



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

Date: 02/05/2024
Time: 03:00 PM
Location: CR 229 & Videoconference
Committee: Senate Labor and
Technology
Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 3090 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 SB 3090, 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.



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David Miyashiro
Executive Director

February 5, 2024

Committee on Education
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

Committee on Labor and Technology
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Aloha Chairs Kidani and Aquino, Vice Chairs Kim and Moriwaki, and Members of the Committees,

HawaiiKidsCAN supports SB3090, which 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.

Founded in 2017, HawaiiKidsCAN is a local nonprofit organization committed to ensuring that Hawaii has an excellent and equitable education system that reflects the true voices of our communities and, in turn, has a transformational impact on our children and our state. We strongly believe that all students should have access to excellent educational opportunities, regardless of family income levels and circumstances.

Hawaii's youth are facing an affordability crisis if they want to remain in the state for years to come. While there are many elements needed to address this issue, a must-have is making sure our youth are equipped with the skills and connections they need to pursue their dream careers. Work-based learning opportunities, such as internships in skilled fields including healthcare, IT, and air travel give students the chance to learn and earn on-the-job and gain experience and connections that will make them stand out for high-paying job opportunities in the future. Additionally, work-based learning provides employers across Hawaii the opportunity to recruit and grow their own workforce of local talent, providing mentorship and training for their next generation of workers. Research has shown that part-time work as a student translates to future

career benefits that include higher hourly wages upwards to 20%, increased annual earnings, and less time spent out of work.¹

SB3090 addresses the critical summer after a student graduates from high school. The concept of “summer melt” refers to this period of time, as students are at risk of getting knocked off course from the plans they have made, including actually showing up and enrolling in colleges where they’ve been accepted. One likely reason for this occurrence is that students struggle to maintain momentum once they are no longer receiving the structured supports and programs of the school system. By enabling them to continue participating in official work-based learning programs, we can better set students up for success during this time of transition.

Mahalo for your consideration,

David Miyashiro
Founding Executive Director
HawaiiKidsCAN

¹ <https://epionline.org/release/new-study-finds-teens-early-work-experiences-have-long-lasting-career-benefits/>