

---

---

## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TEACHER HOUSING.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that approximately ten  
2 per cent of the State's teachers switch schools, relocate, or  
3 leave the profession each year. Only fifty to sixty per cent of  
4 current teachers have been at their school for five years or  
5 more. Chronic teacher turnover forces the department of  
6 education to rely on emergency hires and substitute teachers to  
7 fill vacancies. The legislature further finds that teacher  
8 recruitment and retention are especially difficult at hard-to-  
9 staff schools.

10           The legislature additionally finds that Hawaii's high cost  
11 of living is a significant contributing factor in the department  
12 of education's teacher recruitment and retention efforts.  
13 According to a WalletHub study, Hawaii ranked fifty-first out of  
14 fifty states and the District of Columbia for starting teacher  
15 salary and median teacher salary, adjusted for cost of living.

16           The purpose of this Act is to alleviate the financial  
17 burden on teachers and improve teacher recruitment and retention



1 by establishing a teacher housing assistance program to provide  
2 housing vouchers to qualified full-time teachers who are  
3 employed by the department of education or a charter school and  
4 teach at a hard-to-fill school, as determined by the department,  
5 including public charter schools.

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

9 "§302A- Teacher housing assistance program. (a) There  
10 is established a teacher housing assistance program to be  
11 administered by the department to provide housing vouchers to  
12 eligible teachers. If the number of applications exceeds the  
13 number of available housing vouchers, housing vouchers shall be  
14 provided to eligible teachers through a lottery process.

15 (b) A housing voucher provided under this section shall be  
16 used for:

- 17 (1) Rent for the eligible teacher's primary residence;  
18 (2) Mortgage payments for the eligible teacher's primary  
19 residence; or



1       (3) Down payment on residential real property; provided  
2       that the property shall be the eligible teacher's  
3       primary residence.

4       (c) A housing voucher shall not exceed \$500 per month or  
5       the eligible teacher's monthly rent or mortgage payment,  
6       whichever is less. A housing voucher granted pursuant to this  
7       section shall be applicable for one year. The voucher shall be  
8       renewable for one additional year.

9       (d) Upon the establishment of the teacher housing  
10      assistance program, the department shall develop an application  
11      procedure and processes, procedures, and forms necessary to  
12      implement and maintain the program. The department shall work  
13      with the state public charter school commission to develop a  
14      process to verify that an eligible teacher satisfies the  
15      criteria listed in subsection (f).

16      (e) The department may adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91  
17      to effectuate the purpose of this section.

18      (f) For the purposes of this section, "eligible teacher"  
19      means a person who:

20      (1) Is a full-time teacher;



1       (2) Has taught at a school in the State for at least one  
2           year prior to the application date;

3       (3) Is employed by the department of education or a public  
4 charter school;

5       (4) Commits to teach at a hard-to-fill school, as  
6           determined by the department of education, or a public  
7           charter school for no less than five consecutive  
8           years;

9       (5) Resides in the State;

10       (6) Does not own, operate, rent, or control any  
11           residential real property in addition to the eligible  
12           teacher's primary residence for which the housing  
13           voucher is sought; and

14       (7) Has a household income below           per cent of the area  
15           median income."

16       SECTION 3. Section 302A-833, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
17 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

18       "(b) The revolving fund may be used by the department of  
19 education for any and all of the purposes of teachers' housing,  
20 including the [~~planning~~];



- 1        (1)   Planning, construction, maintenance, and operation of
- 2                    teachers' housing [~~, as well as for the salaries~~];
- 3        (2)   Teacher housing assistance program pursuant to section
- 4                    302A-        ; and
- 5        (3)   Salaries of the necessary personnel in charge
- 6                    thereof."

7            SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the teachers'

8 housing revolving fund the sum of \$                    or so much thereof

9 as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the same sum

10 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027

11 for the provision of housing vouchers through the teacher

12 housing assistance program established by 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, 2025.



# H.B. NO. 89

1

INTRODUCED BY:

*Melvin M. Poepe*

JAN 13 2025



# H.B. NO. 89

**Report Title:**

Teacher Home Assistance Program; Teacher Recruitment and Retention; Teachers' Housing Revolving Fund; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the Teacher Home Assistance Program to provide housing vouchers to certain eligible teachers. Appropriates funds out of the Teachers' Housing Revolving Fund.

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

