 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of
17 Education and Superintendent of Education.
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