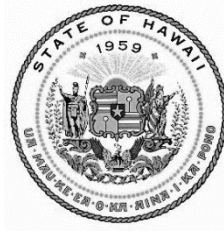


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



CHAD K. FARIAS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**SCHOOL FACILITIES AUTHORITY**  
75 AUPUNI STREET, STE. BASEMENT  
HILO, HAWAII 96720

February 14, 2023

**Testimony providing SUPPORT of HB1256 HD1  
RELATING TO THE SCHOOL CAMPUSES**

REPRESENTATIVE JUSTIN WOODSON, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Hearing Date: 02/14/2023

Room Number 309

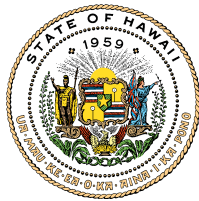
The School Facilities Authority (SFA) is in **support** of H.B. 1256 HD1, RELATING TO THE SCHOOL CAMPUSES.

The SFA supports efforts to find the highest possible uses of our State land assets to provide the resources necessary to support our Keiki in their educational endeavors. Providing teacher and workforce housing is a critical component to addressing the long-standing teacher and educator workforce shortage issue in our State.

The SFA appreciates the consideration by the Legislature for an appropriation of \$200,000 related to the plan and design of the Maui campus housing pilot program. The SFA does not have existing funds that it would be able to utilize to cover the costs associated with starting this program.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI  
SUPERINTENDENT



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LAHAINALUNA HIGH SCHOOL  
980 LAHAINALUNA ROAD  
LAHAINA, HAWAII 96761**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you in support of HB1256, establishing and appropriating moneys for a Maui campus housing pilot project. In my current position as principal at Lahainaluna High School, I know firsthand the critical need for affordable housing for school employees. While there are many reasons why schools in Hawai'i, and West Maui in particular, are suffering from staff shortages, the availability of financially attainable suitable housing is often the decisive factor in whether a highly qualified employee can accept a position.

This issue affects Lahainaluna's ability to fully staff in two main ways. First, for current staff, the high cost of housing in comparison to salaries mandates nearly all employees either have to hold a second or even third job, live far from Lahaina and have to deal with a long and occasionally prohibitive commute, or live in shared accommodations with either family or roommates. All of these seriously affect our retention rates. Teaching and working with students is a labor of love, and those that do it are heroic in their own way. But the financial pressures on employees oftentimes outweigh the multitude of benefits living on Maui has to offer. Employees struggle to get financially secure, barely living paycheck to paycheck, and the pull of leaving the island or entering the private sector in order to gain financial independence can be unavoidable. We lose qualified staff to this reality every year.

Second, the unavailability and high cost of housing greatly affects West Maui schools' ability to recruit new staff to the island. Administrators can all testify to the experience of interviewing a highly qualified and motivated applicant, making an offer of employment, having the applicant accept the offer, but later pull out because they can not afford to live here. Despite our best efforts to screen potential teachers and assess their actual potential for relocating, schools are constantly stressed to see if who we've hired actually report for work. The financial challenges, especially with regards housing costs, for newly accredited teachers is a substantive hindrance for fully staffing a school. These individuals, who often have little to no savings and large college debt, simply cannot afford to move here. The list of potential applicants is usually very long, but in reality there are a very select few for whom working in a West Maui school is a real possibility.

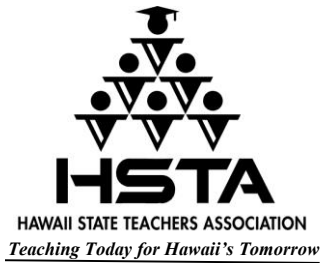
In addition, and not to be undervalued in importance, is the effect this situation has on the academic success of our students. Teachers who are under constant financial pressure, and work multiple jobs, cannot fully devote their time and energy to their craft. Reflective time is compromised, planning time is compromised, and their ability to engage with the school community outside of normal hours as coaches, club advisors, and spectators is compromised. These are key components to producing high achieving school cultures, where every student is given the opportunity to reach their full-potential. We can not undervalue the downstream consequences to our students that the high cost of housing has on their teacher's total well-being. Schools

with stable, highly-qualified, supported staff members who feel valued as professionals by being able to live financially secure lives commensurate with their level of training and role in society, is a mandatory component for student success.

For these reasons I fully support House Bill 1256. Anything we can do to make it easier to staff schools with qualified, dedicated workers will benefit our children. I believe efforts to directly address the housing shortage for school personnel in West Maui is a great step forward.

Sincerely,

Richard Carosso  
Principal, Lahainaluna High School  
808.318.0446  
richard.carosso@k12.hi.us



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Logan Okita  
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Lisa Morrison  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Ann Mahi  
Executive Director

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: HB 1256 HD1 - RELATING TO SCHOOL CAMPUSES

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2023

OSA TUI, JR., PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Woodson and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports HB 1256, HD1**, relating to school campuses. The bill establishes and appropriates moneys for a Maui campus housing pilot program, to be administered by the School Facilities Authority which shall make on-campus housing available to employees at Lahainaluna and Kulanihako'i high schools on the island of Maui. It also requires the School Facilities Authority and Department of Education to submit joint reports to the Legislature.

Hawai'i continues to suffer from a shortage of licensed teachers with over 1000 vacancies each year. Affordable options for teacher housing is one key strategy for the recruiting and retaining of teachers, particularly given that Hawai'i's teacher salaries continue to trail the nation, when adjusted for cost of living. Housing is a big portion of each teacher's paycheck.

If we concentrate on retaining our teachers, the Department of Education would not have to focus so much on the recruitment. **To recruit and retain effective educators, policymakers must find ways to lessen the financial burden of being a public school teacher.** Establishing an on-campus housing program on Maui is a good first step. An affordable housing option on campus would not only help teachers with affordable housing, but cost of living broadly would arguably be lessened. The ability to walk to work would save both in travel time and gas. The price of which remains very high.

In the islands, where new housing that is affordable rarely becomes available, the percentage of renters who face cost burdens – financial handicaps incurred by people spending over 30 percent of their income on housing – is roughly 57 percent, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

Add to these struggles the spike in inflation we've seen in the last year, and ever-rising housing costs. According to Locations Hawaii, the median home cost in Hawaii at the end of 2021 was \$1.02 million. The median rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Honolulu is more than \$1,600 and a two-bedroom is \$2,180. As homes are sold,



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teachers who rent then struggle to find affordable replacement housing. We have had teachers, born and raised on Maui, who have been forced to relocate to the continent for work because they simply could not find affordable housing on Maui, or elsewhere in the islands.

To make ends meet, many teachers are forced to pick up second and third jobs, live in cramped studio apartments, and cut back on necessities like medical and dental care. Thus they cannot devote their full attention to their students and the preparation of lessons and grading that they usually complete after school once their students have left for the day. Those teachers for whom this pilot program could see significant easing of their financial burdens, as well as more time to commit to both their students and their own families.

**Thus, a campus housing pilot program on Maui may assist teachers in attaining sustainable and stable residency, while staving off crushing debt burdens. Implementing and tracking the progress of the pilot program could point the way to more permanent affordable housing solutions for teacher in the future. It would also make the teaching profession more attractive by decreasing travel times and increasing educators' ability to find affordable housing that won't take their whole paycheck.**

To take care of the needs of Hawaii's hardworking teachers, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.



## HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Thirty-Second Legislature, State of Hawaii  
House of Representatives  
Committee on Education

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 14, 2023

### H.B. 1256 – RELATING TO SCHOOL CAMPUSES

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports H.B. 1256, which establishes and appropriates moneys for a Maui campus housing pilot program to be administered by the School Facilities Authority which shall make on-campus housing available to employees at Lahainaluna and Kulanihako'i high schools on the island of Maui.

School principals, especially those on the neighbor islands, struggle with recruiting quality employees because of the lack of attainable and affordable housing. Housing can easily cost over half of an employees' monthly income. The HGEA supports the legislature's effort to find solutions to attract, recruit and retain public school employees and this pilot on-campus housing program at two of Maui's schools is a move in the right direction.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of H.B. 1256.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira  
Executive Director

Council Chair  
Alice L. Lee



Director of Council Services  
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

Councilmembers  
Tom Cook  
Gabe Johnson  
Tasha Kama  
Tamara Paltin  
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez  
Shane M. Sinenci  
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura  
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins

Deputy Director of Council Services  
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

**COUNTY COUNCIL**  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 S. HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.MauiCounty.us](http://www.MauiCounty.us)

February 13, 2023

TO: The Honorable Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair,  
and Members of the House Committee on Education

FROM: Alice L. Lee  
Chair, Maui County Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alice L. Lee".

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 14, 2023; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF  
HB 1256, HD 1, RELATING TO SCHOOL CAMPUSES**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this important measure. This measure would establish and appropriate money for a pilot program to provide for the planning, design, and construction of on-campus housing for employees at Maui's Lahainaluna and Kulanihako'i high schools.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **support** this measure for the following reasons:

1. This measure would address Maui County's lack of attainable housing, which is a limiting factor to attracting and retaining quality, specialized school teachers, staff, and administrators.
2. Lahainaluna and Kulanihako'i high school campuses have existing infrastructure and are located near high-traffic roads, which makes them ideal locations for the pilot project proposed by this measure.
3. Using existing infrastructure and State property to provide on-campus housing for school employees would reduce costs, construction time, and traffic congestion.
4. This measure furthers the following objective of the Maui County General Plan (at page 52 of the Countywide Policy Plan):  
"Encourage the State to attract and retain school administrators and educators of the highest quality."

For those reasons, I **support** this measure.

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