



TO: The Honorable Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair  
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

FROM: Phil Bossert, Executive Director  
Hawaii Association of Independent Schools

RE: **HB 2248 HD1 – RELATING TO SCHOOLS - In Support**

DATE: Friday, February 25, 2022  
1:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee:

My name is Philip Bossert and I am the Executive Director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS).

HAIS and its subsidiary, the Hawaii Council of Private Schools (HCPS), supports HB 2248 HD1. HAIS currently serves 94 independent schools and over 33,000 students in Hawai'i. Member schools include several of the largest independent schools in the U.S., as well as some of the smallest. While distinctive with respect to mission and philosophy, HAIS member schools are united in helping children achieve personal and academic excellence.

There are 111 independent (non-public) K-12 schools in Hawaii. Of that total, 89 schools are currently licensed or pending licensure by HCPS in accordance with Act 227 and 21 schools are compliant with Act 227 by virtue of being accredited by one or more national accrediting agencies recognized by HCPS.

All HCPS licensed schools must submit annual verifications of the health and safety information documents required by various State and County agencies in Hawaii (Dept. of Health, Fire Dept., Dept. of Transportation). However, compliant schools are not required to submit these annual verifications; and, as a result, such documentation is only verified during reaccreditation visits once every 5 to 10 years. And often, such verifications are overlooked by accreditation visiting teams. It is possible that some schools may not be in full compliance with Act 227 for several years due to the lack of such verification and, as a result, may pose a danger to their faculty, staff and students.

HCPS became aware of this issue recently when a licensed school was not able to obtain its annual fire safety inspection certificate due to various facility and equipment issues on its campus. To avoid becoming unlicensed, the school decided to rely instead on its accredited status and become compliant, in which case it would not have to verify its fire safety inspection document for perhaps another 3 to 5 years.

HB 2248 HD1 will close this loophole and require both licensed and compliant schools to submit annual verifications of their health and safety documentation.

We respectfully ask for your support on this measure and pass it out of committee. I am available to answer any questions you might have about this issue.



**LATE**

TO: The Honorable Justin Woodson, Chair  
The Honorable Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Education

FROM: Dr. Llewellyn Young  
Superintendent for Hawaii Catholic Schools

RE: HB 2248 - RELATING TO EDUCATION  
In Support

DATE: Friday, February 25, 2022  
1:00 pm

Aloha House Members of the Education Committee:

Hawaii Catholic Schools (HCS), the largest private school network in the state of Hawaii and subsidiary of the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii in collaboration with the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS) and the Hawaii Council of Private Schools (HCPS) supports this bill **as amended with the inclusion of the Hawaii Catholic Schools Office as the compliance agency to oversee non-licensed but accredited Catholic schools who are not full members of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools** and submits the following comments.

The Hawaii Catholic Schools office functions in the same capacity as HCPS for all parochial Catholic schools which are not members of HAIS but are fully accredited by at least two nationally recognized agencies. In agreement with HAIS and HCPS, the Hawaii Catholic Schools Office will remain autonomous in providing oversight for all state compliance measures regarding the health and safety of our schools in accordance with the compulsory attendance law.

The Hawaii Catholic Schools office remains committed to ensuring all health and safety measures for all Catholic schools in Hawaii which are not full members of HAIS or licensed by HCPS are in full compliance with the law.

We fully support this bill in collaboration with HAIS and HCPS. We respectfully request your support on this measure. Please let me know if you have any questions regarding my testimony.