
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, areas in the State with schools that are
4 hard to staff still face significant challenges in attracting
5 and retaining qualified educators due to limited affordable
6 housing options 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 communities



1 with schools that are hard to staff. Additionally, a stipend
2 program would help alleviate economic burdens and encourage
3 educators to make long-term commitments to teaching in
4 communities with schools designated as hard-to-staff.

5 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish a
6 teacher workforce housing stipend program to support teacher
7 retention at any public school and charter school designated as
8 hard-to-staff, which will strengthen the teaching profession,
9 support educational equity, and invest in the success of
10 Hawaii's students and schools.

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

14 **"§302A- Teacher workforce housing; stipend program;**
15 **hard-to-staff schools.** (a) There is established a teacher
16 workforce housing stipend program to be administered by the
17 department to support teacher retention at any public school and
18 charter school designated as hard-to-staff.

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



1 (1) Is employed full-time in a public school or charter
2 school in an area designated as hard-to-staff; and

3 (2) Does not own a residence.

4 (c) Stipend recipients shall receive \$ per
5 month; provided that stipends awarded shall be used only for
6 rent or utilities. Stipend recipients shall submit annual
7 documentation verifying the stipend was used only for the
8 purposes allowed pursuant to this subsection to the department.

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

16 (e) If the recipient fails to satisfy the work
17 requirements in accordance with subsection (d), the recipient
18 shall repay the total amount of the stipend received as a loan
19 repayable to the department. The repayment shall be subject to
20 terms and conditions set by the department, including
21 circumstances under which recipients may be eligible for



1 deferment or forgiveness due to hardship or inability to secure
2 employment, as well as potential fees for the collection of
3 delinquent repayment.

4 (f) Stipends repaid by a stipend recipient pursuant to
5 subsection (e) shall be deposited into the teachers' housing
6 revolving fund established pursuant to section 302A-833.

7 (g) The department may accept federal funds to support the
8 teacher workforce housing stipend program.

9 (h) In accordance with chapter 103D, the department may
10 enter into written contracts with collection agencies to collect
11 delinquent repayment of stipends owed to the department pursuant
12 to subsection (e). A collection agency that enters into a
13 written contract with the department to collect delinquent
14 stipend repayments pursuant to this section may collect a fee
15 from the debtor in accordance with the terms of, and up to the
16 amounts authorized in, the written contract.

17 (i) The department may adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91
18 to implement and administer the stipend program, including the
19 terms of repayment pursuant to subsection (e).

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



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

4 SECTION 3. Section 302A-833, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
5 amended by amending subsections (a) and (b) to read as follows:

6 "(a) There is established in the state treasury a
7 revolving fund to be known as the teachers' housing revolving
8 fund to be administered by the department of education. The
9 director of finance shall transfer any moneys appropriated for
10 the purposes of teacher housing to the teachers' housing
11 revolving fund. All unexpended balances of appropriations,
12 allocations, allotments, special revolving funds, or other funds
13 heretofore created and made available for the purposes of
14 developing or administering teachers' housing projects shall be
15 transferred to the teachers' housing revolving fund.

16 Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, all moneys, including
17 refunds, reimbursements, and rentals, for housing from teacher
18 tenants, and all moneys received by the department pursuant to
19 302A- (f) shall be deposited in the revolving fund.

20 (b) The revolving fund may be used by the department of
21 education for any and all of the purposes of teachers' housing,



1 including the planning, construction, maintenance, and operation
2 of teachers' housing, as well as for the salaries of the
3 necessary personnel in charge thereof[~~+~~], and for the teacher
4 workforce housing stipend program established pursuant to
5 section 302A- ."

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

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

15 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
16 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

17 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

DOE; Teacher Workforce Housing Stipend Program; Workforce Housing; Reports; Teacher Housing Revolving Fund; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes a Teacher Workforce Housing Stipend Program to support teacher retention at public and charter schools classified as hard-to-staff. Requires reports to the Legislature. Amends the purpose and uses of the Teacher Housing Revolving Fund. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

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