SENATE RESOLUTION

ENCOURAGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, COMPLEX AREAS, AND CHARTER SCHOOLS TO IMPLEMENT SCHOOL-WIDE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES IN THE STATE'S PUBLIC AND CHARTER SCHOOLS.

WHEREAS, studies show that suspension and expulsion, which are traditional methods of addressing disciplinary issues in schools, do not make schools safer and result in lower graduation rates and increased rates of involvement in the juvenile justice system, thus contributing to the school to prison pipeline; and

WHEREAS, restorative justice is a values-based approach to community building, problem solving, and conflict resolution that builds and restores relationships, creates opportunities for dialogue, repairs harm, transforms conflict, and creates equitable learning environments in schools; and

WHEREAS, restorative justice enhances school communities by incorporating values of respect, dignity, mutual concern, collaboration, and accountability into the school culture; and

WHEREAS, restorative justice encourages students to engage in collaborative problem solving, which empowers students and gives them tools to effectively communicate beyond the school setting; and

WHEREAS, restorative justice, in a school setting, shifts the emphasis from managing behavior to focusing on building, nurturing, and repairing relationships, while retaining the ability to hold students accountable; and

WHEREAS, restorative justice focuses on the impact of students' behavior on other members of the school community, rather than only on rule breaking, and allows those impacted to
find ways to repair the harm and restore damaged relationships, rather than imposing punishment; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that restorative justice practices can lead to reductions in problem behavior, improvements in school climate, and increases in student achievement, attendance, and graduation rates; and

WHEREAS, there is a continuum of proactive to responsive restorative practices, ranging from community-building circles to restorative conferencing, which are accessible to educators who can then use those funds to successfully implement school-wide restorative justice practices; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2020, that the Department of Education, complex areas, and charter schools are encouraged to implement school-wide restorative justice initiative practices in Hawaii's public and charter schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Education, Superintendent of Education, and Chairperson of the State Charter School Commission.

OFFERED BY:

[Signatures]