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GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI
INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 04/25/2022

Time: 01:30 PM

Location: CR 225 & Videoconference

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

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

Title of Resolution: HCR 0051, HD1 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PRIORITIZE FUNDING FOR AIR CONDITIONING IN SCHOOLS ON HAWAII ISLAND THAT ARE REGULARLY AFFECTED BY VOG.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports HCR 51, HD1, to provide safe and healthy learning environments for students and staff affected by vog.

In response to the 2018 Kilauea eruption, the Department created 66 safe rooms across 15 campuses in the Keaau, Pahoia, Kau, Konawaena and Kealakehe complexes. These rooms provide a HEPA/charcoal-filtered air supply and are cooled by split-air conditioning systems to create shelter spaces during emergency air quality conditions.

The Department notes that in order for air conditioning systems to be effective in mitigating vog exposure, upgraded filtration is required. Additional funds may be needed for electrical upgrades, installation of equipment, and ongoing operations and maintenance to support upgraded air conditioning systems.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, April 25, 2022

Offering Comments on HCR No. 51, HD 1

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Senate Committee on Education:

My name is Damien Chang, a sophomore at Harvard College and proud graduate of McKinley High School. I write to respectfully offer my strong support for HCR 51, HD 1, with the following representing solely my views as an individual:

I am no engineer, nor do I know much about air conditioning beyond the fact that it cools a person to comfort (at least, when it works). I am also no Big Island native, but I do know they have functioning volcanoes and vogy air. Therefore, I think it would be good for the DOE to prioritize funding for air conditioning if it will grant students their right to learn in a healthy and safe environment. Those who live on Hawaii Island, and particularly in Kona, have as great of a need—and even greater—for basic air filtration and temperature regulation in their classrooms and study spaces as the rest of Hawaii’s students. The measure, having been amended, also accounts for renewable energy and energy efficient technology—a great addition in consideration of our state energy goals and Earth Day, which we observed just a couple of days ago. With this, every day will be Earth Day on Hawaii Island—at least in classrooms.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony.

Respectfully,

Damien Chang