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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SCHOOL SAFETY.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that schools should be a  
2 place of safety and security for children of all ages. However,  
3 the tragic 2012 school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut,  
4 highlighted the need to re-evaluate safety procedures currently  
5 in place. Although the doors to the school automatically locked  
6 once classes began and identification was demanded of visitors,  
7 the perpetrator was able to force his way into the school, where  
8 he killed twenty children and six adults. According to  
9 witnesses, school staff attempted to protect students by locking  
10 classroom doors, hiding them in closets, or barricading them in  
11 other rooms.

12           The purpose of this Act is to strengthen the level of  
13 safety and protection given to schoolchildren in Hawaii by  
14 requiring that the department of education install classroom  
15 doors that lock and unlock under certain circumstances, and  
16 allowing school principals or their designees to lock classroom  
17 doors when doing so is necessary to ensure lives and safety.



1 SECTION 2. Chapter 132, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
3 and to read as follows:

4 "§132- School doors. (a) Notwithstanding any law to  
5 the contrary, before July 1, 2015, all classroom doors of every  
6 school building of the department of education shall have the  
7 capacity to be:

8 (1) Locked from the inside of the classroom; provided that  
9 the door shall not have the capacity to be locked from  
10 the inside without the use of a:

11 (A) Key;

12 (B) Combination code; or

13 (C) Mechanism that is remotely controlled by the  
14 school's principal or the principal's designee;

15 (2) Unlocked from the outside of the classroom; provided  
16 that the door shall not have the capacity to be  
17 unlocked from the outside without the use of one of  
18 the mechanisms described in subparagraphs (A), (B), or  
19 (C) of paragraph (1); and

20 (3) Easily opened from the inside of the classroom without  
21 the use of any key or other special unlocking  
22 mechanism.



1        (b) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the principal  
2 of a school or the principal's designee, in accordance with  
3 internal departmental guidelines issued by the superintendent,  
4 may, even when a school building is occupied, lock any or all of  
5 the school's classroom doors after making a reasonable  
6 determination that such action is necessary for the safety of  
7 the occupants of the school building; provided that all  
8 classroom doors shall still have the capacity to be opened  
9 pursuant to paragraph (3) of subsection (a).

10       (c) In the absence of a finding of gross negligence,  
11 neither the department of education, nor the superintendent, nor  
12 a principal, nor a principal's designee shall be liable in any  
13 civil action for injuries suffered as a result of a  
14 determination made pursuant to subsection (b) to:

- 15       (1) Issue relevant departmental guidelines; or  
16       (2) Lock or unlock a school building's classroom door.

17       (d) Before July 1, 2015, the state fire council, in  
18 consultation with the department of education, shall adopt  
19 administrative rules in accordance with chapter 91 to facilitate  
20 the administration of this section.

21       (e) The department of education and the state fire council



1 shall submit a joint annual report to the legislature no later  
2 than twenty days before the convening of each of the 2014, 2015,  
3 and 2016 regular sessions which, at a minimum, shall:

4       (1) State the status of any pending adoption of or  
5       amendments to the administrative rules described in  
6       subsection (d);

7       (2) Provide a fair and accurate estimate of the cost of  
8       installing doors that comply with subsection (a); and

9       (3) Make recommendations for the amendment of this  
10       section, if any amendments are warranted.

11       SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

12       SECTION 4. If any provision of this Act, or the  
13 application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held  
14 invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or  
15 applications of the Act that can be given effect without the  
16 invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions  
17 of this Act are severable.

18       SECTION 5. This Act does not affect rights and duties that  
19 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were  
20 begun before its effective date.

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1 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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# H.B. NO. 301

**Report Title:**

School Safety; Classroom Doors

**Description:**

Requires, by July 1, 2015, the department of education to install classroom doors that lock and unlock under certain circumstances. Allows school principals or their designees to lock classroom doors when doing so is necessary to ensure safety.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

