
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FIRE ALARMS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that properly functioning
2 fire alarm systems are essential for public school safety. The
3 impact of fires is especially severe for aging facilities.
4 According to the department of education, as of 2022 the average
5 age of public school buildings in Hawaii was seventy-two years.
6 Approximately twenty per cent of Hawaii's two hundred
7 fifty-seven public schools are more than one hundred years old.

8 The legislature further finds that the National Fire
9 Protection Association Life Safety Code, commonly known as NFPA
10 101, requires schools to have functioning fire alarm systems.
11 In 2017, however, the department of education acknowledged that
12 King intermediate school in Kaneohe had not had a working fire
13 alarm system for seven years. In 2022, teachers at Konawaena
14 elementary school on Hawaii island also reported that the
15 school's fire alarm system had been out of service for two
16 years, even after a fire broke out on campus in 2020.



1 The legislature additionally finds that on August 8, 2023,
2 wildfires swept across Maui and killed at least ninety-eight
3 people, making it one of the nation's deadliest natural
4 disasters. The wildfires destroyed over two thousand two
5 hundred structures, including King Kamehameha III elementary
6 school. While the fires did not occur while students were on
7 campus, the physical devastation and loss of life resulting from
8 the wildfires reveals the urgency of ensuring that all of the
9 State's public schools have properly functioning fire alarm
10 systems in case of emergencies.

11 The legislature notes that in 2023, legislators adopted
12 Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 34 and House Resolution No. 55,
13 which urged the department of education to establish a priority
14 list for repairing public school fire alarm systems. In its
15 testimony on the measures, department of education officials
16 expressed that the department maintains a prioritized list of
17 repairs for fire alarm systems that is divided into three
18 categories that are based on the condition of the fire alarms:
19 critical, poor, and fair. According to the department of
20 education, the cost of repairs to fire alarm systems that are in
21 critical condition totals \$51,489,537; the cost of repairs to



1 fire alarm systems that are in poor condition totals \$9,085,000;
2 and the cost of repairs to fire alarm systems that are in fair
3 condition totals \$8,001,944.

4 The purpose of this Act is to protect Hawaii's children
5 from fire-related emergencies by:

6 (1) Requiring the department of education to report to the
7 legislature annually on the installation, repair, and
8 maintenance of fire alarms in Hawaii's public schools;
9 and

10 (2) Appropriating funds for fire alarm repair and
11 maintenance in public schools.

12 SECTION 2. The department of education shall submit a
13 report to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the
14 convening of each regular session on the installation, repair,
15 and maintenance of fire alarms in Hawaii's public schools. The
16 report shall include:

17 (1) The number, location, cost, and project completion
18 date of fire alarm systems installed and repaired at
19 public schools in the preceding fiscal year;



1 (2) A priority list of fire alarm system installations and
2 repairs for public schools and the estimated cost of
3 such projects; and

4 (3) Recommendations and proposed legislation for
5 strengthening fire alarm maintenance and fire
6 prevention throughout Hawaii's public school system.

7 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
9 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for
10 the installation, repair, and maintenance of fire alarms in
11 Hawaii public schools.

12 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
13 education for the purposes of this Act.

14 SECTION 4. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of
15 the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37-91 and 37-93,
16 Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the
17 appropriations contained in H.B. No. , will cause the state
18 general fund expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be
19 exceeded by \$ or per cent. In addition, the
20 appropriation contained in this Act will cause the general fund
21 expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be further



1 exceeded by \$ or per cent. The combined total
2 amount of general fund appropriations contained in only these
3 two Acts will cause the state general fund expenditure ceiling
4 for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be exceeded by
5 \$ or per cent. The reasons for exceeding the
6 general fund expenditure ceiling are that:

- 7 (1) The appropriation made in this Act is necessary to
8 serve the public interest; and
- 9 (2) The appropriation made in this Act meets the needs
10 addressed by this Act.

11 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000;
12 provided that section 3 shall take effect on July 1, 2024.



H.B. NO. 1616 H.D. 1

Report Title:

DOE; Fire Alarms; Installation, Repair, and Maintenance; Report; Appropriation; Expenditure Ceiling

Description:

Requires the DOE to submit an annual report to the legislature on the installation, repair, and maintenance of fire alarm systems in Hawaii's public schools. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

