



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

Date: 03/23/2026

Time: 01:00 PM

Location: CR 229 & Videoconference

Committee: EDU/LBT

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB1888, HD3, RELATING TO THE SAFETY OF EDUCATIONAL WORKERS.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the Department of Education and public charter schools to take certain steps to report incidents of harassment and implement procedures for handling harassment of educational workers. Elevates the penalty for harassment of educational workers to a misdemeanor. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD3)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports HB 1888, HD 3, which increases safeguards for educational workers who encounter instances of harassment, and the establishment of a mechanism to address harassment is essential to ensuring a secure and conducive environment for educators and students in the State.

The Department of the Attorney General is currently developing a pilot program to assist state agencies with Temporary Restraining Orders (TRO) on behalf of their employees. The Department of the Attorney General will identify private attorneys available to assist state employees with TROs and reimburse state agencies for these services.

As a result of this pilot program, the Department recommends the following revision to paragraph 5 in subsection (c):

Assist educational workers who are subjected to harassment~~[, including providing assistance in obtaining a temporary restraining order and]~~ by reimbursing the educational worker for the costs incurred in serving a temporary restraining order related to the harassment, but not including the payment of attorney's fees or court costs.

As currently drafted, "providing assistance in obtaining a temporary restraining order" does not clearly define how the Department would be required to assist. The Department believes that the Department of the Attorney General's pilot program will provide the support contemplated in the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide support to HB 1888, HD 3.

JON N. IKENAGA
PUBLIC DEFENDER

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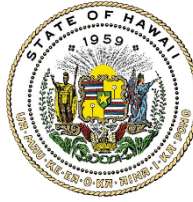
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March 22, 2026

HB1888 HD3: RELATING TO THE SAFETY OF EDUCATIONAL WORKERS

Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee on Education

Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Lamosao and Members of the Committee on Labor and Technology

The Office of the Public Defender (OPD) **opposes HB1888 HD3**. In particular, the OPD opposes the proposed amendments to Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) § 711-1106 which would: (1) add subsection (g) to add to the acts, which constitute harassment, a subsection that addresses disrupting or interfering with the functions of any school, school administration office, or school board; and (2) makes a violation of HRS § 711-1106 a full misdemeanor (as opposed to a petty misdemeanor) when the recipient is an educational worker.

At the outset, HB1888 HD3 is unconstitutional as it violates persons' rights under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and article I, section 4 of the Hawai'i Constitution. Parents, students, or community members must be able to approach school officials or provide testimony at Board meetings. Parents, students, or community members should be able to hold peaceful protests at schools or meetings. Instead, such conduct, which is protected under the U.S. and Hawai'i constitutions, would be subject to criminal prosecution. Issues that arise at schools and school functions are often emotional and personal. Parents advocate for their children or communities on issues that affect families and lives. Persons would be hesitant to communicate open and frankly with board members or school officials for fear that they might cross the invisible line between constitutionally protected communications and expressions and prohibited conduct.

HB1888 HD3 would also be unconstitutionally vague and overbroad¹ as it does not provide a clear, objective, constitutional basis by which these legitimate communications can be clearly and definitively separated from prohibited acts. The lack of any unambiguous and definitively delineated bright line standards would chill open and frank discussions between stakeholders and the board and school officials because persons would not have plain notice of what communications or conduct are permitted and which are prohibited – this makes the measure unconstitutionally vague. The measure is also unconstitutionally overbroad as it would act to criminalize constitutionally protected speech. Discourse at Board hearings and between parents and school officials can at times become adversarial or heated. The lack of any objective, bright-line rule between when speech is protected and prohibited would result in protected speech being criminalized. When would a parent advocating for changes or protesting actions by a school or the board cross the line between good faith communication, parental advocacy or participation in school matters and disrupting or interfering with the administration or functions of that board? Without such clear and objective standards, the measure would prohibit protected speech and therefore be unconstitutionally overbroad.

HB1888 HD3 would also violate the Bylaws of the Hawai‘i State Board of Education. The Bylaws of the Hawai‘i State Board of Education, Article VII, “Public Testimony and Submission of Data, Views, or Arguments,” requires that the Board “accept data, views, and arguments submitted in writing,” and that “all interested persons [be given] an opportunity to present testimony on any item of the agenda[.]” Under the broad and vague language of the measure, some speech or communications would be prohibited in direct violation of the Bylaws.

HB1888 HD3 is also unnecessary. HRS § 711-1106 sets forth six specific types of prohibited conduct that constitute harassment. A person who engages in such conduct against an educational worker can already be prosecuted for harassment in a legal and constitutional manner.² Adding an additional, unconstitutional

¹ A statute is unconstitutionally overbroad when it affects constitutionally-protected freedom of expression or “reaches a substantial amount of constitutionally-protected conduct[.]” State v. Pacquing, 139 Hawai‘i 302, 309, 389 P.3d 897, 904 (2016). A statute is void for vagueness when it does not define a criminal offense with sufficient definiteness so that ordinary people can understand what conduct is prohibited and in a manner that does not encourage arbitrary and discriminatory enforcement. Id. at 314, 389 P.3d 16 909.

² See In Interest of Doe, 76 Hawai‘i 85, 869 P.2d 1304 (1994) (discussing which types of conduct and speech may be constitutionally prohibited under the harassment statute).

subsection, which is already encompassed by the preceding subsections, is not necessary.

Finally, there is no legitimate justification to increase harassment against an “educational worker” to a full misdemeanor. The Penal Code has determined that the nature and severity of the acts that constitute harassment merit punishment as a petty misdemeanor (up to 30 days in jail). If the person engages in more severe verbal acts they can be prosecuted for terroristic threatening.³ If the person engages in more severe physical acts they can be prosecuted for assault.⁴ Under HB1888 HD3, less severe verbal acts that do not constitute terroristic threatening could be punished by up to one year in jail simply because the victim is an educational worker. If the Legislature continues to impose increased penalties for special classes, the exception will eventually swallow the rule and the established act-degree of punishment grading of the Penal Code will be meaningless.

The OPD supports protection of the safety and well-being of Hawai‘i’s educational workers. School administrators, teachers, counselors, and other educational staff should not be subjected to severe harassment, intimidation, and disruptive conduct in the course of their employment. However, educational workers are already protected from such illegal conduct under current statutes for harassment, assault, and terroristic threatening. Therefore, HB1888 HD3 has a laudable purpose, but it is unnecessary and unconstitutional. The OPD supports the sentiment and purpose of HB1888 HD3, but not its implementation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

³ “Educational workers” are already given increased protections under the terroristic threatening statutes as committing “terroristic threatening” against an “educational worker” is a Class C felony, as opposed to a misdemeanor when committed against a normal citizen.

⁴ “Educational workers” are already given increased protections under the assault statutes as committing assault (i.e inflicting “bodily injury” which is defined as “pain, illness, or any impairment of physical condition”) against an educational worker is a Class C felony, as opposed to a misdemeanor when committed against a normal citizen.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



MAKALAPUA ALENCASTRE, ED. D.
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
('AHA KULA HO'ĀMANA)

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1100, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

FOR: HB 1888 HD3 RELATING TO THE SAFETY OF EDUCATIONAL WORKERS
DATE: March 23, 2026
TIME: 1:00 P.M.
COMMITTEE: Committee on Education & Committee on Labor and Technology
ROOM: Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
FROM: Ed H. Noh, Ed. D., Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Mercado Kim, Chair Elefante, and members of the Committees:

The State Public Charter School Commission ("Commission") appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 1888 HD3** which requires the Department of Education and public charter schools to take certain steps to report incidents of harassment and implement procedures for handling harassment of educational workers and elevates the penalty for harassment of educational workers to a misdemeanor.

The Commission appreciates the inclusion of public charter schools in this measure as charter schools are a part of the public education system. Providing safeguards and measures for educators who encounter instances of harassment is essential to creating a positive school environment.

The Commission is available to work with the Legislature, the DOE, and our public charter schools in the passage and implementation of this legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



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Osa Tui, Jr.
President

Logan Okita
Vice President

Cheney Kaku
Secretary-Treasurer

Andrea Eshelman
Executive Director

**TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
&
TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND TGECHNOLOGY**

Item: HB 1888, HD3 – Relating to the Safety of Educational Workers

Position: Support

Hearing: Monday, March 23, 2026, 1:00 pm, Room 229

Submitter: Osa Tui, Jr., President - Hawai'i State Teachers Association

Dear Chairs Kim & Elefante, Vice Chairs Kidani & Lamosao, and members of the committees,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association believes that educational workers play a critical role in keeping our schools safe and supportive for children. When educators and staff face harassment or threats without clear protections or consistent response procedures, it affects not only employees but also students and school communities. As such, we ask that you **support H.B. 1888, HD3**.

The HSTA has been speaking on this topic for many years and applauds the efforts this session to examine how we can protect our teachers and staff at schools around the state. We appreciate the advocates who have worked on HB 1888's bill language for many years and find it important to mention that this piece of legislation creates clarity and accountability when harassment occurs and requires the Department of Education to act.

Since the pandemic, we've seen attacks on educational workers rise. According to a July 2024 article in Education Week, "57% of teachers now report that they are considering quitting or transferring specifically due to concerns about school climate and safety." Additionally, a Business Insider article from August 2025 shared that "26% of teachers reported experiencing physical violence from parents since the return to in-person school."

A school that is unsafe for a teacher or educational worker is, by definition, an unstable environment for a student. Protecting the worker is a prerequisite for protecting the learner. The Hawai'i State Teachers Association asks your committee to support H.B. 1888, HD3.

Mahalo.



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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

The Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawaii
The Senate
Committee on Education
Committee on Labor and Technology

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

March 23, 2026

H.B. 1888, H.D. 3 — RELATING TO THE SAFETY OF
EDUCATIONAL WORKERS

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the intent of H.B. 1888, H.D. 3, which requires the Department of Education and public charter schools to take certain steps to report incidents of harassment and implement procedures for handling harassment of educational workers.

For several years now, the HGEA has expressed concern to the DOE about the escalation of violence against employees. We have demanded that both the DOE and Attorney General do more to protect and support employees instead of seeking first to avoid liability. Earlier this school year, a school administrator was brutally assaulted at an Oahu public high school. After the assault, we demanded in a letter to the Superintendent to know what steps the DOE intends to take to prevent such instances from occurring again in the future.

We support the intent of this bill as it also seeks to achieve what we have been demanding from the DOE. Educational workers should feel assured that their employer is committed to taking prompt and effective action against harassing conduct and those who engage in harassing behavior should be held accountable.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 1888, H.D. 3.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council
1010 Richards Street Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 586-8126 Fax: (808) 586-8129
email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov

March 23, 2026

**Special Education
Advisory Council**

Ms. Martha Guinan, *Chair*
Ms. Susan Wood, *Vice Chair*

Ms. Dominique Anders
Ms. Kathie Awaya
Ms. Virginia Beringer
Mr. Will Carlson
Ms. Annette Cooper
Mr. Mark Disher
Ms. Nancy Gorman
Dr. Natalie Haggerty
Ms. Stacy Haitsuka
Ms. Mai Hall
Ms. Melissa Johnson
Ms. Tina King
Ms. Dale Matsuura
Ms. Cheryl Matthews
Ms. Jessica McCullum
Ms. Siena Molina
Ms. Trish Moniz
Ms. Cherine Pai
Mr. Chris Pelayo
Ms. Kiele Pennington
Ms. Kau'i Rezentos
Ms. Rosie Rowe
Dr. Scott Shimabukuro
Mr. Herbert Taitingfong
Mr. Steven Vannatta
Ms. Lisa Vegas
Ms. Jasmine Williams

Ms. Helen Kaniho, *liaison to
the Superintendent*
Ms. Wendy Nakasone-Kalani,
*liaison to the military
community*

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff
Susan Rocco, Staff

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Committee on Education
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chair
Committee on Labor and Technology
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HB 1888, HD 3 - RELATING TO THE SAFETY OF
EDUCATIONAL WORKERS

Dear Chairs Kim and Elefante and Members of the Committees:

The Special Education Advisory Council, Hawaii's State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), **opposes** the amendments to the original language of HB 1888 that 1) include the disruption or interference with the administration or functions of any school, school administration office, or school board in the offense of harassment, and 2) elevates the penalty for harassment to a misdemeanor when the recipient is an educational worker.

"Disrupts or interferes with the administration or functions of any school, school administration office, or school board" is not defined and subject to interpretation. While no one disputes that school personnel should be protected from assault or anyone making harassing threats to their personal safety or that of their families, SEAC does not believe disruptions to school or Board business rises to the level of a misdemeanor. Further, without clear definitions, adding this language to the current harassment statute could lead to misinterpretation or misuse of power. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) clearly prohibits schools from retaliating against parents of children with disabilities for advocating for their child's rights under IDEA. This includes any attempts to intimidate or discourage parents from participating in the process.

Existing harassment law provides a better vehicle for addressing harassment to educational workers. SEAC believes HB1888, HD3 is neither enforceable with the language cited above, nor is it necessary. Hawaii's existing harassment statute, HRS §711-1106, has clear definitions and ample case law to provide protection to victims of harassment while at the same time preserving the rights of citizens to



engage in political expression.

The proposed classification of harassment of an educational worker law as a misdemeanor would impose significantly harsher penalties than the existing harassment law. In Hawaii, misdemeanors are punishable by up to 364 days in jail and a fine of up to \$2,000. Current harassment law, by contrast, is classified as a petty misdemeanor, punishable by up to 30 days in jail and a fine of up to \$1,000. Even if a parent is ultimately cleared of the charge of committing harassment of an educational worker, he or she would have been significantly harmed financially and emotionally by being arrested, having to find legal counsel and child care for their children, etc.

SEAC is concerned that HB1888, HD3 as currently written will negatively impact parent/school partnerships and potentially harm students with disabilities. SEAC is made up of a majority of parents of children with disabilities and individuals with disabilities. Many parents of children with disabilities, including a number of our SEAC members, are worried due to the vague language in HB1888, HD 3 that they could be punished with a serious fine or jail time, if they exercise their legal right to advocate on behalf of their child with a disability. It has long been documented throughout the nation that special education parents in particular fear retaliation, if they speak up. This bill adds a chilling reminder of that threat and may silence many families from advocating for the individualized services and supports that their child needs to succeed.

Published data other than anecdotal reports has not been provided to the public to justify serious legal action against parents who disrupt or interfere with school business. SEAC believes the number of special education parents whose actions could be construed as interfering or disrupting school functions to be very small. We recommend that your Committee request data from the Department regarding the number of cases of this form of harassment, the types of actions, the responses to the actions, whether police reports or complaints were made, etc., so that you can analyze the extent of the need for an amendment to existing law as well as appropriate solutions.

For all the reasons stated above, SEAC urges your committee to seriously consider the negative impact that adding these amendments to this bill can have on families of students with disabilities. Hasty legislation without a foundation of well-analyzed data and clear definitions does not ensure either protection or justice.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns.

Respectfully,

Martha Guinan
Chair



March 22, 2026

Position: **SUPPORT** of **HB1888 HD3**, Relating to the Safety of Educational Workers

To: Senators Donna Mercado Kim and Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chairs
Senators Michelle N. Kidani and Rachele Lamosao, Vice Chairs
Members of the Senate Committees on Education, and Labor and Technology

From: Llasmin Chaine, LSW, Executive Director, Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women

Re: Testimony in **SUPPORT** of **HB1888 HD3**, Relating to the Safety of Educational Workers

Hearing: Monday, March 23, 2026, 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 229, State Capitol

The Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women is committed to advancing the safety and health of girls and women. The Commission **supports HB1888 HD3** because it **addresses the persistent issue of harassment against educational workers**, which disproportionately impacts women and can contribute to hostile work environments that undermine safety and well-being, **and strengthens protections and reporting procedures** for educational workers facing harassment in our schools.

By requiring the Department of Education and public charter schools to establish clear procedures for reporting and addressing harassment, this **bill takes meaningful steps toward ensuring** that educational workers have access to **safe and supportive workplaces**, fostering accountability and transparency. The inclusion of disruption or interference with school functions in the definition of harassment recognizes the broad range of behaviors that can create unsafe conditions, and the elevation of penalties for harassment against educational workers reflects the seriousness of these offenses. These measures align with best practices for workplace safety and affirm the State's commitment to protecting those who serve in our schools.

The Commission respectfully recommends that the Department of Education and public charter schools engage in regular consultation with stakeholders, including frontline educational workers, to ensure that policies are responsive to real-world conditions.

The Commission respectfully **urges this Committee to pass HB1888 HD3**, strengthening safety for educational workers. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.



UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS

AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO

**THE SENATE
KA 'AHA KENEKOA
THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2026**

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND TECHNOLOGY
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chair
Senator Rachele Lamosao, Vice Chair

Monday, March 23, 2026, 1:00 PM
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

Re: Testimony on HB1888, HD3 – RELATING TO EDUCATIONAL WORKERS

Chairs Kim and Elefante, Vice Chairs Kidani and Lamosao, and Members of the Committee:

The United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO (“UPW”) is the exclusive bargaining representative for approximately 14,000 public employees, which includes blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 1 and institutional, health, and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and various counties.

UPW **strongly supports** HB1888, HD3, which requires the Department of Education (“DOE”) and public charter schools to take certain steps to report incidents of harassment and implement procedures for handling harassment of educational workers. This measure also elevates the penalty for harassment to a misdemeanor when the recipient is an educational worker.

We strongly believe that educational workers should feel assured that the DOE and public charter schools are committed to taking effective action against harassment in order to protect the rights and dignity of the hard-working public employees who are tasked with maintaining a positive learning environment for Hawaii’s students.

Given recent events and the apparent rise in incidents of harassment targeting educational workers, it seems evident, unfortunately, that legislation like this is necessary.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

HEADQUARTERS

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HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 3:18:20 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Elento	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha,

I **OPPOSE** HB1888 HD2.

Refer to the testimony **in opposition** to **HB1888 HD1** provided by the Special Education Advisory Council and individual, K. Wong, Ph.D., and testimony **in opposition** of **HB1888 HD2** by N. Grossman, Hawaii Parent Special Education Advisory Council (HIP SEAC).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in opposition to HB1888 HD3**.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 11:53:03 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Analee Rodriguez	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Analee Rodriguez, and I am the parent of Gavriel Rodriguez, a student at Keone‘ula Elementary School. I am submitting this statement to formally document an incident that occurred on November 12, 2025, as well as my ongoing concerns regarding my son’s safety and care at school.

On November 12, 2025, during pick-up, I found my son lying on the floor crying. At first, I believed he might be having a difficult day. However, as I approached him, I observed that he was holding his ear, which was actively bleeding. He appeared frightened and in distress.

I immediately asked the educational assistants (EAs) present what had happened. I was initially told that my son had “tripped.” When I asked for clarification, I was informed that he had gone somewhere on his own and fallen. At that time, an EA attempted to apply a bandage; however, the wound was severe and could not be properly covered. My son had sustained a visible laceration to his ear. I was not notified by the school about this injury prior to my arrival.

Due to the seriousness of the injury, I immediately brought my son to the emergency room. I also documented his condition with photographs, as his teacher was not present at the time of the incident. At the hospital, medical staff determined that his ear had sustained a laceration involving a torn ligament. Because my son has autism and is non-verbal, he required sedation in order to safely receive treatment. The medical team initially considered stitches; however, they ultimately used medical adhesive to close the wound. His recovery took approximately one month.

On the same day, November 12, 2025, I emailed his teacher requesting a detailed explanation of the incident. I did not receive a response until approximately 72 hours later. In that response, I was informed that, according to the teacher assistant, my son had been pushed. This push caused him to lose his balance, resulting in his head and ear striking a metal locker inside the classroom. This information was extremely concerning and directly contradicted the initial explanation provided to me at pick-up.

Following this incident, I submitted complaints to the school, the district, and a state senator. Despite these efforts, I have not received an appropriate resolution or accountability.

Since then, I have continued to observe concerning patterns regarding my son's care. He has come home with bruises, scratches, and bumps on his head without clear explanations. I have been told that he was taken to the health room; however, I have not received consistent or detailed incident reports. On multiple occasions, I have picked him up while he was visibly distressed and crying. There are also times when he shows reluctance to attend school.

My son is non-verbal and unable to communicate what happens to him during the school day. Additionally, many of his classmates are also non-verbal, which increases the need for proper supervision, transparency, and documentation.

I have also observed serious safety concerns, including an instance where my son eloped without shoes and sustained splinters in his feet. He repeatedly said "it's hot," which I believe was his way of expressing pain. This incident was not communicated to me by the school, and I had to address the injury myself.

I have requested additional support, including a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA), to better understand and support my son's needs; however, this request has been denied. I have also experienced difficulty obtaining clear communication from staff, as my concerns are often not addressed directly.

As a parent, it is deeply concerning and frustrating to feel that I must continuously identify and report issues that should have been properly documented and communicated by the school. My primary goal is to ensure my son's safety, well-being, and access to appropriate support in his educational environment.

I respectfully submit this testimony to document the incident and the ongoing concerns regarding my son's safety and care.

Sincerely,

Analee Rodriguez

analeegrodriguez@icloud.com

8082945004

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 12:50:59 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Inger Stonehill	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Chair Kim, Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committees:

Educational workers are on the front lines of keeping our schools safe, stable, and supportive for our children. When educators and staff experience harassment or threats without clear protections or consistent responses, it doesn't just affect them—it directly impacts the safety and well-being of the students and communities they serve.

HB1888 is urgently needed because it brings clarity, accountability, and consistency to how harassment is addressed. Without clear procedures for investigation, documentation, and response, too many serious concerns are minimized or handled informally, allowing problems to persist or escalate. Our educators deserve better, and so do our students.

The emotional toll of working in an environment where harassment is not adequately addressed is significant. Educational workers are experiencing stress, fear, and burnout at a time when they are needed most. When those who care for and guide our children feel unsafe or unsupported, the entire school community suffers. Simply put, when educators cannot thrive, our students cannot thrive.

We cannot afford to delay action on this issue. I respectfully urge you to support HB1888 and take a meaningful step toward ensuring safer, healthier environments for both educational workers and the children they serve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 3:51:25 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lindsay Chambers	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Chair Kim, Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committees:

When workers are harassed or threatened because of their job, their employer has an obligation to step in and address it. At the Department of Education (DOE), that response is inconsistent and, in some cases, does not happen at all. A safe workplace should not depend on which supervisor an educational worker reports to or that individual’s level of commitment to safety.

Since 2012, Department of Human Resources Development policy 800.002 has clearly prohibited workplace violence, including harassment, threats, intimidation, and disruptive conduct by members of the public. More than a decade later, educational workers are still waiting to see that standard applied in a consistent and meaningful way at the DOE.

That is the gap HB1888 addresses by ensuring there is a clear and timely response when educational workers experience an unsafe work environment.

As the measure moved through the House this session, HB1895 was incorporated into later drafts, adding an elevated harassment component. I support that addition, but it is important to keep in mind that it was not the original focus of the bill. It should not overshadow the core issue we are trying to address.

Nothing in the current draft takes away a parent’s right to advocate for their child. It does not override federal law or limit due process, mediation, or participation in IEP meetings.

As a parent, I understand how important those rights are, and they must be balanced with clear boundaries. No educator should be threatened or harassed as part of their job, and no child should have to witness it. Teachers have reported these incidents happening in front of students and impacting the classroom environment. Educational worker safety is student safety.

When I experienced severe and ongoing harassment tied to my job, I was told by DOE and AG officials that tolerating that conduct was part of my duties. That was the guidance I received even with a court-issued injunction in place.

Once the injunction expired after three years, the individual resumed targeting me online, which amounts to continued stalking behavior. When another victim and advocate of this legislation

passed away last year, that same individual posted online suggesting that the person deserved it. Those posts were ultimately reported and removed after outreach to the platforms and news sites where they appeared.

While individuals are responsible for their own behavior, when this kind of conduct is allowed to continue for years without a structured response or consequences, the system is not working as it should to protect educational workers.

Employers, particularly government agencies, have a responsibility to respond to the growing number of incidents targeting public employees. This is reflected in this session's Judiciary package, which advances a more active role for employers, including the ability to seek temporary restraining orders on behalf of employees experiencing workplace harassment. The testimony submitted on those measures confirms that these incidents are increasing and widespread.

DOE officials recently shared that they are working on internal protocols to address harassment of employees by members of the public. I appreciate that progress. At the same time, those protocols are not yet in place, and for many years the Department's position was that this type of harassment was a "personal matter" for the employee, with the use of state resources to address it considered "unconstitutional."

Codifying minimum requirements ensures accountability and follow-through. I respectfully urge you to pass HB1888.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Chambers

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 11:50:24 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, w/comment to INCLUDE VOLUNTEERS and ER HIRE.

1888 HB RELATING TO THE SAFETY OF EDUCATIONAL WORKERS.

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1888 HD3

Relating to the Safety of Educational Workers

Date: March 20, 2026

To: Representative Mike Lee
Representative Nicole Lowen
Representative Lisa Marten
Representative Tyson Miyake
Representative Daynette Morikawa
Representative Ikaika Olds
Representative Mahina Martin
And All Sponsors of HB1888 HD3

From: R. Kana'iaupuni Gomes

Concerned Citizen of Hawaii
rkomes@gmail.com

RE: Strong Support for HB1888 HD3 with Recommendations for Strengthening

Introduction

Dear Representatives,

I am writing as a concerned citizen of Hawaii to express my strong support for **House Bill 1888 HD3, Relating to the Safety of Educational Workers**. This legislation addresses a critical and growing need in our educational system: protecting the teachers, administrators, staff, and volunteers who dedicate themselves to educating Hawaii's children.

The increasing incidents of harassment directed at educational workers represent not only a serious threat to these individuals but also to the stability and quality of education our children receive. A teacher who feels unsafe cannot effectively nurture young minds. An administrator dealing with persistent harassment cannot focus on educational excellence. A school staff member living in fear cannot provide the supportive environment our students need.

I commend you and your fellow sponsors for recognizing this urgent issue and taking comprehensive legislative action. The framework you have proposed demonstrates deep understanding of the multifaceted challenges facing our educators.

While I enthusiastically support the bill's intent and comprehensive approach, I respectfully offer *recommendations that I believe would strengthen the legislation* and ensure its successful implementation. These suggestions are offered in the spirit of constructive engagement to help make good legislation even better.

Summary of HB1888 HD3

House Bill 1888 HD3 creates a comprehensive protection framework for educational workers in Hawaii's Department of Education and public charter schools. The bill:

- **Establishes mandatory reporting and investigation procedures** for harassment incidents
- **Requires law enforcement notification** within 48 hours of reported harassment
- **Provides paid leave** for court proceedings related to harassment protection
- **Requires annual de-escalation training** for all educational workers
- **Mandates development of emergency safety plans** with worker input
- **Provides assistance** in obtaining temporary restraining orders, including reimbursement for service costs
- **Elevates criminal penalties** for harassment of educational workers from petty misdemeanor to misdemeanor
- **Adds a new criminal provision** prohibiting disruption of school functions
- **Allows non-attorneys to assist** with TRO document preparation without violating unauthorized practice of law statutes

This comprehensive approach addresses harassment through prevention, protection, support, and enhanced accountability—a framework that recognizes the complexity of the problem.

Why This Bill Matters

Educational workers are the foundation of our community's future. They teach our children, shape young minds, instill values, and prepare the next generation of Hawaii's leaders, workers, and citizens. When these professionals face harassment, threats, and intimidation, the entire educational system suffers.

Recent years have seen disturbing increases in:

- Verbal abuse and threats directed at teachers and administrators
- Physical intimidation at school board meetings
- Social media harassment campaigns
- Stalking and threatening behavior toward school staff
- Disruption of school operations by aggressive individuals

These behaviors create hostile work environments, contribute to teacher burnout and departure from the profession, and undermine the safe learning environments our children deserve.

HB1888 HD3 sends a clear message: Hawaii values its educational workers and will not tolerate harassment that threatens their safety and ability to serve our children.

Strengths of HB1888 HD3

1. Comprehensive Protection Framework

The bill creates an integrated system addressing harassment at multiple levels—reporting, investigation, criminal penalties, victim support, and prevention. This holistic approach recognizes that protecting educational workers requires more than just punishing bad actors; it requires institutional commitment, systemic change, and proactive measures.

2. Mandatory Reporting and Investigation

By requiring formal investigations of all reported harassment incidents and mandating law enforcement notification within 48 hours, the bill ensures accountability and creates documentation that prevents incidents from being minimized, ignored, or swept under the rug. This builds trust with educational workers who may have previously felt their concerns were dismissed.

3. Broad Definition of Educational Worker

The bill protects not only teachers and administrators but also specialists, counselors, employees, volunteers, and contractors. This comprehensive definition recognizes that harassment can target anyone in the educational environment and that all who serve our schools deserve protection.

4. Practical Support Mechanisms

The provisions for paid leave for court proceedings, assistance obtaining temporary restraining orders, and reimbursement for TRO service costs demonstrate practical understanding that workers need tangible support, not just policy statements. These provisions help workers navigate the legal system without facing financial hardship or professional jeopardy.

5. Prevention Through Training

Annual de-escalation training equips workers with skills to defuse potentially dangerous situations before they escalate into violence or severe harassment. This proactive approach can prevent incidents rather than merely responding to them after harm has occurred.

6. Emergency Safety Plans

Requiring written emergency safety plans with input from workers ensures practical, implementable protocols developed by those who understand workplace realities.

7. Enhanced Criminal Penalties

Elevating harassment of educational workers from a petty misdemeanor to a misdemeanor sends a clear message about the seriousness of these offenses and provides a stronger deterrent effect. This recognizes that harassment of public servants who serve our children warrants enhanced consequences.

8. Addresses Legal Barriers

By amending the unauthorized practice of law statute, the bill removes a significant barrier that prevented schools from helping workers prepare TRO documents, making legal protection more accessible.

9. Applies to Both DOE and Charter Schools

Ensuring consistent protections across Hawaii's entire educational landscape—both traditional public schools and charter schools—prevents gaps in protection and ensures equity.

10. Transparency Requirements

Mandating that procedures be posted online and distributed annually ensures accessibility, awareness, and accountability.

Areas for Improvement: Issues and Recommendations

While I strongly support HB1888 HD3, I have identified fifteen specific areas where the bill could be strengthened to ensure effective implementation, comprehensive protection, and successful outcomes. I present these recommendations respectfully and constructively.

Issue 1: Critical Effective Date Error (Section 8)

The Problem:

Section 8 states: "This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000."

Is this a typographical error that would render the bill inoperative for 974 years? Educational workers facing harassment cannot wait until the year 3000 for these protections. They need these protections now.

Recommendation:

Amend Section 8 to specify the correct effective date: "This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026" or "July 1, 2027" or another appropriate implementation date.

This correction is urgent and must be addressed before final passage.

Issue 2: Paid Leave Equity Concerns

The Problem:

Sections 2(b) and 3(b) state that paid leave for court proceedings "may be satisfied through the use of accrued sick leave, vacation leave, administrative leave, or any other paid leave authorized by the employer and shall not require the employer to provide additional paid leave beyond existing leave benefits."

This language creates significant inequality:

- Experienced workers with substantial accumulated leave balances receive full protection
- Newer employees who haven't accrued significant leave may face financial hardship
- Will workers who have exhausted leave for other legitimate reasons (illness, family emergencies) be unable to seek legal protection without losing income?

- Part-time workers may have minimal leave accruals

This could create a two-tiered system where protection depends on leave balance rather than need.

Recommendation:

Amend Sections 2(b) and 3(b) to ensure equitable access:

"An educational worker who seeks judicial protection from harassment, including obtaining a temporary restraining order, shall be entitled to up to [5] days of paid administrative leave specifically for attending court proceedings related to the protection, regardless of accrued leave balances. Additional time needed beyond [5] days may be satisfied through the use of accrued sick leave, vacation leave, or other paid leave authorized by the employer. For employees included in bargaining units pursuant to section 89-6, such leave shall be negotiated pursuant to section 89-9(a)."

This ensures all workers can access the legal system without financial penalty while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Issue 3: No Timeline for Investigations

The Problem:

While the bill requires formal investigations under Sections 2(c)(1) and 3(c)(1), it provides no timeline for their completion.

Without deadlines:

- Investigations could drag on indefinitely
- Workers remain in limbo, uncertain about their safety and status
- Alleged harassers face prolonged uncertainty
- The process loses credibility
- Workers may remain exposed to continued harassment during extended investigations

Recommendation:

Add subsection specifying investigation timelines:

"(c)(7) Complete all formal investigations initiated under subsection (c)(1) within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the initial report. Extensions may be granted for documented cause, but no investigation shall exceed sixty (60) calendar days without written approval from [designated authority] and notification to the affected educational worker explaining the reason for delay."

This ensures timely resolution while allowing flexibility for complex cases.

Issue 4: Lack of Anti-Retaliation Protections

The Problem:

The bill lacks explicit language prohibiting retaliation against workers who report harassment or participate in investigations.

Without anti-retaliation provisions:

- Workers may fear professional consequences for speaking up
- Subtle retaliation (negative evaluations, undesirable assignments, denial of opportunities) could occur
- The chilling effect discourages reporting, undermining the entire framework
- Workers who have already suffered harassment face additional vulnerability

Recommendation:

Add new subsection to Sections 2 and 3:

"(f) No educational worker shall be subjected to retaliation, adverse employment action, or any form of reprisal for:

- (1) Reporting harassment under this section
- (2) Participating in investigations as a witness or complainant
- (3) Seeking legal protection including temporary restraining orders
- (4) Assisting other educational workers in reporting or seeking protection from harassment

Violations of this prohibition shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action against the retaliating party and, if the retaliating party is an employee of the department or charter school, may result in termination."

This creates clear consequences and protects workers who come forward.

Issue 5: No Alternative Reporting Mechanisms

The Problem:

The bill requires workers to report harassment to their "immediate supervisor" under Sections 2(a) and 3(a), but provides no alternative when:

- The immediate supervisor is the harasser
- The supervisor fails to act appropriately
- The supervisor is inadequately trained or biased
- The worker fears the supervisor will retaliate or not support them
- The supervisor has a conflict of interest

Recommendation:

Amend Sections 2(a) and 3(a) to include alternative reporting:

"(a) When any educational worker believes that the educational worker is being subjected to harassment, the educational worker may inform the educational worker's immediate supervisor, who shall take appropriate action using the procedures established pursuant to subsection (c). If the immediate supervisor is the alleged harasser, if the supervisor fails to take appropriate action, or if the educational worker is uncomfortable reporting to the immediate supervisor, the educational worker

may report directly to [Human Resources Director/Title IX Coordinator/Designated School Official] or through an anonymous reporting hotline established pursuant to subsection (c)(8)."

Add new requirement under subsections 2(c) and 3(c):

"(8) Establish and maintain a confidential reporting mechanism, including an anonymous reporting hotline and online reporting portal, available 24 hours per day, for educational workers to report harassment when reporting to immediate supervisors is not feasible or appropriate."

Add supervisor accountability:

"(9) Establish disciplinary consequences for supervisors who fail to take appropriate action within [48 hours] of receiving a harassment report, including mandatory retraining and potential disciplinary action up to termination for repeated failures."

Issue 6: Discretion During Investigations May Leave Workers Vulnerable

The Problem:

Sections 2(d) and 3(d) state that the department or charter school "**may** require an educational worker to work or perform tasks pending a formal investigation."

The permissive "may" provides discretion but:

- Lacks guidance about when workers should be placed on administrative leave during investigations
- Could leave workers exposed to continued harassment while investigations proceed
- Creates inconsistent application across different situations
- Doesn't address safety concerns when continued contact with alleged harasser poses risks

Recommendation:

Amend Sections 2(d) and 3(d) to provide clearer guidance:

"(d) The department/charter school may require an educational worker to continue working or performing tasks pending a formal investigation initiated pursuant to subsection (c), provided that:

- (1) The department/charter school shall place an educational worker on paid administrative leave during investigation when:
 - (A) The worker's safety may be compromised by continued contact with the alleged harasser
 - (B) The alleged harassment involved threats of violence or physical contact
 - (C) The worker requests such leave and provides reasonable justification
- (2) When administrative leave is not granted, the department/charter school shall take reasonable measures to minimize contact between the educational worker and alleged harasser during the investigation
- (3) The department/charter school shall document the rationale for decisions regarding work status during investigations."

This protects workers while maintaining operational flexibility.

Issue 7: Limited Scope of Harassment Definition

The Problem:

The definition of harassment in Sections 2(e) and 3(e) requires that harassment be "based on the educational worker's position as an educational worker."

This limitation could:

- Exclude harassment targeting workers for race, gender, age, religion, disability, or other protected characteristics
- Create confusion about which law applies when harassment has multiple motivations
- Leave gaps in protection when harassment is motivated by characteristics other than employment status
- Result in some workers falling through the cracks

Recommendation:

Add clarifying language to Sections 2(e) and 3(e):

"Harassment has the same meaning as provided in section 711-1106. For purposes of this section, harassment is covered when it:

- (1) Is based on the educational worker's position as an educational worker; or
- (2) Occurs in the educational workplace or in connection with the educational worker's professional duties, regardless of the alleged harasser's stated motivation.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or replace protections available under other state or federal anti-discrimination or anti-harassment laws. The protections of this section are in addition to, and not in lieu of, any other legal protections available to educational workers."

This broadens protection while clarifying relationship to other laws.

Issue 8: Emergency Safety Plan Lacks Specificity

The Problem:

Sections 2(c)(4) and 3(c)(4) require development of "written emergency safety plan for aiding educational workers who experience potentially harmful situations," but provide minimal guidance on required content.

Without specificity:

- Plans may be inadequate or inconsistent across schools
- Critical components may be omitted
- Plans may be superficial "check-the-box" compliance documents

- Workers may not know what protections actually exist

Recommendation:

Amend Sections 2(c)(4) and 3(c)(4) to specify minimum components:

"(4) Develop a comprehensive written emergency safety plan for aiding educational workers who experience potentially harmful situations, including situations involving harassment, in their work areas. The plan shall include, at minimum:

- (A) Immediate response procedures for workers facing threats or dangerous situations
- (B) Evacuation protocols and safe room locations
- (C) Emergency communication systems (panic buttons, code words, emergency numbers)
- (D) Protocols for obtaining immediate law enforcement assistance
- (E) Procedures for securing school premises when threats are reported
- (F) Communication plans for alerting other staff of potential dangers while maintaining appropriate confidentiality
- (G) Procedures for workers to request and receive security escorts
- (H) After-hours safety protocols for workers required to be on campus outside normal school hours
- (I) Annual review and update procedures

The department/charter school shall consider suggestions provided by educational workers in developing and updating the emergency safety plan and shall conduct annual training on plan implementation."

This ensures robust, practical safety planning.

Issue 9: No Funding or Resource Allocation

The Problem:

The bill creates significant new obligations:

- Formal investigations requiring trained investigators and administrative support
- Annual training programs for all educational workers
- TRO assistance and reimbursements
- Emergency safety plan development and implementation
- 48-hour law enforcement reporting and coordination
- New procedures, documentation, and oversight systems

Yet the bill contains **no appropriation or funding mechanism**.

Without adequate resources:

- DOE and charter schools may lack capacity to implement requirements
- Compliance may be inadequate or superficial

- An unfunded mandate could strain already tight educational budgets
- Small charter schools may face particular challenges

Recommendation:

Add new section:

"SECTION [X]. Appropriation for Implementation.

(a) There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$[amount] or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the Department of Education to implement the requirements of this Act, including but not limited to:

- (1) Hiring or contracting for qualified investigators
- (2) Developing and delivering annual training programs
- (3) Creating and maintaining reporting systems and hotlines
- (4) Providing TRO assistance and reimbursements
- (5) Developing model emergency safety plans and procedures
- (6) Providing technical assistance to charter schools

(b) There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$[amount] or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to be distributed to public charter schools on a per-school basis to support implementation of the requirements of this Act.

(c) The sums appropriated shall be expended by the Department of Education for the purposes of this Act.

(d) The Department of Education shall submit a report to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2027 detailing expenditures, implementation progress, and any additional resources needed for full compliance."

Alternative if appropriation is not included:

Add requirement for DOE to conduct fiscal impact analysis and submit to Legislature within 90 days of effective date, identifying resources needed and proposing funding sources.

Issue 10: Training Requirements Lack Detail

The Problem:

Sections 2(c)(6) and 3(c)(6) require "annual training for all educational workers on how to use de-escalation techniques and handle harassment from outside actors," but don't specify:

- Duration of training (15 minutes? 2 hours? Full day?)
- Trainer qualifications
- Curriculum content standards
- Methods for verifying completion
- Continuing education or refresher requirements
- Consequences for non-compliance

Without standards, training could be:

- Inconsistent in quality across schools
- Inadequate in duration or depth
- Led by unqualified instructors
- Poorly attended without accountability

Recommendation:

Amend Sections 2(c)(6) and 3(c)(6):

"(6) Implement annual training for all educational workers on how to use de-escalation techniques and handle harassment from outside actors. Training shall:

- (A) Be a minimum of [3] hours duration
- (B) Be conducted by qualified trainers with expertise in conflict de-escalation, harassment response, and workplace safety
- (C) Include evidence-based de-escalation techniques, recognition of warning signs of escalating behavior, personal safety strategies, proper documentation of incidents, and procedures for reporting and seeking assistance
- (D) Be mandatory for all educational workers, with completion tracked and documented
- (E) Include scenario-based practice and skill application
- (F) Be provided during work hours without requiring workers to use personal time

The department shall develop standardized training curriculum in consultation with law enforcement, mental health professionals, and educational worker representatives, and shall make training materials available to all charter schools."

This ensures meaningful, effective training.

Issue 11: TRO Assistance Scope Unclear

The Problem:

Sections 2(c)(5) and 3(c)(5) require schools to "assist educational workers who are subjected to harassment, including providing assistance in obtaining a temporary restraining order and reimbursing the educational worker for the costs incurred in serving a temporary restraining order."

The extent of "assistance" beyond document preparation (addressed in Section 4) and service cost reimbursement is undefined:

- Does assistance include explaining the TRO process to workers unfamiliar with legal procedures?
- Does it include helping workers gather evidence and documentation?
- Does it include accompanying workers to court?
- Does it include coordinating with law enforcement?
- Does it include providing time off for court appearances?

- What about enforcement assistance after a TRO is issued?

Recommendation:

Amend Sections 2(c)(5) and 3(c)(5) to clarify scope:

"(5) Assist educational workers who are subjected to harassment, including:

- (A) Providing information about the temporary restraining order process and requirements
- (B) Assisting with preparation and completion of required forms and documents as authorized by section 605-14
- (C) Helping workers gather and organize documentation and evidence
- (D) Coordinating with law enforcement for service of temporary restraining orders
- (E) Reimbursing the educational worker for costs incurred in serving a temporary restraining order related to the harassment, within [30] days of submission of receipts
- (F) When requested by the educational worker, providing a school representative to accompany the worker to court proceedings
- (G) Implementing workplace safety measures to enforce temporary restraining orders on school premises
- (H) Notifying relevant staff of restraining orders to ensure compliance and worker safety, while maintaining appropriate confidentiality

This section does not include payment of attorneys' fees or court filing costs."

This provides comprehensive, practical support.

Issue 12: New Criminal Provision is Vague and Potentially Overbroad

The Problem:

The new subsection 711-1106(1)(g) criminalizes conduct that "Disrupts or interferes with the administration or functions of any school, school administration office, or school board."

This language is:

- **Vague:** What constitutes "disruption" or "interference"?
- **Potentially overbroad:** Could it criminalize legitimate protest, parent advocacy, or protected speech?
- **Lacking mens rea:** No requirement of intent or knowledge
- **First Amendment concerns:** Could chill protected expression at school board meetings or peaceful protest

Consider these scenarios:

- Parents organizing to advocate for policy changes
- Community members protesting at school board meetings

- Students staging walkouts
- Teachers engaging in informational picketing
- Journalists investigating school administration

Recommendation:

Amend Section 5 to add specificity and safeguards to subsection 711-1106(1)(g):

"(g) Intentionally or recklessly disrupts or substantially interferes with the administration or functions of any school, school administration office, or school board by:

- (A) Creating a substantial and material disruption that prevents educational workers from performing their official duties; or
- (B) Using physical force, threats, or intimidation to prevent educational workers from carrying out their responsibilities; or
- (C) Refusing to leave school premises after being lawfully directed to do so and after being warned that continued presence constitutes criminal trespass

This subsection shall not apply to:

- (1) Constitutionally protected speech, assembly, or petition activities
- (2) Legitimate parent-teacher conferences or school meetings
- (3) Peaceful protest or demonstration that does not create substantial and material disruption
- (4) Labor organizing or collective bargaining activities protected by law
- (5) Journalistic activities
- (6) Student expression protected under state or federal law"

This narrows the provision to truly problematic conduct while protecting rights.

Issue 13: No Victim Support Services

The Problem:

While the bill provides procedural protections (investigations, reporting, TRO assistance), it doesn't address the psychological, emotional, and professional impact of harassment.

Educational workers who experience harassment may suffer:

- Trauma, anxiety, depression, PTSD
- Decreased job performance and confidence
- Burnout and desire to leave the profession
- Physical health effects from stress
- Difficulty returning to work after incidents

Without support services, workers may struggle to recover and continue their essential work with students.

Recommendation:

Add new subsection to Sections 2(c) and 3(c):

"(7) Provide access to support services for educational workers who experience harassment, including:

- (A) Confidential counseling through the employee assistance program or contracted mental health providers, with a minimum of [6] sessions available at no cost to the worker
- (B) Trauma-informed care and support from qualified professionals
- (C) Peer support programs connecting workers who have experienced harassment
- (D) Reasonable workplace accommodations during recovery, including temporary reassignment, modified duties, or adjusted schedules when requested by the worker or recommended by a healthcare provider
- (E) Return-to-work support planning to facilitate successful reintegration after leave or trauma
- (F) Information about available resources and support options provided at the time harassment is reported

The department/charter school shall ensure all support services maintain strict confidentiality and that use of support services does not negatively impact the worker's employment status, evaluations, or opportunities."

This addresses the human impact and supports recovery.

Issue 14: Volunteer Worker Implementation Challenges

The Problem:

Sections 2(e) and 3(e) include volunteers in the definition of "educational worker," providing important protection. However:

- Volunteers may not have regular contact with school administration
- They may not understand reporting procedures or know who their "immediate supervisor" is
- They may be occasional or seasonal volunteers unfamiliar with school systems
- Investigation procedures designed for employees may not map well to volunteer situations
- Volunteers may not have access to the same support systems as employees
- Tracking and training volunteers may create significant administrative burden

Recommendation:

Add new subsection to Sections 2 and 3:

"(g) For volunteers covered under subsection (e)(2):

- (1) The department/charter school shall designate a specific administrator or coordinator responsible for volunteer safety and harassment reporting
- (2) All volunteers shall receive written information about harassment reporting procedures, including contact information for the designated volunteer coordinator, at the time they begin volunteering

- (3) Volunteers may report harassment to the designated volunteer coordinator, any school administrator, or through the confidential reporting hotline established under subsection (c)(8)
- (4) The department/charter school shall conduct investigations of harassment reports from volunteers using the same procedures and timelines as for employee reports
- (5) Volunteers shall be offered access to the same support services available to employees under subsection (c)(7)
- (6) The department/charter school shall take reasonable measures to prevent further contact between the volunteer and alleged harasser during investigation
- (7) Training requirements under subsection (c)(6) shall be provided to regular volunteers who serve more than [20] hours per year; orientation on harassment reporting shall be provided to all volunteers"

This ensures volunteers receive practical protection.

Issue 15: Charter School Implementation Support Needed

The Problem:

Public charter schools vary dramatically in size, resources, and organizational capacity:

- Some charter schools have hundreds of staff; others have fewer than 20
- Administrative infrastructure varies widely
- Small schools may lack HR departments, legal counsel, or trained investigators
- Resources for training, investigation, and compliance differ substantially

Requiring all charter schools to independently implement these requirements could:

- Overwhelm small schools with limited capacity
- Result in inconsistent implementation and protection
- Divert limited resources from educational mission
- Create compliance challenges for schools lacking expertise

Recommendation:

Add new section:

"SECTION [X]. Department of Education Support for Charter Schools.

(a) The Department of Education shall establish a technical assistance and support program for public charter schools implementing the requirements of sections 302D-[new section], including:

- (1) Model policies, procedures, and emergency safety plans that charter schools may adopt or adapt
- (2) Training programs and materials that charter schools may use to fulfill training requirements
- (3) Guidance documents on conducting investigations and maintaining documentation
- (4) Template forms for harassment reporting, investigation documentation, and TRO assistance

- (5) Access to a shared investigator pool that charter schools may contract with to conduct formal investigations
- (6) Technical assistance hotline for charter school administrators with questions about implementation
- (7) Annual workshops on best practices and lessons learned

(b) Small charter schools with fewer than [50] total staff and volunteers may establish collaborative implementation agreements with other charter schools or with the Department of Education to share resources for investigations, training, and emergency planning, provided that each school maintains its own reporting procedures and worker protections.

(c) The Department of Education shall make all model documents, training materials, and guidance publicly available on its website."

This ensures all charter schools can successfully implement requirements regardless of size or resources.

Conclusion

House Bill 1888 HD3 represents a landmark step forward in protecting Hawaii's educational workers and, by extension, ensuring safe, stable environments for our children's education. The comprehensive framework you have proposed demonstrates profound understanding of the challenges facing our educators and commitment to meaningful solutions.

I urge you to consider the fifteen recommendations outlined above. These suggestions would:

- **Correct the critical effective date error** (Issue 1) so the bill can take effect as intended
- **Ensure equitable protection** for all workers regardless of leave accrual status (Issue 2)
- **Provide timely resolution** through investigation deadlines (Issue 3)
- **Protect workers** from retaliation for reporting (Issue 4)
- **Create safety nets** through alternative reporting mechanisms (Issue 5)
- **Keep workers safe** during investigations (Issue 6)
- **Broaden protection** to address all harassment in educational contexts (Issue 7)
- **Strengthen emergency planning** with specific safety plan requirements (Issue 8)
- **Ensure adequate resources** for implementation (Issue 9)
- **Mandate meaningful training** with clear standards (Issue 10)
- **Clarify support** available for obtaining TROs (Issue 11)
- **Protect constitutional rights** while addressing disruption (Issue 12)
- **Support worker recovery** through counseling and services (Issue 13)
- **Address volunteer needs** with tailored procedures (Issue 14)
- **Enable charter school success** through DOE technical assistance (Issue 15)

These improvements would transform already-strong legislation into truly comprehensive, implementable, and effective protection for Hawaii's educational workforce.

Why This Matters Personally

Our teachers, administrators, and educational staff deserve our full support and protection. They shape the minds and characters of Hawaii's future generations, often with limited resources and under challenging circumstances. They work long hours, invest their own money in classroom supplies, provide emotional support to struggling students, and go far beyond their job descriptions to ensure our children succeed.

When educational workers face harassment, threats, and intimidation, they cannot perform these essential functions effectively. When they feel unsafe, unsupported, or unprotected, many leave the profession entirely—taking years of experience and expertise with them. Hawaii already faces teacher shortages and retention challenges. We cannot afford to lose dedicated educators because we failed to protect them from harassment.

This bill recognizes the fundamental truth: when we protect educational workers, we protect our children's futures.

Closing Thoughts

I am grateful for your leadership on this crucial issue and for your willingness to address the safety and well-being of Hawaii's educational workforce. The time and effort you have invested in crafting this legislation demonstrates your commitment to our schools and our community.

I stand ready to support HB1888 HD3 and to advocate for its passage with the strengthening amendments recommended above. Should you wish to discuss any of these recommendations further, I would welcome the opportunity to engage in constructive dialogue.

Thank you for your service to Hawaii and for championing the safety and dignity of those who educate our children.

With sincere appreciation and respect,

R.Kana'iaupuni Gomes

rkgomes@gmail.com

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 4:20:55 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amanda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I don't agree with this

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 5:33:17 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephenie Blakemore	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

Harrassment is a serious workplace issue. Increasingly teachers and other education professionals are attacked and professionally bullied from outside and within the HIDEOE. Until the HIDEOE addresses its own shortcomings regarding harrassment of teachers and others by those within the HIDEOE there should be no bill pased that singles out parents. Individual schools have repeatedly targeted teachers and there is no action taken to examine these cases, relying instead on fear and intimidation tactics to silence those who advocate for students, especially in Special Education. The HIDEOE remains unwilling to listen to parents and teachers who seek better school practices when needed. Look into what has been occurring. Schools and individuals can already invoke restraining orders as protection in the rare extreme cases. Again, clean up HIDEOE practices first.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 6:24:37 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am testifying in strong support of HB1888, which takes essential steps to protect educational workers from harassment and provides clear procedures for reporting and response. Our teachers, administrators, and school staff shape Hawai‘i's future every day. They deserve to do so in safety and without fear.

The Problem

Educational workers increasingly face harassment from students, parents, and community members—behavior that disrupts schools, demoralizes staff, and drives experienced educators from the profession. While existing law addresses discrimination and harassment against students, protections for workers facing harassment specifically because of their role as educational workers remain insufficient.

When workers fear harassment, they leave. Hawai‘i already faces educator shortages that harm student outcomes. Clear procedures, robust investigation, and meaningful penalties signal that we value the people who educate our children. Workers should not have to accept harassment as part of the job.

HB1888 is reasonable, targeted, and overdue. I urge its passage.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 12:16:10 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
pamela anderson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill HB1888 HD3. This is not a fair and just bill for the caregivers of an Autism child, young adult. I respectfully ask you to note no.

mahalo'

p anderson

(808) 351--7281

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 3:42:11 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taren Taguchi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Kim, Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committees:

Educational workers play a critical role in keeping our schools safe for children. When educators and staff face harassment or threats without clear protections or consistent response procedures, it affects not only employees but also students and school communities.

HB1888 is important because it creates clarity and accountability when harassment occurs. By establishing clear expectations for investigation, documentation, and response, the bill helps ensure that concerns are taken seriously and addressed consistently rather than handled informally or in isolation. This structure helps prevent situations from escalating and promotes safer, more stable school environments.

The lack of meaningful support when harassment occurs also takes a serious toll on the mental health and well-being of educational workers. When educators are fearful or burned out due to unresolved safety concerns, they cannot fully thrive in their roles. When educational workers are unable to thrive, neither will our students.

I respectfully ask for your support of HB1888 to help ensure safer schools for both educational workers and the children they serve.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 4:20:31 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Co Le Vavul	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Educational workers play a critical role in keeping our schools safe for children. When educators and staff face harassment or threats without clear protections or consistent response procedures, it affects not only employees but also students and school communities.

HB1888 is important because it creates clarity and accountability when harassment occurs. By establishing clear expectations for investigation, documentation, and response, the bill helps ensure that concerns are taken seriously and addressed consistently rather than handled informally or in isolation. This structure helps prevent situations from escalating and promotes safer, more stable school environments.

The lack of meaningful support when harassment occurs also takes a serious toll on the mental health and well-being of educational workers. When educators are fearful or burned out due to unresolved safety concerns, they cannot fully thrive in their roles. When educational workers are unable to thrive, neither will our students.

I respectfully ask for your support of HB1888 to help ensure safer schools for both educational workers and the children they serve.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 11:55:13 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara Taitano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Kim, Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committees:

Educational workers play a critical role in keeping our schools safe for children. When educators and staff face harassment or threats without clear protections or consistent response procedures, it affects not only employees but also students and school communities.

HB1888 is important because it creates clarity and accountability when harassment occurs. By establishing clear expectations for investigation, documentation, and response, the bill helps ensure that concerns are taken seriously and addressed consistently rather than handled informally or in isolation. This structure helps prevent situations from escalating and promotes safer, more stable school environments.

The lack of meaningful support when harassment occurs also takes a serious toll on the mental health and well-being of educational workers. When educators are fearful or burned out due to unresolved safety concerns, they cannot fully thrive in their roles. When educational workers are unable to thrive, neither will our students.

I respectfully ask for your support of HB1888 to help ensure safer schools for both educational workers and the children they serve.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 7:31:34 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leigh Wong-Miyasato	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The proposed changes to the harassment statute are unconstitutional and unnecessary, and will be harmful to school children in Hawaii.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 8:20:26 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
NOELLE TAVARES-SUMIYE	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Kim, Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committees:

Educational workers play a critical role in keeping our schools safe for children. When educators and staff face harassment or threats without clear protections or consistent response procedures, it affects not only employees but also students and school communities.

HB1888 is important because it creates clarity and accountability when harassment occurs. By establishing clear expectations for investigation, documentation, and response, the bill helps ensure that concerns are taken seriously and addressed consistently rather than handled informally or in isolation. This structure helps prevent situations from escalating and promotes safer, more stable school environments.

The lack of meaningful support when harassment occurs also takes a serious toll on the mental health and well-being of educational workers. When educators are fearful or burned out due to unresolved safety concerns, they cannot fully thrive in their roles. When educational workers are unable to thrive, neither will our students.

I respectfully ask for your support of HB1888 to help ensure safer schools for both educational workers and the children they serve.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 9:30:33 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrea Oka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Kim, Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committees:

Educational workers play a critical role in keeping our schools safe for children. When educators and staff face harassment or threats without clear protections or consistent response procedures, it affects not only employees but also students and school communities.

HB1888 is important because it creates clarity and accountability when harassment occurs. By establishing clear expectations for investigation, documentation, and response, the bill helps ensure that concerns are taken seriously and addressed consistently rather than handled informally or in isolation. This structure helps prevent situations from escalating and promotes safer, more stable school environments.

The lack of meaningful support when harassment occurs also takes a serious toll on the mental health and well-being of educational workers. When educators are fearful or burned out due to unresolved safety concerns, they cannot fully thrive in their roles. When educational workers are unable to thrive, neither will our students.

I respectfully ask for your support of HB1888 to help ensure safer schools for both educational workers and the children they serve.

Sincerely,
Andrea Oka

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 10:46:46 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kera Wong-Miyasato	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The proposed changes to the harassment statute are unconstitutional and unnecessary, and will be harmful to school children in Hawai'i.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 1:00:43 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kalma Wong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 22, 2026

Re: HB1888 HD3

Aloha Chair Kim, Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the Senate Committees on Education and Labor and Technology,

I strongly **OPPOSE** HB1888 HD3. The passage of this bill will unnecessarily modify the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) §711-1106 to include a subsection that states, “Disrupts or interferes with the administration or functions of any school, school administration office, or school board.” It also elevates harassment from a petty misdemeanor to a full misdemeanor when the complainant is an “educational worker.” This will create a special class of people that puts the bill’s definition of “educational worker” above all others in the state. This bill will also place harassment (when the recipient is an “educational worker”) in the same classification as other full misdemeanors, such as third-degree negligent homicide, fourth-degree sexual assault, fourth-degree arson, and third-degree assault.

According to the State of Hawaii Office of the Public Defender’s (OPD) testimony for HB1895, the bill from which the language for HB1888 HD3 was taken, these proposed changes to the harassment statute are **unconstitutional**, as it violates both the U.S. and state constitutions. Specifically, it violates the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and article I, section 4 of the Hawaii Constitution. In OPD’s testimony for HB1651 HD1 in 2024, which was also a bill that had the same language as HB1888 HD3, the OPD stated that, "educational workers are already protected from such illegal conduct under current statutes for harassment, assault, and terroristic threatening." The OPD’s past testimony also stated that elevating one group over another (in this case, "educational workers") has no impact on public safety and is not a measurable deterrent.

The current version of the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) §711-1106 states that, “a person commits the offense of harassment if, with intent to harass, annoy, or alarm any other person, that person...repeatedly makes telephone calls, facsimile transmissions, or any form of electronic communication...including electronic mail transmissions, without purpose of legitimate communication...”

Who exactly will have the power to determine if the purpose of the communication is legitimate? Parents of children with special needs must communicate with the school and staff regularly and oftentimes must make repeated phone calls and emails in order to ensure that their children receive an appropriate education. The subjective nature of this statute will put parents at risk of being prosecuted for advocating for their children and perhaps be subject to \$2000 in fines and a year in jail. Essentially, a parent may be threatened with a year in jail for annoying an “educational worker” with excessive emails. Whether or not the charges go through is beside the point. The mere threat of criminal prosecution will be enough to make parents hesitant to openly communicate with schools or with the Board of Education.

In addition to parents of special needs children, other parents will be adversely affected by this bill. Parents of children who are bullied, for instance, also must communicate their concerns with the schools openly and repeatedly. In fact, parents or community members who wish to communicate any concerns they may have with the schools or school board will be at risk. Even those participating in a constitutionally protected peaceful protest will be subject to criminal prosecution.

The result of this threat will be the suppression of advocacy by parents and will quash legitimate complaints and will, in the end, harm all schoolchildren.

Please OPPOSE HB1888 HD3.

Sincerely,

Kalma K. Wong, Ph.D.

March 22, 2026

Chair Kim, Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committees:

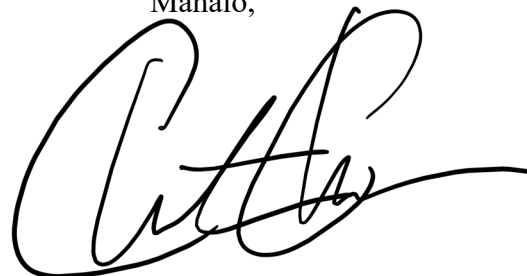
I am writing to express my strong support for HB1888. The current draft of this bill is the result of several years of work by numerous Department of Education employees (and former employees) who have faced threats and harassment as a direct result of their work. They have been ringing the alarm about escalating safety threats and the need for specific requirements that protect educational workers. As we have all recently seen, their concerns were justified because there is shocking video footage of a physical attack against someone who was just doing her job.

In the past, the Department of Education refused to step in to help employees who were being threatened and harassed. Instead, the Department took the position that it was not allowed to commit its resources to help its employees secure Temporary Restraining Orders or pursue other actions required to protect themselves. As a result, talented educators left the profession, moved away, or found work in the private sector. The Department – and the students it serves – lost out on experienced and dedicated employees who wanted to make a difference.

HB1888 can fix this problem by making it clear the Legislature values the people who work for the State and expects the Department of Education to provide support to employees who are being threatened and harassed simply because they are doing their jobs. In addition, HB1888 ensures all employees are treated fairly because it establishes clear requirements for the Department. Those requirements do more than just protect the employees. They also ensure the Department's response is satisfactory and does not lead to potential claims against the State.

In a perfect world, HB1888 would not be necessary. Just like any other employer, the Department has legal and moral obligations to ensure its employees work in a safe environment that is free from threats, harassment, and violence. Unfortunately, history shows us that legislative action is necessary. Years have already passed without the Department implementing processes and procedures to protect educational workers who are being threatened and harassed. Much of that delay appears to be the result of confusion about whether the Department can provide supports to its employees. HB1888 eliminates any questions about whether the Department must protect its employees, and provides a clear framework for what actions are necessary. It is an important piece of protection for the thousands of individuals who are working to support the children of our State.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'C. A. B.', written in a cursive style.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 8:47:32 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alec Wong-Miyasato	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The proposed changes to the harassment statute are unconstitutional and unnecessary, and will be harmful to school children in Hawai'i.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 11:44:23 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ivana Crumpton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Kim, Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committees:

Educational workers are on the front lines of keeping our schools safe, stable, and supportive for our children. When educators and staff experience harassment or threats without clear protections or consistent responses, it doesn't just affect them—it directly impacts the safety and well-being of the students and communities they serve.

HB1888 is urgently needed because it brings clarity, accountability, and consistency to how harassment is addressed. Without clear procedures for investigation, documentation, and response, too many serious concerns are minimized or handled informally, allowing problems to persist or escalate. Our educators deserve better, and so do our students.

The emotional toll of working in an environment where harassment is not adequately addressed is significant. Educational workers are experiencing stress, fear, and burnout at a time when they are needed most. When those who care for and guide our children feel unsafe or unsupported, the entire school community suffers. Simply put, when educators cannot thrive, our students cannot thrive.

We cannot afford to delay action on this issue. I respectfully urge you to support HB1888 and take a meaningful step toward ensuring safer, healthier environments for both educational workers and the children they serve.m

Thank you for your time and consideration.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 12:28:05 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ross Isokane	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 1888 HD3.

Educational workers are increasingly exposed to harassment and threats, and this bill provides a clear, consistent framework for how the Department of Education responds, including investigation, reporting, and support for affected employees. It also ensures workers are not left to navigate legal protections, such as temporary restraining orders, on their own.

While there are concerns about impacts on parents, I believe those concerns are overstated. Reasonable advocacy should not fall under harassment, and due process protections remain in place. At the same time, we should not ignore situations where behavior crosses the line and educational workers are left without adequate support.

At a minimum, employers have a responsibility to protect their employees from harm encountered in the course of their work.

HB1888 HD3 moves us in that direction, and I support it.

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 12:34:51 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kamuela Soo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose

LATE

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 2:44:18 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Umeda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a mother of an autistic son. I have had to advocate for him when he was bullied by a bully and the bully's gang of boys in afterschool care when my son was in the 3rd grade. He was unable to tell me about this bullying, unable to articulate or explain due to his autism. The bullying lasted 6 months and the afterschool care staff either ignored or were oblivious to the bullying. The night before my son entered 4th grade, he was crying. I couldn't understand his fear. Turns out the bully was in his 4th grade class. During the first week, the bully was picking on my son's friend which triggered him. He remembered the months of bullying he had endured for 6 months and wanted to defend his friend. My son took a dull pencil and stabbed his tormentor between his eyes. Fortunately no skin was broken and the boy was not harmed. We were called in the principals office and that is when I learned about the 6 months of bullying. I defended my son, even though I said he wrong to stab the bully. I brought up that my son was not able to articulate about the bullying because of his autism. Had the school suspended him or kicked my son out, I would procured an attorney, and go after the school for their negligence with hiring clueless afterschool staff who did nothing to stop the bullying of my autistic son. I would end up criminally punished if this HB1888 bill was law back then. With this horrendous bill, you will criminally punish parents a full misdemeanor with disabled children who advocate for their child against school staff who might claim "harassment" to cover their ineptness or mishandling of their special needs child. And may I remind you of the abuse of autistic children at Kipapa Elementary school by school staffers back in 2013? This type of abuse would once again be allowed if HB1888 HD 3 were to pass because educators could claim "harassment" and parents charged with a full misdemeanor. Whoever wrote this bill obviously doesn't have a special needs child in their family and is allegedly an advocate to get abusive educators out trouble when they mistreat autistic or special needs kids, who cannot understand or articulate why they are being abused by those in their care. And if this bill passes, I will personally contact an ADA attorney to go after the Hawaii State legislature in the courts, if one doesn't already challenge this unconstitutional bill. Thank you for your time.

LATE

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 7:10:28 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jill White	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I oppose this because it is really hard already to advocate for your child as just one parent at a table full of "team" members. Parents need open channels to work with the school and do what is in their child's best interest.

Mahalo for your time and attention.

PS I think cameras in the classrooms/campus would better suit the objective this bill is trying to create.

LATE

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 8:12:01 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nathan roldan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly **Oppose** this bill.

As a parent of a special needs child. I routinely communicate with school officials to advocate for my child. Sometimes having to make several calls and emails. With this bill i could be charged with a crime by simply seeking answers for things that happen with my child. This will be a civil rights violation, if this bill goes through.

Please don't take parents' rights away by taking our ability to voice our opinions.

Please vote no on this bill.

LATE

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 8:59:46 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Don King	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please reject this bill. It will put parents at an unfair disadvantage in any negotiations with DOE employees. Harassment is already a violation of the law, this weaponizes any harassment or perceived harassment, enabling the accusation to be used by DOE as a tool to silence parents who disagree with any of their decisions regarding the education of their children. Lawmakers should be looking for ways to empower parents, who are the greatest advocates for their children. This law would do the opposite. Please reject this bill

LATE

HB-1888-HD-3

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 9:35:17 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julianne King	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill and urge you to reject it.

Bill 1888 would increase penalties for harrassment of DOE personnel. No one supports harassment, but there are already laws against it. This will would increase the penalites for harassment of DOE employees. Unfortunately I am concerned that accusations of harassment, or the threat of making those accusations, with the increased penalties attached, could be used as a tool to silence parents. The system already puts parents at a disadvantage when negotiating with the DOE over any disagreements in their childs program. Please reject this bill.