

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1376-24

Honolulu, Hawaii
MAR 25, 2024

RE: H.R. No. 149
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred H.R. No. 149 entitled:

"HOUSE RESOLUTION URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ENSURE THAT EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL AND PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL IN THE STATE, FROM KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE TWELVE HAS A CERTAIN NUMBER OF MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to urge the Department of Education to ensure that each public school and public charter school in the State, from kindergarten through grade twelve, employs, or retains under contract, a certain number of mental health professionals.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Disability and Communication Access Board and one individual. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Education and State Public Charter School Commission.

Your Committee finds that the State is experiencing an acute mental health crisis among children and youth. Your Committee further finds that school psychologists provide direct and indirect support to evaluate and address students' intellectual development, academic success, social-emotional learning, and

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mental and behavioral health. Additionally, school counselors counsel students and parents, evaluate students' abilities, address learning problems, and assist students in career and personal development. Your Committee recognizes that school psychologists and school counselors are crucial to supporting the mental health and well-being of students in school.

Your Committee notes that the National Association of School Psychologists recommends a ratio of one psychologist to five hundred students and the American School Counselor Association recommends a ratio of one school counselor to two hundred fifty students. Public schools and public charter schools in Hawaii presently do not meet the recommendations by the National Association of School Psychologists. Your Committee believes that ensuring adequate staffing levels of mental health professionals consistent with recommended ratios will provide Hawaii's keiki with critical support needed to address the ongoing mental health crisis.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Including the Chairperson of the Board of Education as a recipient of a certified copy of this measure; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Education that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of H.R. No. 149, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance in the form attached hereto as H.R. No. 149, H.D. 1.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Education,

for Justin LeChica
JUSTIN H. WOODSON, Chair



