RESEARCH BY THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION has found that reducing class size provides long-term benefits for students and for society as a whole. Reduced class sizes in lower-income school districts help to increase student achievement and students' test scores, alleviate strain on teachers, and raise college-acceptance rates. Furthermore, research by the Center for Educational Equity discovered that smaller class sizes may attract high-quality teachers, citing successes in Tennessee and Wisconsin schools, and smaller class sizes were then adopted by California and Florida. In Rochester, New York, a reduction in class sizes was implemented over a four-year period to manage the effects on personnel and on the budget.

The legislature finds that reduced class sizes will also benefit Hawaii's public-school students and teachers. The purpose of this Act is to require the department of education to implement a reduction in class sizes over four years.
SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to part II to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§302A- Reduction in class sizes. (a) Notwithstanding any collective bargaining agreement to the contrary, beginning with the 2020-2021 school year and ending with the 2023-2024 school year, the department shall implement a reduction in class sizes in all department schools.

(b) Over the period specified in subsection (a):

(1) Class sizes in elementary schools shall be reduced to no more than twenty students per class; and

(2) Class sizes in middle or intermediate schools and in high schools shall be reduced to no more than twenty-five students per class.

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to apply to charter schools under chapter 302D; special education programs; or elective classes, such as visual arts, music, drama, and dance."

SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.
SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

INTRODUCED BY:

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Jan. 31
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Jan. 2, 3 2019
Report Title:
Public Schools; Reduction in Class Sizes

Description:
Requires the Department of Education to reduce class sizes over a period of four years.

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