SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH A VOCATIONAL EDUCATION OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, research confirms that quality out-of-school programs inspire and motivate children to learn, support children’s social and emotional growth, and help raise academic achievement; and

WHEREAS, many school-aged children in the State are raised by working families who cannot afford the high costs of child care and are therefore unable to access out-of-school programs; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2016 report by ChildCare Aware of America, Hawaii is the ninth least affordable state for the cost of before-school or after-school care for school-aged children in child care centers, as a percentage of medium income of parents; and

WHEREAS, the Afterschool Alliance reports that seventeen percent of Hawaii K-12 youth are responsible for their own care after school and that thirty-eight percent of all Hawaii children who are not enrolled in an after-school program would be likely to participate in a program if one were available in the community; and

WHEREAS, the Statewide Point-In-Time Count published January 24, 2016, indicated that approximately 1,935 children in Hawaii are homeless and could benefit from a safe, structured out-of-school environment; and

WHEREAS, there also exists a significant job skills gap within the State's workforce; and
WHEREAS, there is a lack of qualified workers to fill available jobs in industries with careers demanding skills in computer science, coding, engineering, and foreign language; and

WHEREAS, vocational education programs can help narrow the existing job skills gap by preparing students to work in a trade by exposing students to trade, craft, or technical careers such as engineering, computer science, accountancy, nursing, medicine, architecture, hospitality, or agribusiness; and

WHEREAS, vocational education programs can also be aligned with the school day to complement, but not duplicate, arts, culture, literacy, fitness, foreign language, math, science, character development, and community service; and

WHEREAS, many other states have supported policies that expand learning opportunities by offering structured learning environments outside the traditional school day hours through out-of-school programs that provide a range of enrichment and learning activities in various subjects, including arts, civic engagement, language, and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to advance a range of state education and youth goals; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii should follow the lead of these other states by developing its own vocational education out-of-school programs to help address poverty, brain drain, and the job skills gap within the local workforce; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2017, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of Education is urged to establish a vocational education out-of-school program for the State's public and charter school students, in grades nine through twelve, to be conducted during after-school hours, on weekends, and during inter-sessions; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Education.

OFFERED BY:

[Signatures]