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GOVERNOR



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SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
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**Date:** 04/05/2023

**Time:** 01:55 PM

**Location:** 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Finance

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Bill:** SB 1044, SD2, HD2 RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH.

**Purpose of Bill:** Appropriates funds to hire complex-based licensed behavioral health specialists for Hawaii's rural public schools. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD2)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports and appreciates SB 1044, SD2, HD2. The appropriation of funds to increase the school-based youth mental health workforce would strengthen the Department's efforts to meet the needs of students in Hawaii's rural areas experiencing trauma, grief, family separation, depression, and other crises.

The Department previously requested an appropriation of \$861,000 to fund twelve behavioral health specialist positions to serve six complexes. However, the Department inadvertently excluded the Nanakuli-Waianae Complex.

As such, the Department respectfully requests to amend the previous request and asks for an appropriation of \$974,918 per year that would fund two behavioral health specialist positions for each of the following seven complex areas:

Hilo-Waiakea Complex;  
Kau-Keaau-Pahoia Complex;  
Honokaa-Kealakehe-Kohala-Konawaena Complex;  
Kapaa-Kauai-Waimea Complex;  
Hana-Lahainaluna-Lanai-Molokai Complex;  
Nanakuli-Waianae Complex; and

Baldwin-Kekaulike-Kulanihakoi-Maui Complex.

While the Department appreciates the funding in this measure, we ask that it does not replace priorities outlined in the Department's Board of Education approved budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 1044, SD2, HD2.