

MAR 0 6 2020

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH A FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A PLAN TO MAKE COMPLETION OF A FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID A STATEWIDE GRADUATION REQUIREMENT BEGINNING IN THE 2022-2023 ACADEMIC YEAR.

1 WHEREAS, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid is a
2 form completed by current and prospective post-secondary
3 education students seeking undergraduate or graduate education
4 in the United States to determine eligibility for federal
5 financial aid; and
6

7 WHEREAS, federal financial aid options include need-based
8 aid such as federal Pell Grants, as well as unsubsidized
9 Stafford loans that may be available to students regardless of
10 income or other circumstances; and
11

12 WHEREAS, in 2018, certain eligible Hawaii students could
13 have claimed \$10,000,000 in federal Pell Grant moneys, had they
14 completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, but this
15 federal financial aid instead went unclaimed; and
16

17 WHEREAS, students who do not complete the Free Application
18 for Federal Student Aid may rely instead on private student
19 loans that often have high interest rates and lack the consumer
20 protections included with federal student loans; and
21

22 WHEREAS, completion of the Free Application for Federal
23 Student Aid is also the leading indicator of college enrollment,
24 and there is ample evidence that increased financial aid results
25 in positive outcomes, including college completion; and
26

27 WHEREAS, in 2016, in response to more than fifty percent of
28 Louisiana high school seniors not completing the necessary
29 paperwork, the State of Louisiana began requiring completion of
30 the Free Application for Federal Student Aid as a prerequisite
31 for graduation; and
32



1 WHEREAS, as of 2019, Louisiana is ranked first in the
2 nation for completion of the Free Application for Federal
3 Student Aid among high school seniors, having an eighty-two
4 percent completion rate; and
5

6 WHEREAS, in recent years, Hawaii's Free Application for
7 Federal Student Aid completion rate has remained close to sixty
8 percent; and
9

10 WHEREAS, the Department of Education has set a goal to have
11 ninety percent of Hawaii high school seniors complete the Free
12 Application for Federal Student Aid in the 2019-2020 academic
13 year; and
14

15 WHEREAS, increasing completion of the Free Application for
16 Federal Student Aid will benefit Hawaii students and families,
17 and may result in long-term benefit to the State through
18 increased educational achievement and a corresponding increase
19 in economic growth and stability; now, therefore,
20

21 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
22 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2020, that the
23 Department of Education is requested to establish a Free
24 Application for Federal Student Aid Working Group to develop and
25 implement a plan to make completion of a Free Application for
26 Federal Student Aid a statewide graduation requirement beginning
27 in the 2022-2023 academic year; and
28

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
30 requested to include in this plan an option to waive the
31 requirement, provided that any waiver require an acknowledgement
32 of the purpose of and opportunities provided through completion
33 of a Free Application for Federal Student Aid; and
34

35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Free Application for
36 Federal Student Aid Working Group comprise the following:

- 37 (1) The Chair of the Senate Committee on Education, or the
38 Chair's designee, who is requested to serve as co-
39 chair of the Working Group;
40
41 (2) The Chair of the House of Representatives Committee on
42 Lower and Higher Education, or the Chair's designee,



- 1 who is requested to serve as co-chair of the Working
2 Group;
3
4 (3) The Superintendent of Education, or the
5 Superintendent's designee;
6
7 (4) The Chairperson of the Board of Education, or the
8 Chairperson's designee;
9
10 (5) The President of the University of Hawaii, or the
11 President's designee;
12
13 (6) A representative from the University of Hawaii
14 Community College System, to be selected by the
15 University of Hawaii Vice President for Community
16 Colleges;
17
18 (7) The Executive Director of Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for
19 Education, or the Executive Director's designee;
20
21 (8) A Department of Education complex area superintendent,
22 to be selected by the Superintendent of Education;
23
24 (9) A Department of Education principal, to be selected by
25 the Superintendent of Education;
26
27 (10) A Department of Education school counselor, to be
28 selected by the Superintendent of Education;
29
30 (11) A representative of the nonprofit sector, to be
31 invited by the Speaker of the House of Representatives
32 to be a member of the Working Group;
33
34 (12) A representative of the Hawaii Association for College
35 Admission Counseling, to be invited by the President
36 of the Senate to be a member of the Working Group;
37 (13) A representative of the philanthropic community, to be
38 invited by the Speaker of the House of Representatives
39 to be a member of the Working Group;
40



1 (14) A representative of the business community, to be
2 invited by the President of the Senate to be a member
3 of the Working Group; and
4

5 (15) Any other member deemed necessary by the Working
6 Group; and
7

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education
9 provide administrative support to the Free Application for
10 Federal Student Aid Working Group; and
11

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in developing a plan to make
13 completion of a Free Application for Federal Student Aid a
14 statewide graduation requirement, the Free Application for
15 Federal Student Aid Working Group is requested to consider the
16 following:
17

- 18 (1) Resources that are available or may be necessary,
19 including public-private partnerships, to ensure
20 successful implementation of the state plan;
21
- 22 (2) Strategies to ensure that the waiver option is simple
23 and unconditional;
24
- 25 (3) Approaches to establish regional pilot programs,
26 whether by complex area or island, including
27 consideration of the feasibility of these approaches;
28
- 29 (4) Strategies to better support students through the
30 college application process, including providing
31 necessary guidance for students to enroll in college
32 and continue with success once the Free Application
33 for Federal Student Aid is completed;
34
- 35 (5) Procedures to protect family privacy, particularly for
36 undocumented immigrant families, and to support
37 schools to provide hardship waivers for students
38 having unresponsive parents; and
39 (6) Any other issue deemed necessary by the Working Group;
40 and
41

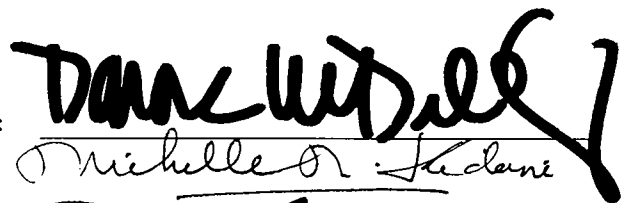


S.R. NO. 94

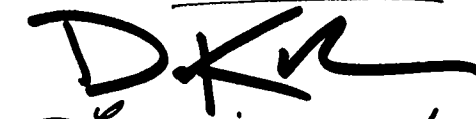
1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested
2 to submit to the Legislature, the Superintendent of Education,
3 and each complex area superintendent, a report of its findings
4 and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, no
5 later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular
6 Session of 2021; and
7

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
9 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, President of the
10 Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Superintendent
11 of Education, Chairperson of the Board of Education, President
12 of the University of Hawaii, Vice President for Community
13 Colleges of the University of Hawaii, Executive Director of the
14 Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education, and President of the
15 Hawaii Association for College Admission Counseling.
16
17
18

OFFERED BY:



Michelle R. [unclear]



Ermaine R. [unclear]

