
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM TO RECRUIT AND EMPLOY QUALIFIED BLIND PERSONS TO SERVE AS ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY INSTRUCTORS AND IN OTHER POSITIONS AS TEACHERS OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS.

1 WHEREAS, the National Orientation and Mobility
2 Certification (NOMC) is a credentialing process administered by
3 the National Blindness Professional Certification Board and
4 includes training in teaching Structured Discovery Cane Travel;
5 and

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7 WHEREAS, for decades, Structured Discovery Cane Travel has
8 been empowering blind children and adults across the United
9 States, helping them build confidence and feelings of self-
10 respect as they move safely from place to place; and

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12 WHEREAS, the methods and principles of Structured Discovery
13 Cane Travel come from the lived experiences of blind men and
14 women who have shared their experiences, attitudes and
15 techniques with each other since 1940, leading to techniques,
16 problem solving strategies, experiential learning, confidence
17 building experiences, and the role modeling of non-visual
18 techniques, which demonstrate their effectiveness while
19 correcting misconceptions about blindness; and

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21 WHEREAS, for the teaching of orientation and mobility, the
22 Department of Education (DOE) has no employees who hold the NOMC
23 credential and until recently would only accept the Certified
24 Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS) certification from
25 the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and
26 Education Professionals. The COMS certification gives the DOE
27 the personnel resources to provide vision-centered orientation
28 and mobility services but not personnel qualified or capable to
29 teach the structured discovery approach; and

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31 WHEREAS, of the two recognized training methods, adherents
32 to the structured discovery approach emphasize employing blind



1 instructors, while adherents to the vision-centered approach
2 emphasize instructors who can see, resulting in diminished
3 employment opportunities for qualified blind persons; and
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5 WHEREAS, although the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board now
6 accepts the NOMC orientation and mobility credential to serve in
7 other positions for which they are qualified to teach visually
8 impaired students, this change has not resulted in more reliance
9 on blind instructors to teach; now, therefore,
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11 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
12 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
13 of 2021, that the DOE is urged to develop and implement an
14 affirmative action program, to the extent permitted by law,
15 designed to recruit and employ qualified blind professionals to
16 serve as orientation and mobility instructors and in other
17 positions as teachers of visually impaired students; and
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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent of the
20 Department of Education is urged to submit a report of its
21 findings and recommendations, including any proposed
22 legislation, to this body at least thirty days prior to the
23 convening of the Regular Session of 2022, indicating the steps
24 taken and progress made to recruit and employ blind people in
25 instructional positions with the Department of Education for
26 which they are qualified; and
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
29 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor,
30 Chairperson of the Board of Education, Superintendent of the
31 Department of Education, Chairperson of the Hawaii Teacher
32 Standards Board, Administrator of the Department of Human
33 Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services for the
34 Blind Branch (Ho'opono), President of the National Blindness
35 Professional Certification Board, President of the
36

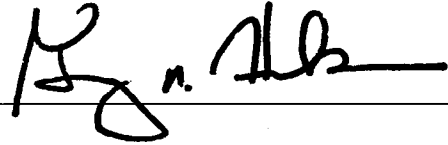


H.R. NO. 25

1 National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii, and President of the
2 Hawaii Association of the Blind.

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OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. A. ...", written over a horizontal line.

FEB 03 2021

