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GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI
INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

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

Date: 03/24/2022

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: 309 Via Videoconference

Committee: House Education

Department: Education

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

Title of Resolution: HCR 0051 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 the intent of HCR 51 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, Pahoa, 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.