SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT MANOA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, TO PREPARE A STUDY THAT EXAMINES AND PROVIDES RECOMMENDATIONS ON IMPROVING THE RETENTION OF TEACHERS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

WHEREAS, the systemic shortage of public school teachers within the Department of Education is exacerbated by multiple factors, including the limited pool of qualified applicants to recruit, and the subsequent administrative challenge of retaining teachers once employed; and

WHEREAS, the severity of this shortage is particularly evident in schools lacking modern facilities and the resources with which to offer new teachers a competitive salary and benefits; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, the Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported that "more than half of Hawaii's public school teachers leave within five years of being hired"; and

WHEREAS, the retention of highly qualified teachers in public schools is critical to achieving long-standing educational goals and academic standards set by the State; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Legislative Reference Bureau, in consultation with the Department of Education and University of Hawaii at Manoa College of Education, is requested to prepare a study that examines and provides recommendations on improving the retention of teachers within the Department of Education; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include the following:

(1) Cases and reports over the past ten years by teachers and administrators on specific factors that had encouraged or discouraged retention as based on years of service within the Department of Education;

(2) Specific data on the average length of service within the Department of Education of teachers who graduated from University of Hawaii programs, other accredited teacher preparation programs within the State of Hawaii, and those who transfer into the State from other states, as well as an analysis of the factors contributing to differing persistence rates; and

(3) Recommendations of administrative and legislative possibilities to incentivize teachers toward continued employment within the Department of Education, and any other proposed strategies designed to mitigate the systemic shortage of qualified teachers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2016; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau, President of the University of Hawaii, Chairperson of the Board of Education, Superintendent of Education, and Dean of the University of Hawaii at Manoa College of Education.

OFFERED BY: