



## OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1500 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-1500

MANPOWER AND  
RESERVE AFFAIRS

February 13, 2024

The Honorable Representative Justin H. Woodson  
Chair, Committee on Education  
Hawaii House of Representatives  
415 S Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

### **RE: DoD Letter of Support – HB 1904 HD1 (RELATING TO EDUCATION)**

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the committee:

On behalf of military families and the Department of Defense, I am writing in support of the policy changes expressed in HB 1904 HD1, a measure to ease enrollment challenges for military families with school-age children.

Approximately 185,000 U.S. military children move between schools annually. Military service members are routinely reassigned to new duty stations, due to mission and training requirements. Service members typically receive official military orders detailing their upcoming assignment thirty days to six months prior to their move. Allowing military families, including those with special education needs, to enroll their children in school, register for classes and apply for specialized programs at the same time as their peers, prior to physically arriving to their location, will help to facilitate their uninterrupted educational progress and smooth integration into their new communities, and relieve unneeded stress during their transition between locations.

With nearly 17,000 active-duty military school-age children attending school in this state, Hawaii is in a position to have a highly impactful positive effect on the educational experiences of military children and families and join forty states that have enacted this policy. The intent of this policy is not to offer an advantage or priority over other students, but simply to provide military families access to educational programs and courses at the same time as their in-state peers. There is added benefit to Hawaii complex area schools by reducing the discrepancy between projected and actual student enrollment numbers for staffing and resource-planning purposes.

In closing, we are grateful for the tremendous support that Hawaii has previously made and is currently making to support our military members and their families. We appreciate the opportunity to support the policy reflected in HB 1904 HD1 and are grateful for the Chair's advocacy on this matter, which we believe will make a significant positive impact for our military families with school-age children pending transfer to Hawaii.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelli May Douglas".

Kelli May Douglas  
Pacific and Southwest Regional Liaison  
Defense-State Liaison Office  
DoD, Military Community & Family Policy  
571-265-0075



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 02/15/2024

**Time:** 02:00 PM

**Location:** 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Bill:** HB 1904, HD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Provides a process for school placement for a child whose parent or guardian has transferred or is pending transfer from another state to a military installation in Hawaii while on active military duty pursuant to an official military order. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) respectfully provides comments on HB1904 HD1.

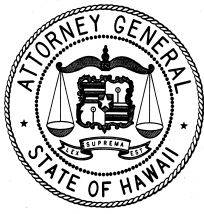
The Department is fully supportive of our military families and the unique struggles they face. Our Joint Venture Education Forum (JVEF) is a cooperative partnership between Hawaii's military community, the Department and other community organizations that provides a venue to transform schools in positive ways for our military-impacted families. This year marked the 24th anniversary of that partnership that has resulted in a multitude of positive initiatives like our Transition Centers which are a key component to help incoming students acclimate to a new school. Partnerships between our schools and military partners in all branches continues to exhibit the shared commitment to all our students and families.

In addition to JVEF, the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children was developed in an effort to reduce the educational and emotional issues encountered when the children of military personnel are required to transfer from schools in one state to another. Hawaii's State Council includes representatives from the Department as well as Executive and Legislative branches and the military.

However, the Department does need to balance the treatment of our military-impacted families with the treatment of our overall student population. One concern the Department has with this measure is that it would create inequity in the registration process for students. Families living in Hawaii who are deciding to move residences are not allowed to pre-register or enroll electronically into their new school. Additionally, if a family decides they wish to stay in a school, even if they are changing school districts, they would be subject to the existing geographic exception process that allows principals to ensure they have the capacity to accommodate all of the families within their community.

To that end, the Department would request the following amendment on page 2 line 4 to read "The department shall, ~~within five days of~~ with receipt of a military order, accept an application for school or program enrollment and course registration ~~by electronic means~~, subject to available space".

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB1904 HD1.



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2024**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

H.B. NO. 1904, H.D. 1, RELATING TO EDUCATION.

**BEFORE THE:**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**DATE:** Thursday, February 15, 2024      **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 309 and Videoconference

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Anne T. Horiuchi, Deputy Attorney General

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Chair Woodson and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments.

The bill provides a process for school placement for a child whose parent or guardian has transferred or is pending transfer from another state to a military installation in Hawaii while on active military duty pursuant to an official military order.

Section 1 of the bill proposes to amend section 302A-1143, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to add to the newly designated subsection (a) a new paragraph (5), on page 1, line 16, through page 2, line 2, to create a new exception to the requirement that a student attend the school of the service area where the student resides.

However, the exception in the new section 302A-1143(a)(5) and (b) is too broad, in that it requires the DOE to accept an application for enrollment without the need to establish current or future residency within the school district. This could be construed to lead to unnecessary enrollment in schools outside of the student's geographic service area.

We recommend deleting new section 302A-1143(a)(5), and revising new section 302A-1143(b) to state:

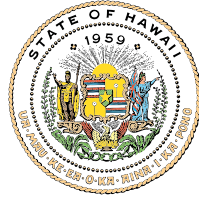
(b) [If subsection (a)(5) applies:] If the parent or guardian of the person has transferred or is pending transfer from another state to a military installation in Hawaii while on active military duty pursuant to an official military order:

(page 2, line 3, deleted wording in the bill is stricken; new wording is underscored).

We believe that the revision would better define the geographic service area for military families transitioning to Hawaii, recognizing the uncertainty of military housing availability and the desire to provide educational stability to students.

The Department also suggests replacing "and" with "or" on page 3, line 13.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill.



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO**  
**CENTRAL OAHU DISTRICT OFFICE**  
1122 MAPUNAPUNA STREET, SUITE 200  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819

February 14, 2024

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Bob Davis, Complex Area Superintendent, Leilehua-Mililani-Waiialua

Title of Bill: HB1904, HD1, RELATING TO EDUCATION

REVISED: ~~within five days of and by electronic means~~

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) respectfully provides comments on HB1904, HD1.

The Department is fully supportive of our military families and the unique struggles they face. Our Joint Venture Education Forum (JVEF) is a cooperative partnership between Hawaii's military community, the Department and other community organizations that provides a venue to transform schools in positive ways for our military-impacted families. This year marked the 24th anniversary of that partnership that has resulted in a multitude of positive initiatives like our Transition Centers which are a key component to help incoming students acclimate to a new school. Partnerships between our schools and military partners in all branches continue to exhibit the shared commitment to all our students and families.

In addition to JVEF, the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children was developed in an effort to reduce the educational and emotional issues encountered when the children of military personnel are required to transfer from schools in one state to another. Hawaii's State Council includes representatives from the Department as well as Executive and Legislative branches and the military.

However, the Department does need to balance the treatment of our military-impacted families with the treatment of our overall student population. One concern the Department has with this measure is that it would create inequity in the registration process for students. Families living in Hawaii who are deciding to move residences are not allowed to pre-register or enroll electronically into their new school. Additionally, if a family decides they wish to stay in a school, even if they are changing school districts, they would be subject to the existing geographic exception process that allows principals to ensure they have the capacity to accommodate all of the families within their community.

To that end, the Department would request the following amendment on page 2 line 4 to read "The Department shall, ~~within five days of~~ with receipt of a military order, accept an application for school or program enrollment and course registration ~~by electronic means~~, subject to available space."

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB1904 HD1.



**STRONG SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1904, HD1  
RELATING TO EDUCATION**

House Committee Education  
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
The Honorable Trish La Chica, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 309 & Via Videoconference  
Hawaii State Capitol; 415 South Beretania Street

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Military Affairs Council ("MAC") **strongly supports** HB 1904, HD1 which provides a process for school placement for a child whose parent has transferred or is pending transfer from another state to a military installation in Hawaii while on active military duty pursuant to an official military order.

The MAC was established in 1985 when the Chamber was appointed by the State to serve as the liaison to the military. The MAC advocates on behalf of Hawaii's military, and is comprised of business leaders, academic institutions, State and County officials, members of the CODEL, community leaders, labor unions and organizations and retired U.S. flag and general officers. The MAC works to support Hawaii's location as a strategic U.S. headquarters in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region which is crucial for U.S. national and homeland security.

The MAC applauds the efforts of the legislature in recognizing the challenges faced by military families and their children when moving to a military permanent change of station orders destination. Military families transferring on official military permanent change of station orders are not eligible to register in courses, enroll in specialized academic programs or sports, or submit their children's names for charter school entry until they are physically located in Hawaii.

The initiative, called Advance Enrollment, is now the policy in 34 states, and with the large active military presence in Hawaii, this initiative will reduce stress and ease the transition for military students and their families.



When military students know which school they will be attending and their class schedules in advance, they and their families have a sense of comfort, relieving unneeded stress during their transition between locations.

Hawaii has an active military presence, with several major military bases located throughout the islands. This makes the initiative beneficial for many families.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our strong support.





**S E A C**  
**Special Education Advisory Council**  
**1010 Richards Street Honolulu, HI 96813**  
**Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129**  
**email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov**

February 15, 2024

**Special Education  
Advisory Council**

Ms. Martha Guinan, *Chair*  
Ms. Susan Wood, *Vice Chair*

Ms. Sara Alimoot  
Ms. Kathie Awaya  
Ms. Virginia Beringer  
Ms. Mary Brogan  
Ms. Deborah Cheeseman  
Ms. Annette Cooper  
Ms. Shana Cruz  
Mr. Mark Disher  
Ms. Mai Hall  
Dr. Kurt Humphrey  
Ms. Melissa Johnson  
Ms. Tina King  
Ms. Jennifer Leoiki-Drino  
Ms. Dale Matsuura  
Ms. Cheryl Matthews  
Dr. Paul Meng  
Ms. Kiele Pennington  
Mr. Christopher Pelayo  
Ms. Kau'i Rezentos  
Ms. Rosie Rowe  
Dr. Scott Shimabukuro  
Ms. Debora Uyeda  
Mr. Steven Vannatta  
Ms. Lisa Vegas  
Ms. Jasmine Williams

Ms. Helen Kaniho, *liaison to  
the Superintendent*  
Ms. Wendy Nakasone-Kalani,  
*liaison to the military  
community*

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff  
Susan Rocco, Staff

Representative Justin H. Woodson  
Committee on Education  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HB 1904, HD 1 - RELATING TO EDUCATION

Dear Representative Woodson and members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii's State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, respectfully provides comments on HB 1904, HD 1 which provides a process for school placement for a child whose active duty parent or guardian has transferred or is pending transfer from another state to a military installation in Hawaii.

Many students with disabilities whose military families experience frequent moves, often in mid-year, are particularly vulnerable for academic, social/emotional or behavioral challenges due to the loss of specially designed instruction and related services during their move to a new duty station and the adjustment to a new school environment. The Hawaii Department of Education and its military partners have been working together for several decades through the Joint Venture Education Forum and the creation of School Liaison Officers (one of whom serves on SEAC) to address the needs of military students.

One issue that sometimes interferes with timely enrollment is that families arrive without unofficial records from the sending state--due to a delay by the sending state in providing these records or to the family's inability to access these records because they are in transit with household goods. To that end, SEAC approves of the emphasis in HB 1904, HD 1 of having Complex Area leadership or staff be responsible for expediting the exchange of relevant records and timely placement of students with disabilities who are eligible for a FAPE under IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehab Act.

SEAC is aware that the policy of Advance Enrollment has been previously considered by the Department and local representatives of



Testimony re: HB 1904, HD 1  
February 15, 2024  
Page 2

the military branches serving in Hawaii. Some concerns that surfaced during those discussions included the following: 1) allowing military families to enroll or pre-register their children may hinder the course options for students who are on-island who may be transferring from another local school; 2) sometimes service members are provided orders to Hawaii, but these orders get rescinded at the last moment creating needless paperwork at the school level; and 3) giving incoming military students the option to continue their placement, even after they move into another home school area, can impact the school's ability to serve all students in their geographic area.

SEAC is hopeful that some of these issues can find a workable solution, so that military students with disabilities who accompany their families to Hawaii receive the supports and services they need to benefit from their education. The Council is appreciative of the opportunity to share our comments and stands ready to help problem solve wherever possible.

Respectfully,

  
Martha Guinan  
Chair