



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
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**Date:** 02/08/2024  
**Time:** 10:00 AM  
**Location:** 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE  
**Committee:** House Labor & Government  
Operations  
House Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Bill:** HB 2401 RELATING TO WORKERS' COMPENSATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Allows newly graduated high school students to be eligible for workers' compensation coverage during the summer following their high school graduation while participating in Department of Education sponsored work-based learning programs.

#### **Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) strongly supports HB 2401, an administrative package bill, which will provide workers' compensation coverage for new high school graduates participating in Department-sponsored work-based learning programs during the summer following their high school graduation.

The Department has prioritized work-based learning to promote workforce readiness, supporting Goal 1.3 of the Board of Education Strategic Plan – "All students graduate high school prepared for college and career success and community and civic engagement." As students transition from high school to their post-secondary plans, the Department offers the new graduates various supports during the summer following their graduation, including college and career advising, training, and internships. Summer training and internships are an extension of their Career and Technical Education (CTE) program of study to help the new graduates further develop the skills needed to succeed in the workforce. Planning and preparation for these internships take place during the school year. Without workers' compensation coverage, employers may be discouraged from hosting new high school graduates as interns as the liability may become theirs.

Over the last five years, the Department has not incurred workers' compensation costs for

students participating in Department-sponsored work-based learning programs. Although the cost anticipated may be minimal, should the Legislature authorize this measure, the Department respectfully requests that the Legislature simultaneously include the funds necessary to implement the changes into the Department's workers' compensation program base budget.

The Department appreciates the Legislature's support in increasing access to work-based learning opportunities for new high school graduates. The Department's goal is for all students to be globally competitive, having the skills to build a successful career anywhere in the world, and locally committed, choosing to live, work, and grow here in Hawaii. Preparing our students for the current and future workforce here at home will not only address our workforce needs, but will also lead to a thriving Hawaii.

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