

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI
INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
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Date: 02/25/2022
Time: 11:00 AM
Location: 308 Via Videoconference
Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 1942, HD1 RELATING TO STUDENT TRANSPORTATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the department of education to establish a tiered student bus fare rate system to include free bus passes for students and households that qualify for free or reduced lunch under the free and reduced price lunch program. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) respectfully provides comments for the committee's consideration on HB1942, HD1.

Currently, bus fare monies collected each school year fund several programs and operational expenses, including city bus passes for McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act students, mileage reimbursements, and various support services, with expenditures averaging \$2,400,000 annually.

The Department would need to collect and analyze the data over the next few years to determine the full scope of the financial impact of the bill. The current free and reduced lunch data may also be skewed due to the fact that all student meals were provided free this school year.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
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EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1942, H.D. 1

February 25, 2022
11:00 a.m.
Room 308 and Videoconference

RELATING TO STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill No. 1942, H.D. 1, amends Section 302A-406, HRS, to require the Department of Education to establish a tiered student bus fare rate system to include a free bus pass for students and households that qualify for free or reduced lunch under the free and reduced-price lunch program. The measure also appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds in FY 23 to carry out the purposes of this bill.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

HB-1942-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 7:02:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2022 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Michael Press	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Michael Press. I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate in Ewa Beach on Oahu. Please support and pass this bill. Mahalo!

Re: HB1942 Relating to Student Transportation

Dear Chair Sylvia Luke, Vice Chair Kyle T. Yamashita, and members of the committee,

My name is Jolee Melink. I am a concerned individual and I support HB1942. As we emerge from the pandemic, students and families continue to need support. I offer my support for and comments to HB1942 below:

HB1942 supports students. Students who qualify for reduced lunch should also qualify for reduced bus fare. Providing low cost transportation options for students will save families money and time which can be reallocated for meeting other needs. Increased affordability for transportation to school could mean the difference between a student attending school or falling behind.

HB1942 ensures safety. Riding the school bus can be a safer alternative to the city bus, walking or biking to and from school for younger students.

HB1942 is sustainable. In my neighborhood it can take up to 10 minutes to pass the two schools during drop off and pick up where car after car idles as they wait. Reduced bus fare for students would create more access to public transportation which results in less traffic, congestion and pollution as less cars are on the roads.

While I support HB1942, it would be better if all students had access to free transportation to and from school. If bus fare is absolutely necessary, it should be as low cost as possible to all students and their families, regardless of eligibility for free or reduced lunch.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.