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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TEACHER WORKFORCE HOUSING.

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

1       SECTION 1. The legislature finds that teachers are  
2       fundamental to shaping the future of Hawai'i's keiki and  
3       communities. However, rural and underserved areas of the State  
4       still face significant challenges in attracting and retaining  
5       qualified educators due to limited affordable housing options  
6       and the State's high cost of living.

7       The legislature further finds that challenges with teacher  
8       retention have resulted in a growing reliance on emergency hires  
9       and long-term substitutes, which can negatively affect the  
10      quality of education for students and place additional financial  
11      strain on the department of education. Addressing teacher  
12      retention is critical to reducing educational disparities and  
13      ensuring equitable access to high-quality learning opportunities  
14      for all students in public and charter schools.

15      The legislature therefore finds that providing financial  
16      assistance for housing through a teacher workforce housing  
17      stipend program would support teacher retention in rural and



underserved communities. Additionally, a stipend program would help alleviate economic burdens and encourage educators to make long-term commitments to teaching in rural and underserved communities.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish a teacher workforce housing stipend program to strengthen the teaching profession, support educational equity, and invest in the success of Hawai'i's students and schools.

SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to part III, subpart E, to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

**"§302A- Teacher workforce housing; stipend program; rural and underserved schools.** (a) There is established a teacher workforce housing stipend program to be administered by the department to support teacher retention at any public school designated as rural or in an underserved area.

(b) An individual shall be eligible for stipend consideration if the individual:

(1) Is employed full-time by the department in a public or charter school in an area designated as rural or underserved; and



1       (2) Does not own a residence within commuting distance  
2       from the school at which they are employed.

3       (c) Stipend recipients shall receive \$1,000 per month;  
4       provided that stipends awarded shall only be used only for rent  
5       or utilities. Recipients of the teacher workforce housing  
6       stipend shall submit annual documentation verifying the usage of  
7       the stipend for housing purposes pursuant to this subsection.

8       (d) Immediately following an award of a stipend, the  
9       recipient shall commit to teaching at a school in an area  
10       designated as rural or underserved for a minimum of three years.  
11       A stipend recipient may continue to receive a stipend pursuant  
12       to this section following the completion of the designated  
13       number of years; provided that the recipient continues to meet  
14       eligibility requirements pursuant to subsection (b).

15       (e) If the recipient fails to satisfy the work  
16       requirements in accordance with subsection (d), the recipient  
17       shall repay the total amount of the stipend funds received as a  
18       loan repayable to the department. The repayment shall be  
19       subject to the terms and conditions set by the department.

20       (f) The department shall submit a report of its findings  
21       and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the



1 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
2 the regular session for every odd-numbered year, beginning with  
3 the regular session of 2027."

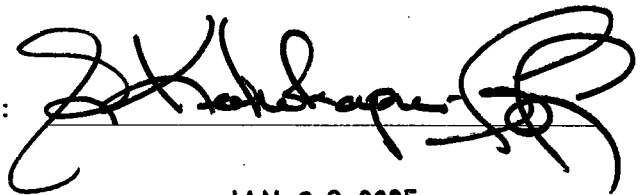
4 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
6 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and  
7 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
8 year 2026-2027 for the establishment and administration of the  
9 teacher workforce housing stipend program established pursuant  
10 to section 2 of this Act.

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

13 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

14 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

15 INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 22 2025



# H.B. NO. 1188

**Report Title:**

DOE; Teacher Workforce Housing Stipend Program; Workforce Housing; Reports; Appropriations

**Description:**

Establishes a Teacher Workforce Housing Stipend Program to support teacher retention at public and charter schools classified as rural and underserved. Requires reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

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

