



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB133 HD2
RELATING TO SURFING**

House Committee on Finance
Hawai'i State Capitol

February 20, 2025

10:00 AM

Conference Room 308

Dear Honorable Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

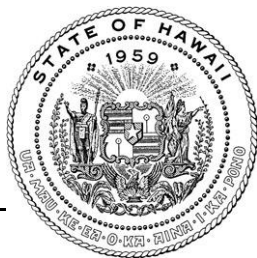
The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) urges the Board of Trustees to **support House Bill 133, HD2**, which provides full funding for the implementation of five high school interscholastic board surfing programs—fulfilling the Legislature’s intent from 2016.

Since the Legislature authorized interscholastic surfing in 2016, only one league—in Maui County—has been established. Meanwhile, states like New York and the Carolinas have successfully launched high school surfing leagues. It is past time for Hawai'i to fully embrace the sport that originated in these islands.

By providing \$2 million in funding, this bill will support five athletic leagues statewide, including public, private, charter, and Hawaiian language immersion (Kaiapuni) schools, ensuring broader participation and fostering the next generation of Native Hawaiian surfers. As noted in Standing Committee Report No. 152 on HB122, HD1 the committee stated, “Surfing is of significant cultural, social, and economic value to the State... and should be sponsored by more of the State’s athletic leagues to enable student-athletes to compete in and perpetuate the legacy of this sport through state championship events.”

Beyond expanding athletic opportunities, this bill sends a clear cultural message that Native Hawaiian traditions and innovations deserve recognition and protection. OHA urges the Legislature to fulfill the promise made in 2016 by ensuring all five leagues are established. Doing so will preserve, promote, and honor Native Hawaiian culture while providing invaluable opportunities for Hawai'i's youth.

Mahalo for your time and consideration, we ask that this committee **pass** this bill with funding.



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKAI

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
DIRECTOR

DANE K. WICKER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804
Web site: dbedt.hawaii.gov

Telephone: (808) 586-2355
Fax: (808) 586-2377

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Thursday, February 20, 2025

10:00 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308 and Videoconference

In consideration of

HB 133, HD2

RELATING TO SURFING.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

I'm Keith Amemiya, Chair of the Governor's Sports Task Force and former Executive Director of the Hawaii High School Athletic Association, and I strongly support HB 133, HD2 which appropriates funds to the Department of Education to support the establishment of surfing as an interscholastic sport statewide beginning in the 2025-26 school year.

Hawaii is the birthplace of surfing, is extremely popular with residents of all ages, and is home to legendary world surfing champions Duke Kahanamoku, Carissa Moore, John John Florence, and many more.

The Hawaii State Board of Education already approved surfing as an official high school sport in 2004. In 2014, the Maui Interscholastic League held its first season where students regularly competed and contended for an official championship. Since that inaugural season, no MIL surfers have sustained any serious injuries during practice or competition.

On Oahu, numerous Oahu Interscholastic Association high schools have adopted surfing as a club sport that requires surfers and coaches to pass rigorous safety requirements before being allowed to participate. To date, no OIA surfers have sustained any serious injuries during practice or competition.

House Committee on Finance
HB 133, HD2
Page 2

The funding of surfing with sanctioned competitions statewide will increase sports participation for both males and females, will increase academic achievement, will increase student and community pride in their schools, will be well received by the general public, and is long overdue.

Based upon the above, I humbly ask for your support and to pass HB 133, HD2.

Please let me know if you have any questions and mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Keith Y. Amemiya
Chair
Governor's Sports Task Force

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 5:17:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Sanita	Department of Education- Hana High and Elementary School	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of Scholastic Surfing in Hawaii Schools

By Christopher Sanita, Principal of Hāna High and Elementary School & Expert Surfer from Hāna, Maui

Aloha mai kākou,

My name is Christopher Sanita, and I am honored to serve as the principal of Hāna School and a lifelong surfer from the shores of East Maui. Surfing is more than just a sport—it is our heritage, our culture, and for many of us, a way of life. As an educator and waterman, I stand before you today to urge the expansion of scholastic surfing throughout Hawai‘i’s public schools.

Surfing as a Cultural Foundation

Hawai‘i is the birthplace of surfing, a gift from our ancestors who saw the waves not as obstacles, but as pathways to connection—with the ocean, with each other, and with ourselves. It is only fitting that our keiki, the future caretakers of this land and sea, have the opportunity to embrace and excel in this tradition as part of their education.

Just as we have embraced football, basketball, and volleyball as integral parts of student development, we must recognize that surfing holds an even deeper significance for our islands. It connects our keiki to Hawaiian values such as mālama ‘āina (caring for the land and sea), kuleana (responsibility), and lōkahi (unity).

Academic and Personal Growth Through Surfing

Beyond its cultural importance, surfing provides incredible benefits for student development:

- **Physical & Mental Well-Being:** Surfing builds strength, endurance, and balance while also serving as a natural stress reliever. It teaches patience, resilience, and adaptability—skills that translate into the classroom and beyond.
- **Engagement & Attendance:** Students who participate in surfing programs are more likely to be engaged in school, stay active, and maintain a sense of purpose. When students are excited about learning—whether in the classroom or in the water—they are more likely to succeed.

- **STEM & Environmental Education:** Surfing is deeply connected to oceanography, meteorology, and environmental science. Through a scholastic surfing program, students can learn about tides, swells, marine ecosystems, and climate change, fostering a greater sense of environmental stewardship.

Opportunities for Equity & Inclusion

Surfing has long been seen as a sport for those with access—access to transportation, equipment, and mentorship. By establishing surfing as a recognized scholastic sport in every complex area, we ensure that all students, regardless of background, can participate and benefit from this experience. Through school-based programs, we can provide necessary resources—boards, gear, and coaching—to make surfing accessible to every child who wants to learn.

A Vision for Hawai‘i’s Future

Imagine a future where our keiki can represent their schools in surfing competitions, earn scholarships, and even pursue professional careers while staying rooted in their communities. Imagine students growing up with an educational system that honors their cultural identity and encourages them to engage with the ocean as both a classroom and a sanctuary.

We have the unique opportunity to align our education system with our values—to offer a sport that is truly Hawaiian and prepare our students not just for careers, but for a lifetime of connection to the ‘āina and moana.

Call to Action

I humbly ask for your support in establishing scholastic surfing programs across Hawai‘i’s public schools. Let’s make sure that our students—our future leaders—have the opportunity to embrace the ocean, to honor their culture, and to thrive through the sport that was born in these islands.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 02/20/2025

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Bill Title: HB 0133, HD2 RELATING TO SURFING.

Purpose of Bill: Appropriates funds to the Department of Education to support the establishment of surfing as an interscholastic sport. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD2)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) recognizes the intent of HB133, HD2, and respectfully offers comments and concerns.

Since 2005, the Department has developed regulations to implement surfing as a high school sport. In 2016, the Hawaii State Board of Education approved the Board Policy 101-11, Surfing, which established surfing as a high school sport.

While the Department appreciates appropriations to support surfing in high school athletic programs, this would not address the more significant risk factors that make surfing difficult for many high schools to sanction. These risks include concerns about accessible and safe surfing areas to conduct practices and the inability to control the practice environment. On Oahu, surfing has not been proposed by any Department high school principal, and providing funding, while appreciated, would not alleviate these concerns. Any new competitive athletic sport offered in the Department is determined by the respective league associations where it is proposed and approved to ensure conditions are right for students and the school.

The total funding required if the sport is opened up to all 43 Department high schools, for coach's salaries for both boys and girls surfing would be approximately \$610,084 for a total of 2 head coaches (one for each gender) and 4 assistants (2 for each gender) which is standard for most team sports. The cost to fund Department teachers as a head coach is currently \$3,226 each, and an assistant coach is \$1,934 each. This cost may be higher for larger teams to meet adult to swimmer ratios. For Department sports, transportation and equipment also requires funding.

The Department reached out to a member of the surfing community, and was informed that organizing a single surfing competition is approximately \$5,800. This amount covers essential expenses such as 2 lifeguards with jet skis, 5 judges, a live scoring operator, beach Marshall, announcer, production setup, ratings, life heats, PA system, generators, horn and timing system, set up and breakdown, supplies, and contingency expenses. These costs do not include night security to monitor the set-up sight the night before, which would require staff or volunteers to do from the host school, or hire security.

The Department respectfully suggests that funding be redirected towards school co-curricular surf clubs where there might be student interest, and where the school has determined that safety concerns have been adequately addressed. The Department also requests that any appropriations would not negatively impact the Department's Governor's-approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

COUNTY COUNCIL

Mel Rapozo, Chair
KipuKai Kualī'i, Vice Chair
Addison Bulosan
Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Felicia Cowden
Fern Holland
Arryl Kaneshiro



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

Jade K. Fountain-Tanigawa, County Clerk
Lyndon M. Yoshioka, Deputy County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 241-4188
Facsimile: (808) 241-6349
Email: cokcouncil@kauai.gov

Council Services Division
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209
Līhu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i 96766

February 18, 2025

TESTIMONY OF ADDISON BULOSAN
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL
ON
HB 133, HD 2, RELATING TO SURFING
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 20, 2025
10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 308
Via Videoconference

Dear Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of HB 133, HD 2, Relating to Surfing. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Kaua'i County Council.

I wholeheartedly support the intent of HB 133, HD 2, which would greatly affect the Kaua'i community.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 133, HD 2. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via email to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

ADDISON BULOSAN
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

AAO:mdt

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 2:36:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gabriel Mercado	Spirit Tribe Xtreme	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The ocean has always been a place of challenge, growth, and connection. By appropriating funds to the Department of Education to support the establishment of surfing as an interscholastic sport, we are not just supporting an athletic program, we are opening doors for students to embrace a lifelong passion, learn discipline, and develop a deep respect for nature.

Surfing teaches resilience, balance, and perseverance, qualities that extend far beyond the waves. For many young athletes, this sport could be the key to unlocking their full potential, offering them a pathway to higher education, professional opportunities, and a stronger connection to their communities.

By investing in surfing at the scholastic level, we are investing in the future of our youth, fostering a culture of environmental stewardship, and honoring a sport deeply rooted in history and tradition. Let's stand together in support of this initiative and give the next generation the opportunity for growth and to have a positive impact in the community.

Thank you

Gabriel Mercado

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 6:39:25 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lezle Molina	HP Baldwin High School Surf Team	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Bill HB133 to help support the surfing community on the outer islands. I agree that we appropriate funds to the department of Education to support the establishmnet of surfing as an interscholastic sport.

We have been doing it on Maui and it has been a successful league, with schools supporting eachother in healthy competition, forming friendships within and outside of their school teams. Being born and raised on maui, it is part of who we are to be connected with some type of water sport, be it paddling, surfing, or swimming. I believe that surfing is part of who we are living in Hawai'i.

I strongly agree that this bill should be passed for the youth of hawaii.



February 19, 2025

State of Hawai'i, House of Representatives
Committee on Finance

Aloha Chair Yamashita,

Board of Directors

Kalani Vierra
President

Ricky Alvarez
Vice President

Bridget Velasco
Secretary

Chantal Zarbaugh
Treasurer

Directors
Zach Edlao
Darwin Okinaka
Cary Kayama
Jon Kaneshina
Bradley Young
Kleve Zarbaugh
Kurt Lager
Clark Abbey
Kekaulike Kealoha

Kirsten Hermstad
Executive Director

Ex Officio Legends
Ralph Goto
Brian Keaulana
Archie Kalepa
Mark Cunningham

Hawaiian Lifeguard Association
P.O. Box 844
Kapa'a, Hawaii 96746
Tax Id 99-0308213
hawaiianlifeguardassociation.org

I am writing on behalf of the Hawaiian Lifeguard Association (HLA) to express our support for House Bill 133, which seeks to establish surfing as an interscholastic sport and appropriate funds for its implementation. This bill is crucial for the well-being and development of our youth.

In the previous committee hearing, there were many questions about the costs associated with inter-scholastic surf competitions. The Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Executive Director Sarah Fairchild wrote a white paper on this topic. It is attached here for your reference. This data is based on actual costs incurred by programs on Maui.

Surfing is not only a significant part of our Hawaiian culture, but it also provides a pathway for students to learn advanced water safety skills. By incorporating surfing into the school curriculum, we can ensure that our students are equipped with essential life-saving skills that are particularly important in our island state. Moreover, offering surfing as an interscholastic sport gives the youth of Hawaii a culturally relevant outlet for safe and structured activities, whether before or after school. We know that students who are engaged in sports or extracurricular activities have lower incidences of suicide and feel more connected to their community. This sense of belonging and purpose is vital for their mental and emotional health.

The Hawaiian Lifeguard Association fully supports House Bill 133 because it aligns with our mission to promote water safety and provide positive opportunities for our youth. We urge you to support this bill and help us create a safer and more connected community for our students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kirsten Hermstad
Executive Director

The mission of the Hawaiian Lifeguard Association (HLA) is to contribute to and advocate for the professional advancement of lifeguards in the State of Hawaii by supporting their efforts to reduce the incidence of drownings and aquatic injuries.

It accomplishes this by: Establishing and maintaining the highest standards of professional surf and open water lifesaving to maximize public safety in Hawaiian aquatic environments. Developing, supporting, and participating in programs that address drowning and aquatic injury prevention strategies. **Serving as a primary resource for aquatic safety education in the State of Hawaii.** Raising funds for water safety programs through available grants and sponsorship agreements. Continuing to actively support the Statewide Junior Lifeguard Program by providing funding for standardized curriculum development, instructor recruitment and training, uniforms and equipment, awards, and travel expenses. Actively supporting the improvement of lifesaving and humanitarian causes, locally, nationally (USLA), and internationally (ILS).



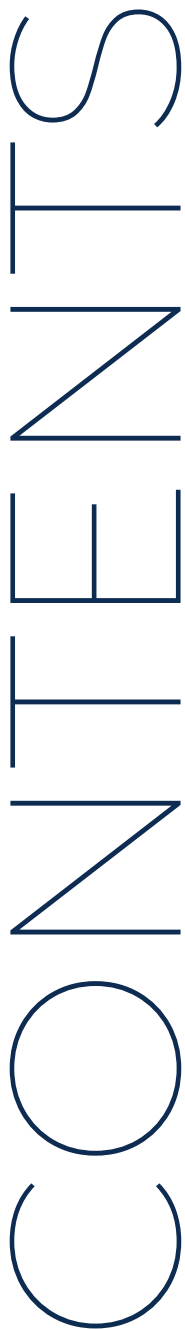
OUTRIGGER
DUKE KAHANAMOKU
FOUNDATION

SURFING IN HAWAII SCHOOLS A WHITE PAPER

Making Surfing a Varsity Sport &
Sanctioning an Official Statewide
High School Surf Tournament



PHOTO: Jack Ho



02. Introduction
03. Why is surfing in schools important?
05. Club sports and school-sanctioned sports
06. Maui's Success Story
09. How did Kamehameha Schools create a varsity team at a private school?
10. Steps to Success Overview
11. What does it take to get surfing started in my school?
12. Requirements to add a sanctioned interscholastic sport
13. What is needed to run a league?
14. How do we hold an official statewide surfing championship?
15. Additional considerations
16. National Surfing Championships
17. College Surfing
18. Professional & Olympic Surfing
19. Appendix

NOTHING BUT THE BEST

Settling Polynesians introduced surfing to Hawaii possibly as early as the 12th century. For Native Hawaiians, surfing is not only a sport but a part of cultural and religious practice. The famous Native Hawaiian Olympic swimmer Duke Kahanamoku introduced surfing around the world as he traveled and made Hawaii synonymous with surfing. Surfing has been Hawaii's official individual sport since 1998, and Hawaii is given special reverence at the international surfing competition level. Despite all this, surfing has yet to be supported as an official sport in most Hawaii high schools.

For years, many people have desired to make surfing an official school-sanctioned sport so that Hawaii high school students who surf can enjoy the same respect, honor, and glory as traditional — and imported — high school varsity sports like football or baseball. The coconut wireless reports the reasons surfing is not already a sanctioned high school sport are liability, insurance, and finances. However, further examination shows the missing pieces are mainly student and parent political pressure and proactive leadership at the school level.

County of Maui public high schools are the only public schools in Hawaii that have successfully launched varsity surfing. This paper will share their story as a blueprint for other schools. This paper will also outline the necessary requirements for HHSAA to sanction an official statewide high school surfing tournament.

Why is surfing in schools important?

Aquatics safety needs to be taught in Hawaii schools because we are an island state surrounded by water. More than half of second graders in Title I schools in Hawaii lack basic swim skills to save themselves from drowning. (Source: [Hawaii Aquatics Foundation](#)). We need aquatics education and ocean safety awareness taught in elementary school, junior lifeguarding provided in middle school, and lifeguarding offered in high school. Surf teams are a natural part of a water safety continuum. Surf teams require basic swim skills upon entry, and they build aquatics skills and water safety knowledge through experience. Surfing can also inspire young people to become lifeguards, a job field in high demand of young workers, that can lead to opportunities for growth in many public safety and medical career paths.

Active participation on a high school surf team could also provide a runway to career paths in surfing-related industries. We need to groom leaders with high business acumen so that they will be at the table, and will make decisions that elevate Hawaii's prominence in the surf industry. Australia has done this and is now influencing professional surfing more than Hawaii, the birthplace of the sport.

In today's fast-paced society, many are overworking themselves to keep up with increasing demands from their respective industries. Unfortunately, spending most of one's days working at a desk can result in stress and severe burnout. These examples of mental exhaustion can in turn create serious health problems. People of all ages face these risks caused by our work-centered culture, and now more than ever, they need an antidote. Surfing provides a solution to these concerning issues by greatly boosting one's mental and physical well-being.

“Surfing heals
and empowers
the mind, body,
and spirit.”
-Sunny Kazama,
student



Surfing gives people a much-needed break from the busy pace of our world, allowing surfers to leave worries on land and be present. The sport of surfing itself requires mindfulness: a surfer must be mindful of their surroundings (the waves and the other surfers in the lineup) and their body (how they stand on a board, how they move with a wave's energy, etc.). Even if one surfs for only twenty minutes, that brief stretch of mindfulness provides a necessary and relaxing reset from the stresses of modern life.

Surfing also builds a sense of community. The ocean has no boundaries, and the sport of surfing attracts people from diverse backgrounds for the same purpose: to catch a great wave. As one continues to surf the same lineups with the same people, it is inevitable that new connections and friendships are formed. In the age of social media and technology, as our world experiences an epidemic of loneliness, surfing can help provide connection.

Surfing also helps people reap benefits from being in nature. A research study showed that sunlight exposure "lowered systolic blood pressure in people with kidney failure on dialysis," which also decreased risk for its related health problems, such as "heart attack, stroke, and kidney damage." Additionally, surfing is a fun way to absorb vitamin D, which plays "an important role in bone health and immune system function." (Source: <https://www.goodrx.com/health-topic/environmental/benefits-of-sunlight>) Surfing fulfills the Hawaiian value of lōkahi meaning unity, oneness, and harmony, in that surfers can feel at one with nature, a more elusive feeling for today's teens who have smartphones and video games at their disposal.

Lastly, surfing does wonders for physical health as it is like a 3-in-1 workout session. Surfing is a combination of intense cardio (the fast pace of paddling and carving on a wave), strength training (the continuous use of one's body while surfing), and muscle building (development of muscle groups, especially shoulders and back). The benefits of all three of these workouts can be enjoyed by surfing, an efficient way to release mood-improving endorphins.



What is the difference between club sports and school-sanctioned sports?

At the time of this writing, with the exceptions of Maui high schools and Kamehameha Schools, surfing is still only a club sport across Hawaii. Club teams have school students playing on them but athletes generally must pay to be in the club and for all their uniforms, equipment, and games. Either parents must supply the funds or the students must fundraise. In some economically disadvantaged communities, a coach pays for team costs out of pocket.

School-sanctioned sports get school funding for their uniforms, transportation, and games. Athletes in school-sanctioned sports also directly represent and play for the school. There is a deeper feeling of pride and responsibility. School-sanctioned athletes are governed by school athletic rules, including requirements of a preseason physical examination and at least a 2.0 GPA in the public school setting. Varsity athletes can have access to the athletic trainer and the weight room and can get special recognitions from the school system that are not available to club athletes. As a club team member, a surfer could never be the “Athlete of the Year” or be recognized at the year-end athletic awards banquet for all sports. Varsity athletics infer a higher level of commitment, responsibility, and training than club sports, and therefore are more significant on a college application.



'Iolani Surf Club Team 2023

Maui's Success Story

For 19 years there was an unofficial surf championship for Maui high schools called the Maui Scholastic Surf Championship. There was clearly interest in surfing to become a varsity sport. Students, parents, teachers, and interested citizens started lobbying at the annual state school board meetings on Maui. The interest soon spread to Oahu where more local citizens spoke at school board meetings including students, parents, educators, politicians, and leaders in the surf community. Liability was repeatedly brought up as an issue of concern, but it was proven that injuries were far less common in surfing than in any of the traditional DOE sports — like football, basketball, soccer, and wrestling — by looking at the high school trainers' injury reports. The Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), which insures the Hawaii Surfing Association contests, also confirmed they'd never had a claim filed due to surfing.

The opposition continued from the statewide Department of Education (DOE) at every school board meeting, but because of the public demand, the DOE was forced to look into the possibility of making surfing a varsity sport. The DOE tasked the Executive Director of the Oahu Interscholastic League (OIA) to look into the costs of implementing surfing as an interscholastic sport. The then Executive Director of the OIA came up with a budget that was outrageously costly. When asked where he got his figures, he said, "the internet." He never asked one of the many individuals or organizations that produce surf contests throughout the state. This was one of many attempts at stymying the sport of surfing in public schools. Regardless, in 2004, the state school board finally voted unanimously 10-0 to allow surfing as a school sport in Hawaii public schools!

HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION OFFICIAL SURFING POLICY

The Board of Education recognizes that surfing, or he`e nalu, has been a part of Hawaii's history since ancient times. Surfing is recognized for its long-standing historical and cultural roots and significance to Hawaii. Surfing is the official individual sport of the State.

The Board of Education approves surfing as a high school sport. The Department of Education shall adopt regulations to implement surfing as a high school sport.

Approved May, 2004 - Click book icon for link.



Maui's Success Story (continued)

It took the DOE three more years to form regulations regarding the implementation of surfing in public schools. The safety guidelines were more restrictive than any other high school sport. Finally, in 2012, the Maui County high school principals voted to adopt surfing as an interscholastic sport. After an exhibition year in 2013, Maui Interscholastic League (MIL) had surfing as an official sport for the first year in 2014.

The MIL was able to start its first official season of varsity surfing as a spring sport. Spring was determined to be a good season to catch both north and south swells. Each high school receives its own budget from the DOE. It is up to the principal to allocate a portion of that budget to athletics, and generally up to the athletic director to allocate a portion of the athletic budget to surfing. It was up to the athletic directors at each school to find a coach and start implementing the program. Generally, each school has a paid head coach and a paid assistant coach, but more may be needed if there is a large team.

The cost of running a full public school team is under \$10,000 per year, which pays for coaches' part-time salaries, surf jerseys, transportation to practice and meets, and coach certifications. (See appendix for itemized costs.) Some schools also choose to purchase board shorts and t-shirts for their students. Students usually must supply their own boards and leashes and parents sign off on liability and attest in writing that their children are capable surfers. Billabong sponsored Kamaaina Kids to provide the coach safety certification on Maui in the first year, but it was very expensive. Now Archie Kalepa, the former head of Maui County Ocean Safety who now trains Navy Seals, and Cary Kayama, the current Chief of Maui County Ocean Safety, have volunteered to run the coach certification for free. The coaches must pass an open ocean swim test, and receive training in ocean rescue, lifesaving techniques, and ocean risk assessment. There is also classroom training in CPR and first aid. The coaches use this training to pass on the knowledge they have learned to their student-athletes, including basic CPR, first aid, and swim skills, though it is not generally a certification at this time, depending on the school. (On Oahu, schools hire off-duty City & County lifeguards to run the certifications.)

Maui's Success Story (continued)

Teams may have 5 boys and 5 girls competing for their school at each Maui Interscholastic League meet. Like tennis, the teams compete in tiers - #1 vs #1, #2 vs #2, etc. The #5 surfer — maybe the least skilled — is still as important as the #1. This keeps competition more balanced and lower-ranked kids are still encouraged to be a key part of the team. Teams may have more than 10 kids with alternates and currently, some have 20-plus. A small school, like Hana, has less than 10 team members and usually does not have the statistical ability to win a meet, though they compete anyway and can win their division individually. Students that earn cash sponsorship, turn product sponsorship into cash, win a surfing prize over \$600, or sign a contract to represent a company for cash are ineligible to compete. Product sponsorships are not considered disqualifying at this time.

In the entire spring season, Maui holds 5 meets — 4 as a team with points to determine boys' and girls' team champions and one as individuals to determine the individual boys' and girls' champions. (HHSAA allows leagues to determine championship structures however they want to as long as it's within the season-determined timeline, usually 12-14 weeks.) These meets have been organized from the beginning by Kim Ball, who had already been staging unofficial meets for 19 years before the MIL started surfing in 2014. He estimates the initial season costs to run 5 meets for 10 schools to be about \$20,000, but that includes at least \$12,000 in equipment that will have multiple years of life. (See appendix for full details of his budget.) Ball has personally sought sponsorships and donations to cover these meet costs over the years. He also donates his own time. In other non-school-sanctioned leagues, teams and individuals pay a fee to the organizer to cover these costs. The MIL has only paid the judges and a water safety officer. The beach marshals, computer techs, set-up and breakdown staff, and the announcer are all volunteers.

Presently, the MIL has 6 public schools (Baldwin, Hana, Kihei Charter, King Kekaulike, Lahainaluna, Maui High), and 4 private schools (Haleakala Waldorf, Kamehameha Maui, Maui Prep, Seabury Hall) competing in surfing.

How did Kamehameha Schools create a varsity team at a private school?

Despite the vast resources and Native Hawaiian heritage of Kamehameha Schools (KS), the administration was not initially open to a varsity surf team. In 2009, a group of students, parents, and teachers formed a club and paid for team costs out of pocket and by fundraising. They set their sights on the national championship — the National Scholastic Surfing Association (NSAA) Championship in Dana Point, California. Since 2009, Kamehameha's Surf team has competed 13 times and eventually won back-to-back national championships in 2014 & 2015. It was then after continued advocacy from students, parents, and coaches that the team was finally granted varsity status in 2018.

Over the years, dedicated coaches, parents, and students have historically fundraised the majority of the costs associated with participating in surfing as a high school sport, locally and nationally. Though KS covers some aspects of the team now that it is varsity, travel will still not be paid for by KS until surfing is an official Hawaii High School Athletic Association (HHSAA) sport. As such, throughout the year, Kamehameha's Surf Team hosts car washes and surf sample sales and runs a concession stand at the school, in order to pay for food, lodging, airfare, and transportation when traveling for the NSSA championship as well as competitions on the outer islands.

Kamehameha Schools student, Kahanu Cuban, wins the individual NSSA title in 2019.



STEPS TO SUCCESS

01

Start a surf team or club in your school

Get an faculty advisor to help you. Recruit students. Follow safety rules. Get insurance.

02

Partner with your principal, athletic director, and area superintendant

Teach them why interscholastic surfing is important to you and your friends and ask for their support.

03

Get on the agenda at your league meetings

Ask for varsity surfing in your league and ask the principals in your league to call a vote to add surfing as a sanctioned sport. Bring other supporters to testify as well.

04

Hold a season and championship

Once you league officially adopts surfing, run a season and hold a league championship.

05

Encourage other schools to follow these steps

Once three leagues are established and hold championships, HHSAA will hold a state championship.

What does it take to get surfing started in my school?

The good news is that the way has been paved for surfing to be a varsity surf in any Hawaii public high school. Surfing is already authorized to be a school-sanctioned sport in the state of Hawaii. The safety regulations are already in place. Now, the most important decision-makers are the principals, complex area superintendents, and superintendent, along with influence from school athletic directors. Keep in mind that many of these people have no experience in competitive surfing and may need to be educated about its significance and potential to be a competitive sport. Heavily burdened with a spectrum of responsibilities, it appears **administrators will not act until they are pushed to do so by their student bodies and parent groups**. In recent (2023) official testimony the superintendent of schools wrote as a reason not to implement a budget for surfing, “On Oahu, surfing has not been proposed by any Department high school principal.”

So firstly, if your school doesn't have a club surf team already, start one. Anyone can start a club at their school with a supportive adult advisor. Rules may vary by school but many club teams already exist throughout the islands. It is suggested that your club team start following the state safety requirements (see appendix) and have a well-written safety plan. If your school cannot provide insurance, club team insurance can be purchased pretty inexpensively through the AAU (<https://aausports.org/Insurance>). Recruit boys and girls from all grades.

The next step is to ask your high school league to make surfing an official sport. Find teachers and staff members who surf and can help advocate. Directly ask your principal and/or superintendent to add surfing as an official interscholastic sport. Get on the agenda at school board meetings and school assemblies. Ask in emails and through social media posts. More importantly, get your schoolmates to ask too. Collect signatures for a petition on paper or through the web on free sites like Change.org. Ask social media influencers to promote the petition and tag your school, its administration, and your league. Get your student government involved. Parents can rally around this cause too and mobilize the PTA to formally ask for the sport to be added.

Requirements to add a sanctioned interscholastic sport in the Hawaii high school leagues

Each league has its own requirements to add sanctioned sports (see below). Get familiar with your league's specific requirements and then go to the local league meetings which are generally held quarterly and attended by principals. Request ahead of time to get on the agenda. At the meeting, speak about why you want varsity surfing at your school and request that principals call a vote to add it as a sanctioned sport in your league. Keep doing this until it happens.

Oahu Interscholastic Association (OIA): <https://www.oiasports.com/>

12 of 23 principals need to vote to adopt the sport. 8 schools need to participate in the sport that first year.

Interscholastic League of Honolulu (ILH): <http://ilhsports.com/>

There needs to be a committee formed to research for one school year and present its findings to the Board for consideration of implementation as a new sport. For team sports, 6 schools need to form a team. For individual sports, 8 schools need to form a team. (Surfing is both team and individual, so there would need to be 8 teams.)

Big Island Interscholastic Federation (BIFF): <https://www.biifsport.com/>

If the HHSAA has not yet sanctioned the sport, 8 schools need to field a team. If the HHSAA has sanctioned the sport, only 3 schools need to field a team. HHSAA website lists 24 schools because they include charter schools which usually add on to larger school teams. <https://www.hhsaa.org/schools>

Kauai Interscholastic Federation (KIF): <https://www.hhsaa.org/schools>

2 out of 3 voting members need to approve the adoption of the new sport. (The 3 voting members are Kapaa, Kauai, and Waimea.)

Maui Interscholastic League (MIL): <https://milsports.org/home>

Already has sanctioned (shortboard) surfing and is already running a league with 13 schools, including Lanai High School and Molokai High School.



What is needed to run a league?

Once a league adopts surfing as a school-sanctioned sport, here is what is needed:

1. A person or entity who will organize and run the league like Kim Ball does on Maui. These are some possible organizations that could fill this role:
 - a. Hawaii Surfing Production Corp under Hawaii Surfing Association (HSA) runs the OIA non-sanctioned league and charges \$2,711 (as of 2023) to each school for five events. HSA could possibly be contracted to run the OIA and ILH leagues if they were to become sanctioned. The Hawaii Surfing Association has chapters on Oahu, Big Island, Kauai, and Maui: www.hawaiisurfingassociation.org
 - b. Hawaiian Lifeguard Association. They are an umbrella organization and members and chapters across the islands. They have the skills to teach water safety and run events. This could be a means of fundraising for the lifeguards to earn money for equipment and training. www.facebook.com/HawaiianLifeguardAssociation/
 - c. Nā Kama Kai. This nonprofit organization teaches water safety and already runs its own surf contests. www.nakamakai.org
 - d. National Scholastic Surfing Association (NSSA) Hawaii has the ability to run contests as well: www.nssahawaii.org
2. The principals and athletic directors will need to allocate a budget for the surf team at their schools and hire a coach.
3. Public and private schools must buy sports insurance for surfing and may do so through the sports insurance broker Loomis & LaPann, Inc. www.loomislapann.com / (800) 566-6479
4. The coaching staff must get safety trained following the state safety requirements and make a plan to implement safety training for the athletes.
5. Tryouts and practices pursue like any other sport.



How to get Hawaii High School Athletic Association (HHSAA) to run an official statewide surf tournament

The many competitive athletes on club teams across Hawaii have been clamoring for an official statewide tournament for some time. Here are the rules from the Hawaii High School Athletic Association (HHSAA), the governing body of Hawaii high school athletics.



HHSAA will conduct a state tournament when 3 leagues in the state have adopted the sport and crown a champion, with at least 3 schools in each league participating.

HHSAA will conduct a state tournament when 3 leagues in the state have adopted the sport and crown a champion, with at least 3 schools in each league participating. Maui already has a league and a championship, so only 2 other leagues are needed. Kauai seems like an easy prospect because there are only three voting members. ILH may be another good early prospect because there are multiple schools already operating clubs in that league, and it's a smaller league than OIA.

Once HHSAA is compelled by its bylaws to conduct a state tournament for surfing, it has catastrophic insurance that will cover the championship tournament. It will also cover all the costs of running the championship tournament except for transportation to the tournament and the team uniforms and equipment. HHSAA does collect a small fee per student at the beginning of the season.



Additional considerations for high school surfing

Supporting different skill levels: Some schools may field a very experienced, competitive team while others may be teaching surfing for the first time to some athletes. For many schools with a range of participant skills, a club surfing team may continue to be a great option to include novice and beginning surfers to teach water safety skills and help kids build relationship with the ocean. This could possibly be a complement to the varsity surf team. At one school on Oahu, the surf club sponsors dryland events like surf movie nights and CPR classes for anyone in the club, and only certain students compete in meets on the actual surf team.

Shortboarding, longboarding, or bodyboarding: In the first years of the Maui surfing league, the athletic directors wanted to include shortboarding and bodyboarding. Because of time restraints, bodyboarding could not be retained. Most of the bodyboarders were shortboard surfers who were competing in bodyboarding only to help their team. This may not be the case in other leagues. Bodyboarding does not exist in a national format, but it is the most cost-effective entry point into wave riding, plus bodyboards can be easily brought on the bus by kids who lack access to other transportation to the beach.

Longboarding is a thriving sport and a good entry point for a lot of beginner surfers. Longboarding seems to be particularly popular right now with advanced-level female surfers. The club league on Oahu currently holds girls' and boys' competitions for longboarding and shortboarding, and co-ed competitions for bodyboarding. Encourage all kinds of wave riding on your team and competitions will follow based on involvement.

Extracurricular vs. Cocurricular: In Hawaii public schools, surf teams should be extracurricular – not co-curricular for school credit – because then the sport loses some of its competitive edge. By current law, in a cocurricular activity, no one can be cut from the team and a teacher must be hired to organize the team, adding to the cost. However, school credit rules vary at private schools. At Kamehameha, surfing is a varsity sport but does not add school credit. 'Iolani grants its varsity athletes a free study period for half the school year, in lieu of the required P.E. classes, if they represent their school in two varsity sports.

National Championships for High School

The National Scholastic Surfing Association (NSSA) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to encourage and assist its members in their interest to learn and develop the fundamentals and skills of surfing competition while competing in structured and quality events. More than 80 NSSA events are run nationwide that culminate with the annual National Championships which is regarded as the highest-profile youth surfing event in America. Currently, any team from Hawaii can self-fund and attend the NSSA championships while teams in other parts of the country have to qualify at regionals. The NSSA national championships are currently held in California but there is an interest in the Hawaii surf community for Hawaii to be at least an occasional host.



Kamehameha Schools Surf Team attending the NSSA Nationals in 2019.

Surfing in College

Surfing is not currently a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) college sport in any division for men or women. Here is the link to more information about how to add a women's sport to the NCAA:
<https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2016/8/26/ncaa-emerging-sports-for-women-process-guide.aspx>

For men's sports, at the same link provided above, refer to "18.2.4.1 Men's Sports. A National Collegiate Championship or a division championship may be established in a men's sport if at least 50 institutions sponsor the sport. (Adopted: 1/11/94 effective 8/1/94, Revised: 1/17/09)"

Can a college have "varsity" surfing if it is not NCAA?

Yes. Colleges can sponsor sports at the varsity level even if it is not an NCAA sport.

If surfing were to become a NCAA sport, would sponsored athletes be ineligible to compete?

All athletes competing on any of the member teams must follow all applicable NCAA rules and guidelines on NIL (Name, Image, Likeness). Additional NIL information here: <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2021/2/8/about-taking-action.aspx>

Quotes from the link:

- "NCAA college athletes now have the opportunity to benefit from their name, image and likeness. All three divisions have adopted a uniform, interim policy suspending NCAA name, image and likeness rules for all incoming and current student-athletes in all sports."
- "Individuals can engage in NIL activities that are consistent with the law of the state where the school is located. Colleges and universities may be a resource for state law questions."
- "Individuals can use a professional services provider for NIL activities."
- "College athletes who attend a school in a state without an NIL law can engage in NIL activity without violating NCAA rules related to name, image and likeness."
- "State law and schools/conferences may impose reporting requirements."

Professional Surfing

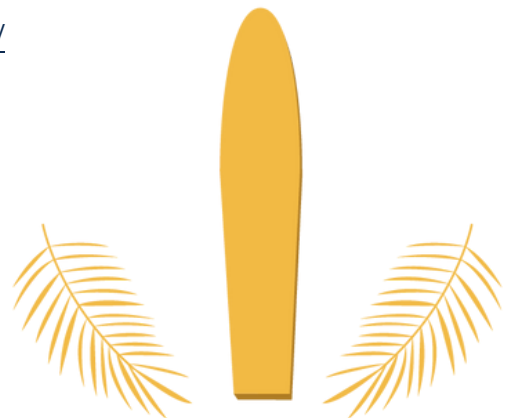
There is a professional world championship every year with the International Surfing Association (ISA), the recognized governing body of surfing. Hawaii has a special status in the ISA and is recognized as its own country within ISA competition. ISA, founded in 1964, is recognized by the International Olympic Committee as the World Governing Authority for Surfing. The ISA governs and defines Surfing as Shortboard, Longboard & Bodyboarding, StandUp Paddle (SUP) Racing and Surfing, Para-Surfing, Bodysurfing, Wakesurfing, and all other wave riding activities on any type of waves, and on flat water using wave riding equipment. The ISA crowned its first Men's and Women's World Champions in 1964. It crowned the first Big Wave World Champion in 1965; World Junior Champion in 1980; World Kneeboard Champions in 1982; World Longboard Surfing and World Bodyboard Champions in 1988; World Tandem Surfing Champions in 2006; World Masters Champions in 2007; World StandUp Paddle (SUP, both surfing and racing) and Paddleboard Champions in 2012; and World Para Surfing Champions in 2015. ISA membership includes the surfing National Federations of 113 countries on five continents.

From: <https://isasurf.org/>

Olympic Surfing

Surfing premiered as an Olympic sport at the 2020 Olympic games, about 100 years after Duke Kahanamoku first called for surfing to be in the Olympics. Significantly, the first Gold medalist in surfing was Carissa Moore, who has Native Hawaiian heritage.

Learn more: <https://olympics.com/en/sports/surfing/>





20.

Costs to stage a high school surf contest on Maui

21.

Maui surf team expenses

22.

Example Contents of Surf Team Binder

23.

About HHSAA

24.

DOE Surfing Regulations

APPROXIMATE COSTS TO STAGE A HIGH SCHOOL SURF CONTEST ON MAUI (2023)

EQUIPMENT

\$1,200	Apple Laptop Computer
---------	-----------------------

\$1,500	6-iPads (3 judges, 1 head judge, 1 announcer, 1-back-up)
---------	--

\$1,500	Sound system, two speakers, soundboard, microphone
---------	--

\$1,200	Electronic timing system
---------	--------------------------

\$2,400	3 pop-up tents (logos on tent cover, good aluminum frame)
---------	---

\$300	5 6-foot tables
-------	-----------------

\$360	12 chairs
-------	-----------

\$2,800	Honda generator (quietest)
---------	----------------------------

\$400	Miscellaneous (trash bags, zip ties, manual back-up scorecards, pens, duct tape, tent stakes/sand bags, extension cords, power strips, heat board, back-up horn)
-------	--

\$12,460	TOTAL - Most things can be reused all season if not season after season.
----------	--

CONTRACTORS

\$450	Judges. Note: Our judges are International Surfing Association (ISA) certified. ISA is the Olympic governing body for surfing.
-------	--

\$150	Head judge
-------	------------

\$250	Water safety officer
-------	----------------------

\$120	Liveheats.com (license per event)
-------	-----------------------------------

\$405	Police officer if required (Hookipa is required; Lahaina Harbor, Koki Beach, Fleming Beach, Kahului Harbor not)
-------	---

Note: Schools rotate their athletic trainers at each event. Maui has one athletic trainer per MIL contest.

\$500	Uniforms for officials (short sleeve Tee, long sleeve Tee, cap) for the season (Many Maui officials are volunteers, and the judges are paid less than pro events.)
-------	--

\$1,875	TOTAL
---------	-------

SCHOOL EXPENSES

\$560	Surf jerseys (3 sets of six, 18 per school - S, L, XL)
-------	--

\$1,080	Optional - Boardshorts will be \$50-\$60.
---------	---

\$270	Optional - T-shirts around \$10-\$15
-------	--------------------------------------

\$1,910	TOTAL (for 18 students)
---------	-------------------------

Example Contents of Surf Team Binder

Coaches should bring the Surf Team Binder to all practices, competitions, and activities. The binder includes all of the following information for surfers, in case of emergency:

- 1.Coaches Certifications: NFHS (Fundamentals of Coaching, Concussion In Sports, Heat Illness Prevention, Sports Nutrition, COVID-19, etc.); Lifeguard; AAU Membership documents; etc.
- 2.Magnus 911 Emergency Documents: Consent for Medical Treatment; Medical Disclosure Statement; Athletic Participation Waiver
- 3.Parent Guardian Emergency Contacts
- 4.Parent Insurance
- 5.Healthcare Provider and Primary Care Physician
- 6.Allergies
- 7.Medications
- 8.OTC Medications
- 9.Medical History
- 10.Immunization Record



About HHSAA

The Hawaii High School Athletic Association (HHSAA) serves 95 public, private, and charter schools across the state of Hawaii to support and promote athletics as part of the high school education program. HHSAA currently conducts championships in 18 different sports (2nd most in the nation) and offers 44 team and 88 individual championships impacting nearly 40,000 student-athletes. HHSAA also conducts workshops for coaches and officials and coordinates two scholarship programs that benefit 33 deserving high school seniors. HHSAA performs these functions on an annual budget of \$1.9 million. Operational costs are kept at a minimum as the HHSAA office is a classroom at Kaimuki High School (no rent) and is operated only by a full-time staff of three. Half of the annual budget is attained through fundraising and support by corporations. Without such sponsors, HHSAA would not be able to operate state championships at no cost to its member schools. (Note - schools pay approximately \$100,000.00 in member dues annually, however the HHSAA returns over \$150,000.00 to its member schools in profit sharing).

Altogether, nearly 40,000 students participate in one or more of the 18 sports that HHSAA offers. Participants in sports by current state championships are as follows:

- Air Riflery – 60 boys, 60 girls
- Bowling – 100 boys, 100 girls
- Cross Country – 200 boys, 200 girls
- Football – 12 teams (approx. 60 members per team)
- Volleyball – boys 20 teams, girls 24 teams (approx. 15 members per team)
- Cheerleading – 18 teams (approx. 15 members per team)
- Basketball – boys 20 teams, girls 24 teams (approx. 15 members per team)
- Canoe Paddling – boys 16 teams, girls 16 teams, mixed 16 teams (approx. 15)
- Soccer – boys 20 teams, girls 24 teams (approx. 20 members per team)
- Baseball – 20 teams (approx. 25 members per team)
- Golf – boys 96, girls 66
- Judo – boys 160, girls 160
- Softball – 24 teams (approx. 25 members per team)
- Tennis – 32 boys, 32 girls
- Water Polo – 12 teams (girls) (approx. 20 members per team)
- Wrestling – 224 boys, 224 girls
- Swimming & Diving – 400 boys, 400 girls (many perform multiple events)
- Track & Field – 196 boys, 196 girls

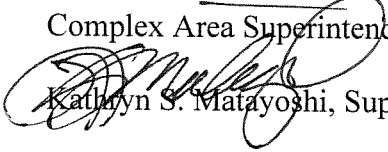
From www.hhsaa.org



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

March 7, 2014

TO: Complex Area Superintendents, High School Principals, and Athletic Directors
FROM:  Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent
SUBJECT: **Updated Surfing Regulation 2180.1**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (HIDOE) has updated the Surfing Regulation 2180.1 to include interscholastic surfing. Please discard the April 2005 Surfing Regulation 2180.1 and replace with the attached regulation. Each interscholastic league that adopts surfing as an interscholastic sport should follow the parameters in Surfing Regulations 2180.1(Rev. 02/14).

Should you have questions, please contact Mr. Raymond Fujino, Interim DOE Athletics Administrative Officer, at (808) 421-4394.

Thank you for your cooperation and attention to this matter.

KSM:RF:rf

Attachment

c: Assistant Superintendents
Superintendent's Office Directors
District Athletics Specialists
State Public Charter School Commission Office
Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Student Support

SURFING REGULATION

Purpose

This regulation is established to implement Policy 2180 on Surfing. It sets the authority and minimum requirements to implement surfing as a high school sport in Hawaii's public schools.

Definitions

High School Sport – any athletic activity in grades 9-12.

Surf Club – a special interest club for high school students formed to promote the historical and cultural roots of surfing and/or to implement surfing as a high school sport.

Interscholastic Leagues – shall refer to and mean the Oahu Interscholastic Association, the Big Island Interscholastic Federation, the Maui Interscholastic League, and the Kauai Interscholastic Federation

Interscholastic Surfing Contest – a high school surfing competition sanctioned by the Oahu Interscholastic Association, the Big Island Interscholastic Federation, the Maui Interscholastic League, or the Kauai Interscholastic Federation, and governed by the interscholastic league's sport rules, constitution, bylaws, and eligibility requirements.

Surf Team – a student athletic surf team for high school students whose members engage in competitive surfing and other ocean-based activities related to surfing.

Surf Club advisor – an adult Department of Education ("DOE" or "Department") employee who serves as a mentor to student club members and who is responsible for ensuring that all DOE requirements for student clubs are met.

Surf Club Coach – an adult who meets specified minimum ocean-safety/surfing experience requirements, helps mentor student club members, and is responsible for “coaching” student surfers. The coach is responsible for the safety of student members and participates in all ocean-based activities related to surfing, including preparing for surfing, riding waves, and competition. The coach does not need to be a DOE employee but must be knowledgeable about and agree to adhere to all DOE policies, rules, regulations, procedures, and guidelines.

Surf Team Coach – an adult who meets specified minimum ocean-safety/surfing experience requirements, helps mentor student-athletes, and is responsible for coaching student-athletes. The coach is responsible for the safety of student members and participates in all ocean-based activities related to surfing, including preparing for

surfing, riding waves, and competition. The coach does not need to be a DOE employee but must be knowledgeable about and agree to adhere to all DOE as well as individual athletic leagues' policies, rules, regulations, procedures, and guidelines.

Authority

1. Hawaii public schools with grades 9-12 that establish surfing clubs, with the permission of the school principal, shall adhere to all DOE regulations including 2120.1 – Student Activities Program, 2250.1 – Field Trips, and to all guidelines/procedures pertaining to student activities, water safety, and surfing.
2. If the Interscholastic Leagues sanction surfing as an interscholastic competition, all public schools in their respective interscholastic leagues shall adhere to all DOE policies, rules, regulations, guidelines, and procedures pertaining to student activities, water safety, and surfing.

Surf Club Regulations

Surf Club Staffing Requirements

1. Each surf club shall have an advisor who is a DOE employee. The school principal must approve all club advisors.
2. Each surf club shall have a minimum of three coaches. The school principal must approve all surf club coaches.
3. Each surf club coach, whether ocean-based or land based, shall meet the following minimum qualifications:
 - a. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification
 - b. First Aid Certification
 - c. Ocean Rescue Skills Training
 - d. Ocean Safety Risk Management Training
 - e. Ocean-Related Injury Prevention Training
 - f. Training in Legal and Cultural Issues Related to Ocean Safety Management in Hawaiian Waters
 - g. Near-Shore Waters Environmental Awareness Training
 - h. DOE Background Check
4. All certifications must be current.

Surf Club Student Requirements

1. Student surf club members (also referred to as "club members") shall meet all academic requirements for participation in co-curricular activities as specified in Board of Education Policy 4520, DOE Regulation 4520.1.

2. Student surf club members that participate in ocean-based activities shall have Junior Lifeguard Certification or equivalent skills in all four areas listed below:
 - a. CPR Certification
 - b. Basic ocean swimming ability
 - c. Basic ocean rescue skills training
 - d. Ocean safety risk management skills training
3. Student club members shall have general physical fitness, as certified by an annual medical examination. Medical examination certification forms shall be on file **prior to** participation in any in-water activities.
4. Student club members shall have signed parent/guardian permission forms that must be on file **prior to** participation in any off-campus club meetings/activities, including surfing practices. Parents/guardians signing permission forms shall acknowledge the hazards and dangers of surfing when they allow participation.
5. Although the Department will not be responsible for verifying the appropriateness or safety of a particular surfboard the student may use, whether owned or borrowed by the student, surf club coaches shall have the sole discretion to disallow the use of surf equipment that the coach determines to be unsafe.
6. Student club members who meet the academic requirements outlined in Policy 4520 but who do not meet all minimum ocean safety skills and training requirements may be club members but cannot participate in any ocean-based activities.

Surf Club Adult-Student Ratios for Water Activities

1. The minimum ocean-based coach to student ratio for water activities shall be one (1) adult to six (6) students.
2. The land-based surf club coach to student ratio shall be one (1) adult to twelve (12) student surf club members.
3. At least one surf club coach shall remain on-shore at all times to observe no more than two in-ocean groups.
4. The level of adult to student supervision shall be increased to accommodate student club members with special needs and other special circumstances to make certain that the safety of all students is ensured. The principal has the authority to impose a lower adult to student ratio when special circumstances exist. The land-based club coach to student ratio and the ocean-based club coach to student ratio shall be adhered to at all times. A land-based club coach observing land-based members cannot also be simultaneously observing any ocean groups, and an on-shore surf club coach observing ocean groups cannot also be simultaneously observing land-based members.

5. An in-ocean group is a group of no more than six (6) student club members.
6. Student club members shall practice the buddy system, 1:1 ratio, whenever participating in in-water activities.
7. There shall be no more than twelve (12) student club members **in** the water at any given time.

Ocean-based-Site/In-water Activities

1. All surf club advisors and club coaches shall have knowledge of and adhere to the Department of Education Guidelines for Water-Related Activities.
2. There shall be a DOE employee at all ocean-based site activities, including surfing practices.
3. Standard Department of Education Field Trip, Consent, Release, and Assumption of Risk, and Use of Private Vehicle forms shall be used for all ocean-site/in-water activities, including surfing practice.
4. All surf club coaches shall assess ocean conditions prior to and during the ocean activity, including surfing practices. Club coaches shall also assess students to ensure they are capable of handling surf/ocean conditions for the activity. Club coaches shall have the authority to prohibit club members from ocean activities if in their sole discretion they determine the club member is not capable of handling the surf/ocean conditions, or if the club members engage in behavior that is deemed risky and/or unsafe.
5. The coaches shall develop an Ocean-Safety Management Plan and implement it appropriately. The Plan shall specify what actions shall be taken when surf or weather conditions are or become unsafe. A copy of the Plan shall be kept on file in the school office. It shall be the responsibility of each school to develop a plan for their surf club. The Plan should include emergency procedures for incidents, which include but are not limited to, extreme weather/surf conditions, accidents, injuries, and shark attacks.
6. The surf club coaches shall assure that there is a plan to account for all student surf club members at all times. The ocean-based site shall be vacated at the end of each activity. Student club members shall not be allowed to remain at the site but shall be dismissed from a designated area, away from the beach. Surf club coaches shall use a sign-in/sign-out form with student signatures to accommodate those student club members who have prior parental approval to drive. The DOE parental approval form must be completed for each practice or event the parent is allowing his/her child to drive to. Student club members leaving the site with someone other than their parent/guardian must submit appropriate parental permission forms prior to the practice or event. Student club members may be released to a parent/guardian from

the activity site provided that the proper release forms noting date/time of release have been verified and signed by parent/guardian and club coach.

Equipment for Surfing Activities

1. The surf club shall acquire and maintain the following equipment for all ocean-based activities, including surfing practice:
 - a. Rescue surfboard, minimum nine (9) feet
 - b. Rescue tube and swim fins
 - c. Emergency medical kit
 - d. Cellular phone: club advisors and coaches shall have cellular phones, a written plan for cellular no-signal areas and also have knowledge of the nearest land-phone line and fire station.
 - e. One automotive vehicle that can be used to transport student members in case of an emergency.
 - f. Color-coded jerseys for student members and club coaches
 - g. Air horns, flags

Insurance

1. Although medical/health insurance coverage is not required, if the club advisor, coach, and student club member chooses to be insured, they shall be responsible for his/her own coverage.
2. Each student and parent/guardian must sign a form that acknowledges their understanding that: a) all insurance costs and medical, dental, and vision costs related to injury are the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian; and b) the DOE will not assume any of these costs.

Surf Team Regulations

Surf Team Staffing Requirements

1. Each surf team shall have a minimum of three surf team coaches. The school athletic director and principal must approve all surf team coaches.
2. Each surf team coach, whether ocean-based or land based, shall meet the following minimum qualifications:
 - a. CPR Certification
 - b. First Aid Certification
 - c. Ocean Rescue Skills Training
 - d. Ocean Safety Risk Management Training
 - e. Ocean-Related Injury Prevention Training
 - f. Training in Legal and Cultural Issues Related to Ocean Safety Management in Hawaiian Waters

- g. Near-Shore Waters Environmental Awareness Training
 - h. DOE Background Check
3. All certifications must be current.

Surf Team Student Requirements

1. Student surf team members (also referred to as "team members") shall meet all academic requirements for participation in co-curricular activities as specified in Board of Education Policy 4520, DOE Regulation 4520.1.
2. Student surf team members shall have Junior Lifeguard Certification or equivalent skills in all four areas listed below:
 - a. CPR Certification
 - b. Basic ocean swimming ability
 - c. Basic ocean rescue skills training
 - d. Ocean safety risk management skills training
3. Student team members shall have general physical fitness, as certified by an annual medical examination. Medical examination certification forms shall be on file prior to participation in any in-water activities.
4. Student team members shall have signed parent/guardian Consent, Release, and Assumption of Risks forms that must be on file prior to participation in any off-campus team meetings/activities, including surfing practices. Parents/guardians signing permission forms shall acknowledge the hazards and dangers of surfing when they allow participation.
5. Student team members shall have surfing experience, skills and abilities equivalent to compete in a surf meet. The student-athlete's parent or legal guardian is required to attest through a written and signed letter that the student team member possesses surfing experience, skills and abilities at the level of a surf meet competitor in order to participate on the school's surf team. When surf team coaches assess the skills and abilities of the student-athletes, the coach shall do it in the ocean on a one-to-one basis.
6. Although the Department will not be responsible for verifying the appropriateness or safety of a particular surfboard the student may use, whether owned or borrowed by the student, surf team coaches shall have the sole discretion to disallow the use of equipment that the team coach determines to be unsafe.

Surf Team Adult-Student Ratios for Water Activities

1. The minimum ocean-based surf team coach to student ratio for water activities shall be one (1) adult to six (6) students. The level of adult to student supervision

shall be increased to a one-to-one basis to assess students' skills and abilities during the initial try-out period.

2. The land-based surf team coach to student ratio shall be one (1) adult to twelve (12) students.
3. At least one surf team coach shall remain on-shore at all times to observe no more than two in-ocean groups.
4. The level of adult to student supervision shall be increased to accommodate student club members with special needs and other special circumstances to make certain that the safety of all students is ensured. The principal has the authority to impose a lower adult to student ratio when special circumstances exist. The land-based coach to student ratio and the ocean-based coach to student ratio shall be adhered to at all times. A land-based team coach observing land-based members cannot also be simultaneously observing any ocean groups, and an on-shore surf team coach observing ocean groups cannot also be simultaneously observing land-based members.
5. An in-ocean group is a group of no more than six (6) student team members.
6. Student team members shall practice the buddy system, 1:1 ratio, whenever participating in in-water activities.
7. There shall be no more than twelve (12) student team members in the water at any given time.

Ocean-based-Site/In-water Activities

1. All surf team coaches shall have knowledge of and adhere to the Department of Education Guidelines for Water-Related Activities.
2. Standard Department of Education Field Trip, Consent, Release, and Assumption of Risk, and Use of Private Vehicle forms shall be used for all ocean-site/in-water activities, including surfing practice.
3. All surf team coaches shall assess ocean conditions prior to and during the ocean activity, including surfing practices. Team coaches shall also assess student team members to ensure they are capable of handling surf/ocean conditions for the activity. Team coaches shall have the authority to prohibit team members from ocean activities if in their sole discretion they determine the team member is not capable of handling the surf/ocean conditions, or if the team members engage in behavior that is deemed risky and/or unsafe.
4. The individual surf team coaches shall develop an Ocean-Safety Management Plan and implement it appropriately. The Plan shall specify what actions shall be taken when surf or weather conditions are or become unsafe. A copy of the Plan

shall be kept on file in the school office. It shall be the responsibility of each individual school to develop their Plans. The Plan should include emergency procedures for incidents, which include but are not limited to, extreme weather/surf conditions, accidents, injuries, and shark attacks.

5. A surf team shall only be allowed to participate in the Interscholastic Surfing Contest if the interscholastic league has developed specific rules and regulations for the surfing competitions, and the rules and regulations include safety precautions for the ocean contest area, as well as the judging/spectator area on shore, and include water safety personnel in the surfing area and security personnel on shore.
6. The surf team coaches shall assure that there is a plan to account for all student team members at all times. The ocean-based site shall be vacated at the end of each activity. Student team members shall not be allowed to remain at the site but shall be dismissed from a designated area, away from the beach. Team coaches shall use a sign-in/sign-out form with student signatures to accommodate those team members who have prior parental approval to drive. The DOE parental approval form must be completed for each practice or event the parent is allowing his/her child to drive to. Student team members leaving the site with someone other than their parent/guardian must submit appropriate parental permission forms prior to the practice or event. Student team members may be released to a parent/guardian from the activity site provided that the proper release forms noting date/time of release have been verified and signed by parent/guardian and coach.

Equipment for Surfing Activities

1. The surf team shall acquire and maintain the following equipment for all ocean-based activities, including surfing practice:
 - a. Rescue surf board, minimum nine (9) feet
 - b. Rescue tube and swim fins
 - c. Emergency medical kit
 - d. Cellular phone: Team coaches shall have cellular phones, a written plan for cellular no-signal areas and also have knowledge of the nearest land-phone line and fire station.
 - e. One automotive vehicle that can be used to transport student team members in case of an emergency.
 - f. Color-coded jerseys for students members and team coaches
 - g. Air horns, flags

Insurance

1. Although medical/health insurance coverage is not required, if the team coach and student athletes chooses to be insured, they shall be responsible for his/her own coverage.

2. Each student and parent/guardian must sign the Consent, Release and Assumption of Risk form that acknowledges their understanding that: a) all insurance costs and medical, dental, and vision costs related to injury are the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian; and b) the DOE will not assume any of these costs.

Adopted: 04/05

Amended: 02/14

Thank you to the people who contributed to this white paper:

Sarah Fairchild, Executive Director, Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation
Kim Ball, Co-Coordinator, Maui Interscholastic League (MIL) Surfing
Daniel Ikaika Ito, Head Coach, Kamehameha Schools Surf Team
Chasen Kim, Assistant Coach, Kamehameha Schools Surf Team
Chris Butler, Assistant Coach, 'Iolani Surf Team
Davin Kazama, Assistant Coach, 'Iolani Surf Team
Sunny Kazama, 'Iolani Surf Team Member (Class of 2024)
Jack Ho, Punahou Surf Team Member and Organizer (Class of 2023)

Thank you to the coaches and organizers who continue to support surfing in Hawaii schools.

CONTACT

Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation

PO Box 160924

Honolulu, HI 96816

www.dukefoundation.com

info@dukefoundation.org

[@dukefoundation](#)

In memory of Duke Kahanamoku.



HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 8:57:54 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessamy Town Hornor	Hawaii Water Safety Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee,

I am writing in **strong support** of the Surfing in Schools bill. I am the co-founder of the Hawai'i Water Safety Coalition and executive editor of the newly published Hawai'i Water Safety Plan. I am also a Public Health Educator at DOH EMSIPSB in the area of drowning prevention but I am not representing the DOH in this testimony.

In addition to promoting surfing as a sport, the Surfing in Schools bill would help teach water safety and drowning prevention to our youth by offering guidance from experienced coaches and by addressing real world ocean based situations. We also know that safety interventions and rescues happen every day among surfers on our beaches, coastlines and surf breaks. Elevating community-based water and ocean safety makes us all safer in and around the ocean in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

Jessamy Town Hornor

Co-founder, Hawaii Water Safety Coalition

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 9:14:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sean Moody	Billabong	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am a sales rep for both Dakine and Billabong who are the main sponsors along with Hi Tech for the MIL surf program. I grew up in Hawai'i as a professional surfer and was able to travel the world and get what I consider one of the best educations a kid can get.

Surfing is the unofficial sport of Hawai'i and seems to be overlooked by many. It is one of the healthiest sports our youth can do as I truly believe the ocean heals everything.

I am writing this in hopes that you guys will continue to push the sport of surfing forward for the youth of Hawai'i. We can't sponsor events if we have none.

Thank you for your time.

Aloha,

Sean Moody



**OUTRIGGER
DUKE KAHANAMOKU
FOUNDATION**

P. O. BOX 160924
HONOLULU, HI 96816

DUKEFOUNDATION.ORG

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Andrew Richardson
PRESIDENT

Andrew Rocheleau
VICE PRESIDENT

Susie Saxten
TREASURER

Malia Pietsch Kamisugi
SECRETARY

Bill Pratt
**FUNDRAISING &
OUTREACH**

Jenifer Bossert
PAST PRESIDENT

Rachel Bradley

Jodie Duvall

Noah Gibson

Paul Hayes

Daniel Ito

Michelle Meredith

George Norcross

Zak Noyle

Maggie Parks

Bernice Parsons

Dara Shelton

Catherine Wolfe

Dear Chair Yamashita and the Committee on Finance:

I'm writing in support of HB133 to appropriate funds to establish surfing as an interscholastic sport in the Department of Education (DOE). The Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation supports the development of competitive water sports in Hawaii. Surfing is Hawaii's official sport and is intrinsic to our cultural identity, historically and today. Additionally, surfing teaches and builds water safety skills which are sorely needed in our state which ranks second in the nation for rate of drowning among residents.

Surfing was designated as an official interscholastic sport in the DOE in 2014. The purpose of this bill is to provide the funding needed to get teams established around the state, so that the league thresholds can be met for three league tournaments to occur, triggering a state championship to be held by HHSAA. Once a state championship is held, the sport would be funded within the budget of other DOE varsity athletics, like soccer, football, archery, bowling, and flag football. This evolution is not anticipated to take more than a few years at most. Maui has an existing league championship; OIA and ILH are very close to the threshold; Kauai only needs 2 schools to participate.

The Foundation published a white paper about surfing in schools which can be found [at this link](#). I'm attaching the estimated costs of a surf contest for your reference. My understanding is insurance for an interscholastic sport would be covered by the same insurance the DOE already carries, and HHSAA's insurance would cover the state championship.

The other costs not listed are:

- Coaches' water safety training
- Students' jr. lifeguard training: currently covered on Oahu for free by Honolulu Ocean Safety
- Transportation

The safety protocols of the sport were already approved and established by the DOE in 2014 and a copy can be found inside the white paper. These are probably the most extensive safety protocols of any DOE sport and to date the Maui interscholastic league and the Oahu club leagues have great safety records.

Please help surfing get past the tipping point to become a sport our kids can participate in to proudly represent their schools and receive varsity status.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Fairchild".

Sarah Fairchild

Executive Director

DUKE'S CREED:

"In Hawai'i, we greet friends, loved ones or strangers with Aloha, which means with love. Aloha is the key word to the universal spirit of real hospitality, which makes Hawai'i renowned as the world's center of understanding and fellowship. Try meeting or leaving people with Aloha. You'll be surprised by their reaction. I believe it and it is my creed. Aloha to you."

DUKE PAOA KAHANAMOKU

APPROXIMATE COSTS TO STAGE A HIGH SCHOOL SURF CONTEST ON MAUI (2023)

EQUIPMENT

\$1,200	Apple Laptop Computer
\$1,500	6-iPads (3 judges, 1 head judge, 1 announcer, 1-back-up)
\$1,500	Sound system, two speakers, soundboard, microphone
\$1,200	Electronic timing system
\$2,400	3 pop-up tents (logos on tent cover, good aluminum frame)
\$300	5 6-foot tables
\$360	12 chairs
\$2,800	Honda generator (quietest)
\$400	Miscellaneous (trash bags, zip ties, manual back-up scorecards, pens, duct tape, tent stakes/sand bags, extension cords, power strips, heat board, back-up horn)
\$12,460	TOTAL - Most things can be reused all season if not season after season.

CONTRACTORS

\$450	Judges. Note: Our judges are International Surfing Association (ISA) certified. ISA is the Olympic governing body for surfing.
-------	--

\$150	Head judge
-------	------------

\$250	Water safety officer
-------	----------------------

\$120	Liveheats.com (license per event)
-------	-----------------------------------

\$405	Police officer if required (Hookipa is required; Lahaina Harbor, Koki Beach, Fleming Beach, Kahului Harbor not)
-------	---

Note: Schools rotate their athletic trainers at each event. Maui has one athletic trainer per MIL contest.

\$500	Uniforms for officials (short sleeve Tee, long sleeve Tee, cap) for the season (Many Maui officials are volunteers, and the judges are paid less than pro events.)
-------	--

\$1,875	TOTAL
---------	-------

SCHOOL EXPENSES

\$560	Surf jerseys (3 sets of six, 18 per school - S, L, XL)
-------	--

\$1,080	Optional - Boardshorts will be \$50-\$60.
---------	---

\$270	Optional - T-shirts around \$10-\$15
-------	--------------------------------------

\$1,910	TOTAL (for 18 students)
---------	-------------------------

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 10:27:38 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lei Fisher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha nui honorable legislators,

I **strongly support** this measure as a Native Hawaiian, north shore resident, & surfer. I wish that surfing was an established school sport when I was in school. With Hawai‘i being the birthplace of surfing -- a celebrated cultural & traditional practice by Native Hawaiians for centuries -- it is a wonder that the sport is not already funded and better established throughout the state. With so many non-residents profiting of the surfing industry here, we should better educate our local keiki and ‘opio & give them the opportunities they need to hone their surfing skills -- growing more professional and collegiate surfers at home first and foremost.

Please **PASS** this measure.

Me ke aloha,

Lei Fisher

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 6:10:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth Matsuda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Beth Matsuda. I work with the high schools that have surf clubs. I coordinate the Coaches Ocean Risk. Assessment classes and the Jr. Lifeguard programs for the students. There's strong interest in students getting involved in surfing. This school year we had 11 OIA schools and 6 ILH schools. Next year 3 more OIA schools will be coming on and 19 ILH schools have expressed interest in joining us next year.

The main barrier to more OIA schools joining is financial. Most have had a difficult time paying for their competition fees, which run about \$3,000 per school. We work with HSA (Hawai'i Surfing Association). We are trying to bring down the competition fees.

Surfing helps keep the students maintain their GPA and give them an alternative after school program. It can also open careers. We've has students go on the be Ocean Safety Lifeguards, some I have gotten the set up to work in the maritime industry.

Surfing addresses the whole health of the participants- physically, mentally and emotionally. It gives them an after school activity that they won't participate in the mainstream sports. Surfing is culturally appropriate and keeps our students from getting involved in nefarious activities.

Please help us establish a sport that is already a state sport become an interscholastic sport.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 9:21:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sanoe Kazama	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Surfing was born in Hawai'i, yet it is still not a funded sport in high schools statewide. Surfing is offered as a club sport in only a handful of schools, preventing students from experiencing the pride of representing their schools and the joy of building lifelong memories with teammates.

Besides holding immense cultural significance in Hawai'i, surfing provides a much needed study break for students' mental health, disconnecting us from stressors, releasing mood-improving endorphins, and connecting us to Mother Nature. Surfing is also a wonder for physical health, as it's a full body workout that incorporates cardio, strength training, and muscle building all at once. It is a sport that improves the health, both physical and mental, of our students, and connects them to a supportive community like no other. The ocean truly has no boundaries, and the sport of surfing brings people together from all walks of life for the same purpose--to catch a great wave. Everyone in a lineup shares the same stoke as you, cheering you on when you catch a wave, offering guidance to improve on a turn or carve, or just sharing their aloha and knowledge as you talk story with them. One can't help but feel surrounded with aloha as they surf, especially while surfing in a lineup of people who share the same love for the ocean.

I ask the State of Hawai'i to allocate funds so that every high school student statewide has the opportunity to represent their school with pride and reap the numerous benefits of surfing: physically, mentally, and community-wise.

Mahalo for your time!

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 9:49:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicola Laulu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Funding surfing in schools will not only be the right thing to do but it can help encourage our keiki to get into the ocean and learn what was once a normal part of Hawaiians everyday lives.

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 6:55:38 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice Giles	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i is the birthplace of surfing. It shouldn't be a sport that is supported in our youth to perpetuate the culture. It also gives a positive activity for kids to do outside of school and make healthy choices.

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 7:19:27 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joslyn Sato	Leilehua High School - Mules Surf Team	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Thank you for scheduling a hearing and allowing testimony. I stand to support HB133 to provide students an opportunity to represent their high school and peers to be part of Hawai'i's sport of Surfing. By recognizing high school surfing as an (OIA) Interscholastic Sport we can use the upcoming 2025-2026 school year to work collaboratively with the DOE and OIA to develop the sport's structure and financial requirements real time while seeing the surf season in action. Since financial requirements have been the most recent concern, by using an actual season to see and talk through requirements, we can then create a sustainable estimate and financial plan. Thus, supporting high school surfing as an OIA sport, and providing some financial appropriation for the upcoming school year will allow schools to participate and allow us to work through the season structure and budget.

Surfing offers many benefits in addition to those achieved being a student-athlete. Surfing aligns with the DOE's Nā Hopena A'o (HĀ) by allowing students to be connected to the ocean and an active lifestyle rich in culture and history. As a parent, this has been an excellent experience for my daughter to connect her passion and represent her school doing her "sport", while gaining benefits that impact her well-being, build connections, gain ocean safety and ocean stewardship, and exposure to career opportunities; all that will last well beyond high school.

High school surfing has gone through the legislature on several occasions, and now is the time to take a step forward and find ways to collaborate and work towards making high school surfing a recognized and supported 'Oahu high school sport.

The Current Season

15 'Oahu schools (6 private schools and 9 public schools) have participated in the high school surf contests this school year. Several others have identified they were interested but due to a lack of resources to include funding and program offerings to fulfill the coach and student ocean lifeguard requirements, schools struggle to fulfill requirements in time to participate.

This year, 162 students (about 102 Boys and 60 Girls) have participated in a surf contest so far. With the growth of participating schools, the coaches have been working together to plan and coordinate the season. Teams follow the [Surfing in Hawai'i Schools: A White Paper](#). The

Hawai'i Surfing Association hosts all contests, and works with a coach working group to determine dates, locations, rosters, etc.

The current season is planned for all schools to compete in at least 5 contests, which requires about 7 Contest Days. This limitation is based on Ocean/Park permit limitations on time as well as number of students in a heat (in the water competing at a time).

- A Contest day consists of 2 Contests (a morning contest and an afternoon contest). 6 Schools participate in a Contest (12 schools total on a Contest Day).
- There are 5 Divisions, with 3 heats in each (1 student per school in each heat). Divisions include Boys Shortboard, Girls Shortboard, Coed Bodyboard, Boys Longboard, and Girls Longboard.
- Teams do not need a full roster to participate.

General expenses for each team include Contest Fees from the Hawai'i Surfing Association, AAU membership for each student and coach, Coach ocean lifeguard training classes, Student ocean lifeguard training classes, and any other general equipment needed.

By moving this bill forward, we can work on the key areas that continue to come up during legislative hearings:

- Interest to become an OIA Sport: Starting a surf team without resources is challenging, many start off small and getting all the requirements completed without any resources prevents schools from starting a team.

When considering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in any sport, not all sports will have the same level of interest at every school and/or might be smaller teams, but if a sport (especially one tied so closely to Hawai'i's culture, history, economy, and lifestyle) cannot fulfill the requirements to meet OIA consideration, then possibly a new approach may need to be considered to provide a process and way to recognize and support (resources & funding).

- Safety & Liability: Surfing occurs in the ocean, which is not a controlled environment like a park or school field or court; however, surfing is not the first ocean sport. There are other sports that take place in the ocean and we can leverage those safety protocols. In addition, Maui has offered surfing for about 10-years. Teams follow guidance established in the White Paper with surveying ocean conditions, having lifeguards, having students/coaches trained, AAU insurance, and ensuring proper equipment.
- Cost: Primary fees are the Contest Fees determined by the Hawai'i Surfing Association's operating costs. While I've been told there are some concerns about the fees being high, there could be an opportunity to work with the contest operator and/or find other ways to run a contest leveraging another vendor and/or creating an OIA contest team like the

Maui Interscholastic League to reduce costs while maintaining safety and requirements to run a contest.

Recognizing High School Surfing as an Interscholastic Sport is an opportunity to support and invest in our Hawai'i - the culture, the history, the future, the lifestyle. Your support would provide resources to strengthen the program. Your investment is not only for a sport with contests, but a program that builds ocean stewards connected to the 'aina, promote and support active lifestyle and community/cultural connections, expose students to future careers related to the ocean and surf industry which directly supports Hawai'i, and you invest in ocean safety by giving coaches and students skills that they use when they are in the ocean to keep not only themselves safe but also safety of others.

Thank you for your time and consideration to support HB133.

Joslyn Sato

Parent and Volunteer of the Leilehua High School Mules Surf Team

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 7:54:45 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kylie Sato	Leilehua High School - Mules Surf Team	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

I am the captain of Leilehua High School's Surf Team. I wanted to also join on zoom but I am unable to miss my PE class. I started our surf team with my friend last year. When people asked me what sport I was going to do in high school or if I do a sport, my response was always... "I surf!" Surfing is my sport! Even though I don't do it competitively outside of school it's my sport because that's what I love and that's all I do on the weekends and after school.

While Surfing is a sanctioned sport there are no committed resources. Surfing aligns with the DOE's Vision and Values and is connected to our history, culture, 'aina, and career opportunities here in Hawai'i. Being in our second year, I have seen so much benefits but also challenges.

Surfing for my high school has given me an opportunity to excel in surfing, participate in contests and meet other students, and fuel my passion for the ocean while also staying active and being part of something in my school with other students that surf & bodyboard.

I also like that we are required to take Jr Lifeguard because it keeps us safe but also allows us to be aware of the safety of others anytime we are around the ocean. We can warn others and a few team mates also saved others because of our training.

The challenge I've seen is that because it's not an official sport, teams struggle to fundraise and find coaches. Also we don't get a lot of choices for surf spots because of permitting. Having more support by the DOE would help to make our season better. And we're constantly struggling to find program providers to meet our lifeguard training. Any help would offset cost, provide us resources, and ensure the safety, fun, and success of our season.

Surfing is more than just a high school sport and more than just a contest. It connects me to the Hawaiian culture, history, and the ocean, and I appreciate it more but also become more aware of safety and caring for the ocean and beach. It's also good for my wellbeing and provides awareness to the industry and career opportunities.

My school is celebrating its 100th year and looking through history, in 1999 students like me had the same hope for their surf club to become part of the OIA. Over 25-years later students are still dreaming of the same thing!

Last year I sent out a petition and received over 300 supporters: <https://www.change.org/p/support-high-school-surfing-as-an-official-athletic-sport>

Everyone I talk to and encounter supports high school surfing and they often are confused why it's not a sport, especially here in Hawai'i. Check out this video to hear a little from my team and coach about high school surfing featured by K2 (scroll down the page to find the video): <https://www.k2-nho.com/k2-foundation>. You can also visit our Instagram to see more of our team https://www.instagram.com/mules_surfteam/

By passing HB133 it is a step forward in making high school surfing (shortboard, bodyboard, longboard) a recognized sport and investing in us and giving us an opportunity to connect our passion to our school, expose us to career opportunities, and create ocean stewards that embrace culture and history now and for a lifetime. Our sport might be small and there might not be large teams, but surfing is our sport! Your support and resources matter and will make a difference!

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Kylie Sato (*Team Captain*) and the Mules Surf Team

Liv Koyanagi, Kara Watson, Taj Porec, Zyrus Alailima, Kaikane Hanoa, Judah Keohokapu, Oren Nelson, Jordan Orillo, Colt Gomersall

Leilehua High School

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 8:26:28 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steven Thobe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Friends!

My name is Steve and I am the Head Coach for Seabury Hall Surf Team here on Maui. This is my 4th year as Coach. I am writing in hopes that you will support this Bill. The MIL Surf League is so good for several reasons. Here are my three reasons.

The first is Ocean Safety. We live on and island if our youth can thrive in the Ocean it becomes a sanctuary for release from stress and fear for these youngsters. The second is the chemistry it builds with Team. Every business requires Teamwork for the Dream to work. My group of young freshman are pushing each other as peer group. It is so inspiring to see! They are going bigger, faster and higher with rotations. So good!

Lastly it is The Hawaiian Sport! Surfing should be celebrated at all levels. The Ocean is the Fountain of Youth and what a way to teach our kids about the most important thing on the planet and how to care for it as GREAT STEWARDS OF OUR OCEANS AND CARETAKERS OF IT. Surfers do this and this is what I am teaching my Guyz and Gallz at Seabury home of Spartan Surfing. Be good stewards of OUR OCEAN.

So many MAHALOS and more ALOHA

Steve Thobe(toe-bee)

Head Coach Spartan Surfing

Testimony on the Importance of Adopting Surfing as a High School Sport

Aloha,

My name is Jason Shibata, and I am honored to share my testimony on the significance of integrating surfing into high school athletics. I am an alumni of The Kamehameha Schools, Class of 1998, and was a team member of the first Kamehameha Surf Team. My career in surfing has taken me through various roles, including being a former competitive professional surfer, the former Team Manager for Volcom, and the Marketing Director for Vertra. Currently, I serve as the Head Coach for the Kamehameha Surf Team and the Head Coach for the Hawaii Surf Team Juniors and Masters programs, which travel internationally to compete in the International Surfing Association's World Championships.

Surfing is more than just a sport; it is a fundamental part of Hawaiian culture, a powerful tool for youth development, and a means to foster community inclusion. By adopting surfing as an official high school sport, we have the opportunity to not only celebrate our rich heritage but also provide young athletes with the structure, support, and camaraderie they need to thrive.

For many young surfers, competitive surfing has traditionally been an individual pursuit, requiring them to navigate their journey alone. However, the introduction of scholastic surfing changes this dynamic entirely. Unlike traditional contests where surfers compete solely for their personal rankings, high school surfing allows students to compete as a team, similar to how we approach competition with the Hawaii Surf Team. This team-based format fosters a sense of unity, motivation, and accountability that is often missing in individual competitions.

Through my experience coaching and competing with the Hawaii Surf Team, I have witnessed firsthand how a team environment can elevate a surfer's potential. When competing as a team, surfers not only push themselves to perform their best but also uplift their teammates, strategizing together, analyzing conditions, and providing encouragement both in and out of the water. This sense of camaraderie builds confidence, resilience, and mental strength—qualities that are essential not just for competition but for life itself.

Beyond the personal growth of the athletes, high school surfing has the power to bring the community together. Schools, families, and local businesses can rally behind their teams, creating a deeper connection between education, athletics, and culture. Surfing, which has been at the heart of Hawaiian identity for generations, deserves to be recognized in the same way as other school-sanctioned sports such as football, basketball, or volleyball. By legitimizing it at the scholastic level, we provide young surfers with more opportunities, resources, and pathways to further their passion, whether that be through professional careers, college scholarships, or roles in surf-related industries.

Moreover, implementing surfing as a high school sport aligns perfectly with the principles of Hawaiian culture—respect for the ocean, the importance of ohana (family), and the spirit of aloha. It allows the next generation to honor and perpetuate the legacy of our ancestors while also paving the way for the future of competitive surfing.

Safety and liability are and always will be a top priority in aquatic and ocean sports, especially surfing. To ensure the well-being of all participants, all team members must pass a Junior Lifeguard and CPR certification to gain eligibility. This requirement equips them with the skills and knowledge to act as first responders in emergency situations until lifeguards or EMS arrive.

By implementing these safety measures, we enhance the overall security of competitions and everyday practice sessions, making them much safer for both participants and the public.

In closing, the inclusion of surfing as a high school sport is not just about competition; it is about fostering a supportive environment for student-athletes, strengthening our communities, and preserving an essential part of Hawaii's identity. By taking this step, we are not only giving young surfers the structure and support they need but also ensuring that the sport continues to grow in a way that remains true to its roots.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Jason Shibata

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 8:34:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Miranda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am supporting this initiative! Surfing is a Hawaiian tradition and should have its place in our schools for all students who want to participate and to have their own space in inter scholastic sports!

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 8:59:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jan K Baldado	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly SUPPORT HB 133!

Mahalo nui.

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 9:06:52 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Seth Mckinney	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Seth Mckinney and I am writing in support of making surfing an interscholastic sport in Hawaii schools. Surfing is now an olympic sport, has its own professional league and is recognized globally as a sport. Hawaii, as a state, is a direct economic benefactor of surfing. We have professional contests here and people travel from around the world to surf in Hawaii. It stands to reason some of the tax revenue that surfing in Hawaii produces can be appropriated to funding a program like interscholastic surfing.

Surfing is part of Hawaii's culture and heritage. I urge lawmakers to support HB 133.

As a Maui athlete, I can first handily speak on the impact surfing has made for me as an interscholastic sport. I had never surfed before and could barely stay on a board. As an athlete who has participated in other sports, I can confidently say that the surfing teams create a uniquely positive environment. From the moment I joined, there were always other coaches and teams congratulating me on my progress, which is something I have never experienced in other sports. This constant encouragement and sense of community made a significant impact on me. In other sports, the competition can sometimes overshadow the camaraderie, but in surfing, it feels different. The support I received allowed me to stay in the sport comfortably without feeling any negativity or judgment. I believe this positive atmosphere stems from the sport itself and the values it promotes. There's an unspoken sense of respect towards others because we all understand how challenging and intimidating surfing can be. This mutual respect and understanding create a strong bond among surfers, making the sport not just about individual achievements but also about collective growth and support. The morals presented within surfing, such as perseverance, humility, and respect for nature and fellow surfers, contribute to a nurturing environment that is rare in other athletic pursuits. This supportive community has been instrumental in my continued participation and enjoyment of the sport. Through surfing I had made some of my closest friends and mentors; relationships I have never built while participating in other sports. Surfing has played a significant part in my physical health, social atmosphere and encourages me to do well in all aspects (including academics) which is why I believe surfing should be an island wide interscholastic sport.

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 9:22:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Giles	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Strongly Support HB133

Being that Hawaii is the birthplace of surfing, it is a shame that this isn't already supported by our school system and state.

While other countries like Australia and Brazil and States like California and Florida pride and cater to the sport of surfing and surfing athletes, the support has been nil. The State of Hawaii rakes in millions from the surfing industry as international events and visitors clamor to our shores every year and yet there is no support for the local sport and athletes.

Even more so now that it is an Olympic sport, here's our chance to make it right by starting with our youth and schools and supporting Surfing as an interscholastic sport.

Paul Giles

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 9:31:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
megan abubo	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and committee members. I am here today to stand on my testimony in support of HB133 regarding Surfing as an Interscholastic Sport. My name is Megan Abubo and I'm a proud graduate of Waialua High School. I have had the honor of representing our beloved state of Hawai'i while I was attending High School and on the Professional World Surfing tour for over 15 years after. I had the opportunity to take our culture, aloha spirit, and passion for surfing around the world from the age of 14 until the age of 31. I have travelled to every continent except Antarctica. I would attribute my success as a professional athlete to which I won World Runner UP, Rookie of the year, The triple Crown of surfing, and been honored at various levels within surfing. I was even given the honor of representing the women's voice during the growth of our sport during the early 2000's on an all-male dominated board of industry elites.

I have been listening to some testimony and with all due respect, I am quite ashamed that our state has not recognized surfing, the birthplace of surfing within our school system. Except for Maui, and the awesome leaders there many of whom are my dear friends, I am ashamed that on Oahu we have not been able to support our keiki with the opportunity to express themselves culturally and competitively in the birthplace of surfing.

Not all kids want to do land sports, not all kids want to be confined to being in an arena or a court. Thankfully to surfing, my life forever changed. If it were not for the countless coaches I had outside of school, I would have not been here today and accomplished what I have. My passion for surfing came only after I realized that track, soccer, basketball, and volleyball were for me. I grew up on Lemon Road across the street from the WALL, I grew up very poor and found my first surfboard in a rubbish can. Surfing altered the trajectory of my life and can so for many other young kids who do not resonate with land sports the way they do the ocean. Being in the ocean is cultural, it is spiritual, and it is a chance to connect with mother nature that "only a surfer knows the feeling".

It is hard to sit here in this room and explain if you do not share the same passion, so I try to bring to you my mana'o and my experience, so you understand that. Surfing can give these kids

that chance and opportunity to go places or be a part of something bigger than them if they do not connect on land like they do in the ocean. We honor canoe paddling and those who want to be in the wa'a, yet we do not honor these young surfers the same way. Surfing is an ancient, historical, and culturally preserved activity that we should honor and allow a safe and participate able space for our keiki.

I recall the first of my 7 amateur national titles that I accumulated at a young age and being asked while competing in the mainland why I wasn't trying to win the high school title too, I simply replied, "we don't recognize surfing". All I could say. Now fast forward I am 47 years old, and we still can't recognize surfing on the interscholastic level. How is this so?

There are safe surf spots that keiki can hold training at, there are safer beaches, not everything is life threatening like Pipeline and Sunset Beach. Waves break year-round all over the island, and we don't need to put children in harm's way, however we can tap into the countless resources around us that would like to see surfing acknowledged on the high school level.

I believe there are resources and ex professional surfers you can tap into and figure a way to make things work within a budget. There are ways if you brought and asked the right people how. By asking organizers of professional surfing events, you are inviting for expensive costs. These are professional surfing events. Why not ask or find out how we, ex pro surfers can help and give you information Board of Education. Most kids I grew up with attended public school, we would all love to see our sport thrive within the education system.

Why doesn't the Board of Education do better and tap into those resources, those of us who have lived the competition, who know the organizers, who have judged, who have commentated on a professional level, and who coach. Many of us are public school educated alumni. If we don't start at the high school level, where do we begin? What message are we telling the keiki that surfing isn't respected enough like football and basketball and other sports to support. How many keiki are we leaving out if we don't do this now.

Our state has money to pay referees and coaches of other sports, but not surfing. Let's find a way and collaborate and make this happen. We all have so many resources. Surfing can be a gateway for other kids who only relate to the ocean and can bring them closer to their parents.

If you ever went out on a Saturday and saw the huge amounts of people enjoying surfing, you would ask yourself, how do we not support this. How many families are playing football together? I'm just saying this sport begins with the keiki and ends with the kupuna.

Surfing can combine judges on a local level, not professional, coaches on a level where we tap into alumni, coordinators and commentators that share the passion for the sport.

I don't know where I would be today if I didn't find that board in the trash can. Surfing changed my life, and I survived losing my mother and father and sister at a young age, I survived influential negative factors, and I did all that because I competed, and a few uncles believed in me. It took me around the world and to all walks of life. Imagine how much easier and more believable it would have been if I were respected and recognized in my own school and education system. Imagine the other lives that could have been guided if they were given the tools.

Thank you for listening to my testimony today, I strongly support funding and implementing a way to include surfing into our Scholastic sports programs.

Megan Abubo

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 9:49:17 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bryan Goodnight	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am 100% in support of HB 133. I have been involved with the MIL High School Surf program since the beginning. Its a great sport for the Hawaii kids who love to express their talant in the waves.

Mahalo,

Bryan Goodnight

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 9:58:43 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maggie Hong	Kaiser High School	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Comments: I am writing in full favor of passing HB133 to establish surfing as an interscholastic sport. My daughter is a member of Kaiser's High School's inaugural surf club. And to support her and her love for the sport, I volunteered to be chair of fundraising because this is the biggest obstacle we face. \$3100 is a tremendously steep bill for 8 participating athletes to fundraise all by themselves without financial support from the school or the DOE. I was extremely disappointed to learn that Superintendent Keith Hiyashi gave such a skeptical response to lawmakers' proposed \$42,000 allocation last year to support surfing in schools. He should have taken the money for the surf clubs. While the ocean poses unpredictable conditions, our keiki who want to surf competitively are comfortable in the ocean. Their risk for injury is no greater than high-contact interscholastic sports like football or basketball? Moreover, Mr. Hiyashi's requirement that all surfers receive junior lifeguard certification should demonstrate the surfers' level of competence and comfort in the ocean. Surfing is part of our Hawaiian culture and should be embraced and sponsored as such by the state government. Surf clubs operate like a competitive team and should be given the same status as other competitive sports. It is a shame that HIDOE does not sponsor the sport that is native to our ancestors and that continues to bring worldwide attention to our culture, the sport, and money to our island chain. Let's make this official already and fund our surfer athletes!

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 10:01:18 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Myriam Saboui	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Myriam Saboui and I am in strong support of HB133.

Surfing is more than just a sport; it is a lifestyle that teaches discipline, resilience, teamwork, and respect for the environment. For many students, the opportunity to join a surf team can provide a positive and engaging outlet for physical activity, fostering personal growth and developing skills that will stay with them long after they leave high school. By establishing funding for surf teams at high schools, the state is also promoting inclusivity and diversity. This bill will make it more accessible for students of all backgrounds, thus creating opportunities for everyone to take part in the sport. Funding high school surf teams is an investment in our youth and our communities.

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 10:38:10 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Davin Kazama	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my SUPPORT OF HB133.

We all know the benefit of high school sports and the community that it breeds. The pride that kids feel from representing their schools, playing with, against, and in front of family and friends...that community is what makes sports so critical in the development of our youth today.

We all know that Hawaiians invented surfing and were once banished from participating in it. There is no sport more engrained in Hawaii's culture, and yet has been actively excluded from Hawaii's list of high school sports.

What we might not know, however, is that because surfing is not an interscholastic sport in Hawaii:

1. Surfers are ineligible for numerous international, national, and local scholarships, including the prestigious HMSA Kaimana Awards & Scholarship Program which has granted higher education funds to Hawaii High School Athletic Association athletes for 20 years. \$100,000 will be granted this year, and not a single dollar will or has ever been received by an HHSAA surfer/athlete, because there is no such thing.

2. Surfers are not viewed as student-athletes on their college applications. They are simply viewed as students, hurting their college options and chances of admission.

3. With no team option, many surfers forsake in-person schooling. These students do their schooling and training individually, separating themselves from their classmates and peers. This isolation and individualism works well for some, but less so for others.

There is a way forward, though. Let's commit to finding a way to get this done. Together, let's put in the work to create opportunities. The passage of HB133 is a necessary step to providing our community with what it's been wanting for decades. Surfing as an HHSAA sport is a dream that is well within our reach and it starts with HB133. Let's do this.

Thank you,

Davin Kazama

P.S. I understand that there is concern over the cost of a surf contest, estimated at \$4,350, versus \$1,800 for a football game. I'd like to respectfully point out that a surf contest features 12 teams (\$362.50 per team, per contest) whereas a football game features 2 teams (\$900 per team, per game). In other words, a surf contest is 60% more cost effective per team, per game. Thank you.

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 10:44:05 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Al Sagon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern:

My name is Al Sagon. I am in support of bill HB-133. I have been involved with the Maui Interscholastic Surf League for 10 years as a volunteer judge. I have seen our Maui program's success, growth and development with the participation of all of the High Schools here. Surfing is a tradition and a way of life in Hawaii. The sport that originated in ancient Polynesia should be recognized and be funded comparable to all high school athletic programs.

Surfing promotes participation of students no matter their skill level. Also physical and mental, creativity and enviromental awareness.

I humbly ask that your support of HB-133.

Cordially,

Al Sagon

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 11:05:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
anthony kelling	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha hou kākou,

I am in support for HB 133 HD2 for the following reasons.

Surfing is the national pasttime of Hawai‘i. High school surfing provides opportunities for our keiki to learn life skills and self awareness about themselves in the medium of the ocean. The ocean is a classroom that has no equal. Yet, other science and sports programs recieve the funding necessary to allow those participants to succeed and grow into productive citizens to this land and this nation.

We as makua should provide the revenue needed for those learners who lean towards surfing as it provides a positive outlet for their contribution to our culture and home. This would provide mutiple outlets for our keiki to suceed. Science, arts and culture and other sports often compete for the chance to survive and create success, can we do the same through surfing?

Mahalo for listening to this mana‘o in support for this bill,

Anthony Kaipo‘i Kelling

Coach for Ke Kula ‘o Samuel M. Kamakau hui he‘enalu.

Feb 19, 2025

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 11:33:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaipo Guerrero	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a former surf coach for Kamehameha high school I can assure you that surfing builds confidence and camaraderie amongst students.

Just as important is the ocean knowledge students gain is a valuable life tool for anyone living on a island in the middle of the Pacific .

As a coach also being certified with CPR and ocean rescue techniques you are then able pass basic information on to students. Students then have a base line of what to do when in the position of being first responders to ocean rescue or on land support. I can't stress on how valuable this is for the kids.

I would also like to mention that surfing is a cultural activity that should be celebrated here in Hawaii, it's birthplace

Aloha

Kaipo Guerrero

Broadcast Director, World Surf League

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 12:20:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joel Centeio	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Joel Centeio. I'm born and raised here on Oahu, and went to school in the Ewa Beach area. I was a part of the Campbell Highschool Surf club back in the early 2000's. It was such a good experience to surf and compete representing my school. It also was a very good way for me and my peer group from Ewa Beach to stay out of trouble by going surfing together.

I now work in the Surf industry for the Florence Marine X brand that was founded by 3X Hawaiian World surfing champion John Florence. I am also coaching the Waialua Highschool Surf team currently. We all strongly support surfing becoming a sanctioned highschool sport. Surfing is a very safe sport that will encourage these kids to live a healthy lifestyle in the ocean. Not to mention surfing began here in Hawaii!

I strongly support bill HB133

Mahalo,

Joel Centeio

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 1:26:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Davin Kelling	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou e nā Alakaʻi a me nā Lālā Luna Makaʻāinana o ke Kōmike Finance,

My name is Davin Kānanaikawaiola Kelling and I am a senior at Ke Kula ʻo Samuel M. Kamakau, Laboratory Public Charter School. I am in strong support of HB133 HD2, which proposes to appropriate funds to the department of education to support the establishment of surfing as an interscholastic sport. I am fortunate to have participated in high school surfing on the Kamakau surf club over these past two years and believe every student should have this same opportunity in all public schools across Oʻahu.

As Hawaiʻi is the home of surfing and continues to host many professional surf competitions attracting international attention, I don't understand why surfing is not yet an OIA sport in the high schools. For students at Kamakau, surfing is not just a sport. Our surf club is taking advantage of this opportunity to reclaim surfing as a Hawaiian cultural practice. We are learning through the eyes of our kupuna as moʻolelo are shared with us of this traditional hana kuʻuna (cultural practice) and as we learn of the traditional names and stories of surf spots across Oʻahu. I have also appreciated the opportunity to connect and interact with other student surfers across Oʻahu at the high school competitions.

As student safety is a concern for all, I feel that it is addressed with all students being required to earn their Jr lifeguard certification and coaches are required to become lifeguard certified. We are carefully watched during practices with multiple coaches available to assist with a 1:6 coach to student surfer ratio.

As cost is also a concern for surfing, I feel that other sports that involve the competition of multiple schools at a single time can be just as costly. For example, what is the budget for the OIA Paddling season? This sport is more similar to surfing than is football, which is a competition between two schools and allows the host school to charge an entry fee. As Hawaiʻi hosts multiple pro surf competitions, donations from these competitions could be sought after to further support surfing in the high schools. Afterall, our Hawaiʻi student surfing athletes serve as a pipeline to these professional competitions with our very own Ēweleiʻula Wong, Kamakau class of 2023 now surfing in the professional arena.

Mahalo for allowing me to testify and for your consideration.

Me ke aloha nō,

D. Kananaikawaiola Kelling

Kamakau, Class of 2025

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 2:23:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charme Taksony	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

I am writing in support of HB 133 to fund surfing as a sport in the state of Hawaii. I am a teacher at Maui High School and am the head coach for our surfing team. On Maui, we have an amazing high school surf league. The benefits of the high school surf league are many, too many to recount, but it brings joy, aloha, and value for the students, the families, and our island community. Any negative results that anyone can come up with to oppose funding surfing in Hawai'i as a state high school sport is negated by the positives. Surfing originated in Hawai'i and is so closely connected to our culture. This is another great reason to fund it as a state high school sport.

I humbly ask that you jpass this bill to fund surfing as a state high school sport. Please feel free to contact me at 20280942@k12.hi.us or at 808 283 1109 with any questions.

Mahalo

Charme' Taksony

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 3:00:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Jane Watson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a former teacher from 1968 to 2010 at Waiane HS and at Nanakuli HIS and as a high school canoe-paddling coach I urge the House to support HB133 which furthers high school students' participation in the sport of surfing. If the goal of high school athletics is to develop physical health and promote life-long physical fitness then promoting a sport in which individuals can participate their entire lives should be a high priority. Unlike many team sports, surfing is a sport that can be a life-time activity providing the benefits of physical activity well into a person's senior years. Please support HB 133 which I believe will promote activities that will benefit students for a lifetime.

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 3:05:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lyndee Sprenger	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, fellow keiki o ka 'āina!

Surfing isn't just a sport in Hawaii; it's our legacy, our cultural treasure, and our gift to the world. The ancient Hawaiians called it "he'e nalu," or wave sliding, and it's been part of our island life for centuries. By supporting HB 133, we're not just riding waves; we're riding the currents of our cultural heritage, connecting with the spirit of aloha and the mana of our islands.

Imagine our keiki learning to read the ocean like a book, becoming watermen and waterwomen. Surfing teaches them to respect and understand the sea, potentially turning them into efficient lifesavers. It's like a superhero training program, but with better views and fewer capes.

Now, let's talk about the big kahuna of sports recognition - the Olympics. Surfing made its debut at the Tokyo 2020 Games, bringing our island sport to the global stage⁶. It's like Hawaii got a gold medal just for being Hawaii. So, isn't it time we honored this sport that we gifted to the world?

The Department of Education and the Board of Education recognized surfing as a high school sport back in 2016. But here's the wipeout - only one of five local athletic leagues have sponsored it. By passing HB 133, we're giving our keiki more opportunities to hang ten and compete in this cherished sport.

Supporting HB 133 isn't just about sports; it's about preserving our culture, boosting our economy, and investing in our future. The 2010 Vans Triple Crown of Surfing on the North Shore of Oahu generated a whopping \$20,900,000 in spending. Imagine what we could do if we nurtured more local talent!

By recognizing surfing as a high school sport, we're honoring our past, embracing our present, and shaping our future. It's a chance to show the world that in Hawaii, we don't just go with the flow - we ride it, with style and aloha.

So let's wax up our boards, paddle out, and catch this legislative wave. Because in Hawaii, surfing isn't just a sport - it's our birthright, our culture, and our way of life. Mahalo for considering this humble argument in favor of HB 133. May it ride to victory like a perfect Pipeline barrel!

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 3:55:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaiulani Bowers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill as surfing needs to be in Hawaii schools. The ocean changes lives for the better and our state should be leading the nation with surfing in schools

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 5:34:14 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Greg Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

This is Greg Smitty Smith. I moved to Maui when I was 11 in 1980. The first thing thing I did was learn how to surf ever since then surfing has been a passion and a lifestyle. I graduated high school at Maui high school in 1987 and I only wish that surfing was an official sport back in those days, It's been awesome seeing surfing grow throughout the years and becoming an Olympic sport. This is so important for our youth and the ocean is an Intercal part of the Hawaiian lifestyle if we can give our full support and make this a statewide high school sport I'm sure it'll change lives and help some of the nontraditional sport athletes that aren't into football and baseball and keep a positive influence on our community and potentially help them stay away from bad influences. I'm a taxpayer and I vote at every opportunity. I hope you guys make the decision to support Hawaii's athletes in the sport of surfing..

Sincerely

Greg Smitty Smith 🤝

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 8:48:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeff Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jeff Smith, i am the head Coach for HP Baldwin High School in Wailuku, Maui My experience in the Maui Interscholastic League for Surf has been nothing but amazing My athletes grades are a cumulative 3.8 because they know how we have a higher standard to be on the team Our kids three years ago barely surfed after the season and now they all surf together every aubgke day and have dorned such a bond that they will be friends for life My team is also about being preoarfed and ready for ocean emergencies They all are CPR/AED certified , trained in ocean rescue and capable of saving anyones life in an emergency whether at the beach or in the community Interscholastic Surfing has created the most well rounded community members ive ever had the opportunity to meet

Its one of the most popular Olympic sport events out there and it was created in Hawaii How can we hive every community member the opportunity at surfing

Head Coach Jeff Smith

HP Baldwin High School

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 9:01:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michal Przeciechowski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a parent of 2 high school students. Surfing, for our entire community is more than just a sport, it's a culture. Being able to participate in the surfing meet ups for these kids is a paramount of importance. It plays a major educative role. We don't have big stadiums or arenas, but we do have beautiful ocean. Wherever these kids would end up being in future, studying or working, the current experience of high school surfing will always be their lantern, giving them strength and allow to co-exist and compete with other students or co-workers. This is an important investment in these kids, teaching them a beautiful alternative for unhealthy temptations and bad habits. Showing them healthy and friendly competition. An investment in their persistence and reinforcement of the Aloha Spirit.

Please kindly vote to provide necessary funding for high-school surfing and allow it not only to maintain but gradually grow to reach many more local kids. This is Hawaii, all the kids should be given opportunity to grasp the beauty and wisdom of surfing.

Mahalo Nui Loa

Ohana of Przeciechowskis

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 9:17:57 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ava Herren	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a high school surfer from Maui and having surf in school has been one of the best things that has happened to me. Before joining my high schools surf team I was kind of into surfing but not good or super invested in it, but I was convinced to join my schools team and I met the BEST group of people and now I am super into the sport and have seen myself improve through the past year that I have been doing it. Having surf as a high school sport helps kids get introduced to this amazing sport and improve it without having to spend hundreds on personal coaches. Besides just improving in my surfing other things in my life have also improved, surf has such a kind community and being able to see that through my team and at competitions with all the schools on island really helps spread aloha to everyone. Being apart of a team is also such a crucial part of my experience because everyone from my coaches to everyone on my team has been so encouraging through my surf journey and has spread good habits and knowledge onto me because being around supportive, kind, and amazing people has influenced me into a better person and taught me how to show kindness to anyone and everyone. All students should be able to experience the amazing community that is high school surf in their schools.

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 9:23:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Rouse	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this bill. As a surf coach at Kekaulike High School on Maui, I've seen firsthand the benefits of including surfing as a high school sport. Scholastic surfing has been part of Maui's culture for many years, and there's strong involvement and excitement surrounding it here. Surfing is deeply rooted in Hawaiian heritage, and recognizing it as an official sport would honor that legacy. Surfers, like other student-athletes, deserve the opportunity to compete, earn recognition, and showcase their talent. Providing funding and establishing it as an official sport statewide would give young surfers the chance to represent their schools and communities.

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 5:01:40 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
April Bautista	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I kindly ask that your Committee pass this measure.

Thank you,

April

April Kamilah Bagasao Bautista

Kalihi-Pālama

HB-133-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 7:43:14 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James D Howe Jr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting this testimony in support of HB 133 based on my professional experience in Ocean Safety, Ocean Safety Management, and Aquatic Injury Prevention in the State of Hawaii.

When the BOE passed a resolution to make surfing a high school sport the DOE reached out to Ocean Safety professionals to assist in developing a high school surfing program.

That program has been in place for more than a decade. The program allowed surfing to go forward as a club sport. On Maui, thru the leadership of Kim Ball and Archie Kalepa, the Maui Interscholastic League adopted surfing as a sport and the program moved into the high school sport program.

This has been highly successful on Maui but has not been the case on Kauai, Hawaii, and Oahu where the program has remained in the club category.

Today, there is ample evidence that the safety concerns that have been raised by the DOE, should not be the major deciding factor in determining the future for the program.

The benefits:

Students that participate in the high school surfing program are learning ocean safety skills that not only protect them but contribute to the overall safety of all those who use our ocean waters.

Additional benefits include fitness, friendship, healthy competition, and an incentive to maintain a passing grade point level (which incentivizes class attendance).

The cost associated with this sport are minimal. The benefits are substantial. Surfing and association ocean recreational activities are lifelong.

Thank you for your favorable consideration of HB 133.

Jim Howe

City and County of Honolulu Emergency Services Director (ret) and Ocean Safety Chief (ret)

