

MAR 08 2022

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO EXPAND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES IN THE PEARL CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT.

1 WHEREAS, the Pearl City School District is experiencing a
2 transportation shortage, primarily due to a reported bus driver
3 shortage; and

4
5 WHEREAS, transportation issues and bus driver shortages in
6 the Pearl City School District have existed since at least 1991;
7 and

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9 WHEREAS, the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic and related
10 impacts have exacerbated the transportation shortage during
11 2021; and

12
13 WHEREAS, safe and reliable transportation to and from
14 school is critical to academic success; and

15
16 WHEREAS, parents have reported that more than a dozen Pearl
17 City students currently lack transportation services and are on
18 a waitlist; and

19
20 WHEREAS, according to the Department of Education's Student
21 Transportation Services Branch:

- 22
- 23 (1) Students must live at least one mile away from the
24 school to qualify for regular school bus service;
 - 25
26 (2) Students who live less than one mile may be waitlisted
27 for bus service even if there are unused seats on the
28 bus and it will not result in cost to the State;
 - 29
30 (3) Only full-sized school buses are deployed for most
31 routes and routes must have a minimum number of
32 student riders (i.e., forty-eight for elementary
33 schools) to qualify for bus service;
 - 34 (4) Students not qualifying for a free bus pass are
35 required to pay up to \$72.00, quarterly, for
36 transportation services;



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- 1
- 2 (5) Approximately fifteen-thousand students use bus
- 3 services on Oahu and eighteen-thousand use bus
- 4 services on the neighbor islands; and
- 5
- 6 (6) Pearl City School enrollment is approximately five
- 7 thousand, and approximately five hundred of these
- 8 students use bus services to and from school; and
- 9

10 WHEREAS, to address the current transportation shortage,
 11 the Department of Education launched a mileage reimbursement
 12 program on September 1, 2021; now, therefore,
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14 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
 15 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2022,
 16 that the Department of Education is requested to work
 17 expeditiously to achieve the following:
 18

- 19 (1) Immediately provide bus service to all students in the
- 20 Pearl City School District who are currently on the
- 21 waitlist for bus services;
- 22
- 23 (2) Identify schools in the Pearl City School District
- 24 that lack regular transportation services;
- 25
- 26 (3) Utilize smaller buses and lower route ridership to
- 27 maximize transportation options for students;
- 28
- 29 (4) Enhance direct outreach opportunities between the
- 30 Department of Education, schools, and parents to
- 31 discuss changing demographics and transportation needs
- 32 in the district;
- 33
- 34 (5) Develop a bus driver and commercial driver license
- 35 training and feeder program;
- 36
- 37 (6) Establish a driver "pool" by collaborating with
- 38 teachers, parents, unions, senior groups, community
- 39 nonprofit organizations, the military, and the
- 40 university system; and
- 41



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1 (7) Explore staggered school start and end times to
2 facilitate student transportation; and
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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
5 Resolution be transmitted to the Department of Education.
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OFFERED BY: *Bennett J. Prusich*

