



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

Date: 03/19/2026

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: EDN

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB2024, SD2, RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES.

Purpose of Bill: Authorizes the School Facilities Authority to use public-private partnerships for the development of public school facilities, including facilities at public charter schools. Requires the School Facilities Authority to establish a pilot program to develop three new public schools in areas based on demonstrated need through public-private partnerships. Requires reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD2)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments and concerns regarding SB 2024, SD 2, which authorizes the Hawaii School Facilities Authority (SFA) to pursue a pilot program to develop three new schools through public-private partnerships (PPP).

The Department recognizes the Legislature's interest in identifying innovative, cost-efficient delivery of school facilities and acknowledges the potential value of PPP models when appropriately structured and applied in the right educational context.

In Hawaii, conversion charter schools are former Department of Education public schools that must continue to serve their original geographic area. The Department retains ownership and control of all lands and facilities for conversion charter schools. Start-up charter schools, by contrast, are newly established and operate independently of the Department. They are not tied to the Department attendance boundaries or programming, and their facilities are not on Department-owned or controlled land.

Based on this distinction, the Department acknowledges that the PPP structure in SB 2024, SD 2, may be more appropriate for start-up charter schools. Start-up charters operate with greater autonomy and operational flexibility, are not bound to the Department's educational programming structures, and frequently rely on private or non-Department Lands.

The Department also notes the continuing evolution of the SFA's authority and responsibilities. As its portfolio expands to include pilot housing initiatives and

potential PPP projects, it is essential to clearly define its authority and responsibilities to avoid duplication of effort and administrative inefficiencies. Ensuring SFA's authority and responsibilities are well-defined will improve coordination and reduce the risk of disruption to Department operations.

For these reasons, the Department strongly requests that Section 3 be amended to expressly prohibit the development of any PPP project on Department-owned or controlled land, whether currently held, actively used, or reserved for future facilities needs. This restriction broadly applies to any parcel owned, managed, operated, or encumbered by the Department, including properties under agreement, dedication, long-term planning designation, or other forms of commitment.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments for SB 2024, SD 2.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



RIKI FUJITANI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Hawai'i School Facilities Authority

2759 S. KING STREET, ROOM H201
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

House Committee on Education

March 19, 2026
2:00 PM

Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 309

Senate Bill 2024, Senate Draft 2, Relating to Charter School Facilities

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee,

The School Facilities Authority (SFA) **supports** Senate Bill 2024, Senate Draft 2, which would require the SFA to establish a pilot program to develop three new public schools in areas based on demonstrated need through public-private partnerships (P3s).

Hawai'i continues to face some of the highest public school construction costs in the nation. These escalating costs make it increasingly difficult to provide adequate educational facilities for students, particularly in communities experiencing enrollment growth and capacity constraints. At the same time, traditional school delivery timelines are often too slow to respond to urgent needs. Overcrowding, aging infrastructure, and rising costs require that the State explore new approaches that are both efficient and accountable.

Other jurisdictions have successfully used public-private partnerships to accelerate school delivery. For example, Prince George's County Public Schools in Maryland delivered six new public schools through a long-term P3 model that bundled design, construction, financing, and maintenance into a single performance-based agreement. While the district makes structured public payments over time, the approach provided faster delivery, predictable costs, and long-term accountability for facility upkeep. This illustrates the type of model Hawai'i can evaluate through this pilot program.

SB2024 SD2 provides a framework for testing alternative delivery methods through a limited pilot program. Specifically, the bill would require SFA to establish a program to

develop three new public schools located in different geographic areas based on demonstrated community need using P3s.

SFA supports piloting this approach because it allows the State to evaluate whether P3 models can deliver school facilities that are more cost-effective, delivered more quickly, and designed for long-term durability and quality. Importantly, P3s are not a substitute for public funding, but a tool that may allow the State to deliver facilities more efficiently while ensuring long-term upkeep, performance standards, and public oversight. In some cases, a P3 model may allow the State to deliver a school facility at a substantially lower cost than traditional procurement, potentially reducing the overall capital required for delivery.

SFA appreciates that the bill establishes clear requirements for transparency and accountability. The pilot program would be implemented through competitive requests for proposals evaluated on criteria that include:

- Cost savings to the State
- Community need and enrollment growth
- Quality of design
- Speed of delivery
- Site availability
- Compliance with applicable laws

The bill also includes legislative oversight through required interim and final reports to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot program, including costs, efficiencies, and implementation challenges.

The appropriation provided in this measure would allow SFA to develop and administer the procurement process, engage the market effectively, and ensure that proposals are realistic, financeable, and aligned with community priorities before the State makes major long-term commitments. By investing in this structured planning and procurement process, Hawai'i can make better-informed decisions and build a pipeline of viable school projects that reflect both fiscal responsibility and educational urgency.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Riki Fujitani
Executive Director

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: SB 2024 SD2 RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES
DATE: March 19, 2026
TIME: 2:00 P.M.
COMMITTEE: Committee on Education
ROOM: Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
FROM: Ed H. Noh, Ed. D., Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission ("Commission") appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in **SUPPORT of SB 2024 SD2** which:

- 1) Allows the School Facilities Authority ('SFA') to enter into partnerships for the design, financing, and maintenance of public school facilities and projects on privately-owned land;
- 2) Requires SFA to establish a pilot program for the development of proposals for three new public schools through public-private partnerships; and
- 3) Evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot program through reports to the Legislature.

Securing facilities for public charter schools continues to be an ongoing challenge that affects the performance and success of charter schools and their students. Innovative programs and proposals such as the development of public-private partnership schools by SFA are supported by the Commission as an alternative way to address charter school facility issues. The Commission has already successfully opened two new Preschool-only charter schools utilizing an innovative model of public-private partnerships.

The Commission is available to work with the Legislature and SFA on the passage and implementation of this legislation. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



info@hawaiikidscan.org
hawaiikidscan.org

March 17, 2026

House Committee on Education
Representative Justin Woodson, Chair
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair

Regarding: **Support for SB 2024 SD2 Relating to Charter School Facilities**

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee,

HawaiiKidsCAN strongly supports SB2024 SD2, which requires the School Facilities Authority (SFA) to establish a pilot program to develop proposals for three new public schools in areas based on demonstrated need through public-private partnerships (P3s); authorizes the SFA to use P3s for the development of public charter school facilities; requires reports to the Legislature; and appropriates funds.

Founded in 2017, HawaiiKidsCAN is a local nonprofit organization committed to ensuring that Hawai'i has an excellent and equitable education system that reflects the true voices of our communities and, in turn, has a transformational impact on our children and our state. We believe that all students should have access to excellent educational opportunities, regardless of family income levels and circumstances.

Perhaps more than anyone, the Legislature understands how shifting population patterns are placing uneven pressure on our school facilities. While some communities face under-enrollment, others are experiencing rapid growth that has left existing schools overcrowded. At the same time, public charter schools - serving thousands of Hawai'i students and growing each year - continue to face persistent challenges in accessing stable, adequate facilities. Unlike Department of Education schools, most charter schools independently secure and finance their campuses, creating significant operational and financial strain.

With state budgets tightening and new school construction not keeping pace with need, a new approach is clearly needed. The Hawai'i School Facilities Authority is well positioned to develop and execute a new model of public charter school facilities development through this pilot. In practice, the structure of this bill creates a pathway



that is particularly well-suited to charter schools, which are uniquely positioned to initiate and benefit from P3 arrangements to meet urgent facility needs.

The SFA has already demonstrated its ability to deliver results for Hawai‘i families, including leading the expansion of public pre-K classrooms. It also has the flexibility and creativity to advance innovative funding strategies, such as the P3 model proposed in this bill - an approach that could be especially transformative for charter schools that currently lack access to consistent capital funding streams.

Based on national best practices, P3s create incentives for timely delivery and shared accountability. Private partners have “skin in the game” to deliver projects on budget and on schedule, while also bringing specialized expertise in project management and innovation. This model can help address internal capacity challenges that have contributed to Hawai‘i’s capital improvement backlog. Importantly, P3s can also expand access to upfront capital, allowing critical school facilities - particularly for charter schools - to be built now, with costs spread over time rather than being delayed by limited public funding.

Given the ongoing frustration from communities and policymakers over stalled projects and lapsing funds, this pilot represents a meaningful opportunity to test a more responsive and efficient approach to school facilities development. Charter schools in Hawai‘i have already demonstrated what is possible when given the opportunity to innovate, such as Kīhei Charter School, which developed a high-quality campus for approximately \$18.6 million serving over 650 students. In contrast, recent Department of Education school projects have reached costs that may be difficult to sustain, including Kūlanihākoī High School (\$440 million), East Kapolei Elementary School (\$160 million), and East Kapolei High School (\$700 million).

By focusing this pilot on a model that can effectively support public charter school facilities, SB2024 SD2 offers a pragmatic and forward-looking step toward modernizing Hawai‘i’s education infrastructure and expanding opportunity for students across the state.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Erica Nakanishi-Stanis
Advocacy Director
HawaiiKidsCAN



Senate Committee on Education

Senate Bill 2024, Relating to Charter School Facilities

Thursday, March 19, 2026, 2:00 PM

Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 229

IN SUPPORT

Dear Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

Hawai'i Technology Academy, the state's largest public charter school, strongly supports SB 2024. Facilities remain one of the largest challenges facing Hawai'i public schools — and charter schools in particular.

HTA is particularly well-positioned to address some of the acute challenges facing key constituencies. Our enrollment has surged 60% in just four years — from 1,375 students in 2021-22 to 2,203 in 2025-26 — yet we still maintain extensive waitlists. We are primed for expansion in areas where projected population growth will further strain limited school capacity. Our 'Ewa Beach and Waipahu campuses currently serve more than 1,000 students in southwest and central O'ahu, and we are seeking to add additional schools in adjacent neighborhoods.

Currently, facilities are the primary barrier to expansion. High real estate costs, complex permitting, and the unique constraints of being a government agency create significant hurdles. We would welcome the opportunity to partner with the SFA, leveraging its technical expertise and financial relationships to unlock new opportunities for growth.

This pilot program would provide a low-risk pathway to explore options without requiring immediate, long-term state appropriations. As projects progress, an oversight framework would ensure that every school remains a responsible steward of public funds. By unifying state resources, innovative schooling, and private capital, we can secure a strong educational foundation for our keiki for generations to come.

We urge the committee to pass this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Matt Zitello

Hawai'i Technology Academy Executive Director

94-450 Mokuola Street • Suite 200 • Waipahu • HI 96797
808-676-5444 • myhta.org • info@myhta.org



UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS

AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair

Rep. Trish La Chica, Vice Chair

Thursday, March 19, 2026, 2:00 PM
Conference Room 309 & Videoconference

Re: Testimony on SB2024, SD2 – RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, 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 **opposes** SB2024, SD2, which authorizes the School Facilities Authority (“SFA”) to establish a pilot program to develop three new public schools in areas based on demonstrated need through public-private partnerships. This measure also authorizes the SFA to use public-private partnerships for the development of public school facilities, including facilities at public charter schools.

UPW is opposed to legislation that authorizes the possible privatization of the duties that have historically been performed by public employees. We are concerned with language (page 4, lines 8-9) that would allow the SFA to enter into partnerships for the maintenance of any project. Based on prior private-public partnerships in state government, our concern is that the maintenance of the proposed projects could be contracted out rather than utilizing public workers who can perform these duties. Should this committee choose to pass this measure, we would ask that this language be removed.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HEADQUARTERS

1426 North School Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-1914
Phone 808.847.2631

HAWAII

362 East Lanikaula Street
Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4336
Phone 808.961.3424

KAUAI

2970 Kele Street, Suite 213
Lihue, Hawaii 96766-1803
Phone 808.245.2412

MAUI

841 Kolu Street
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793-1436
Phone 808.244.0815

1.866.454.4166

Toll Free - *Molokai/Lanai only*



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 House of Representatives
Committee on Education

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

March 19, 2026

S.B. 2024, S.D. 2 – RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO wishes to provide comments on S.B. 2024, S.D. 2. which requires the School Facilities Authority (SFA) to establish a pilot program to develop three new public schools in areas based on demonstrated need through public-private partnerships and authorizes the SFA to use public-private partnerships for the development of public school facilities, including facilities at public charter schools.

We recognize and respect the Legislature's desire to prioritize cost-efficiency and community needs. However we oppose the State entering into public-private partnerships for the development of school facilities, in particular, what that means for the maintenance and upkeep of these schools, duties that historically were provided by civil service employees. This measure does not clearly define the authority, decision-making power, or operating scope of the School Facilities Authority (SFA) in relation to the Department of Education, Department of Accounting and General Services, the Hawaii Public Charter School Commission, and the respective charter school governing boards.

Without clear statutory delineation, this bill risks deepening the confusion and misalignment that already exist between these entities. Our understanding is that the SFA has been tasked with major responsibilities, including building new preschool classrooms, developing a new school in Central Maui, and creating workforce housing for educators. While preschool classrooms have come online, we continue to hear of significant challenges related to the Central Maui school project, and the long-anticipated workforce housing development at Mililani High School has not yet materialized. These examples raise concerns about whether the SFA can take on additional responsibilities without more clearly defined roles and stronger coordination with the State departments and governing bodies aforementioned.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the Legislature refine this measure to ensure clear, non-overlapping definitions of authority and responsibility between the SFA, the DOE, DAGS, HSPCSC, and the charter school governing bodies. There should be formalized processes for communication, coordination, and shared decision-making; and transparent accountability structures that prevent duplication, enhance efficiency, and ensure that private partners are not allowed to prioritize profit over the needs of our students, schools, and communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on S.B. 2024, S.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

SB-2024-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 4:46:14 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/19/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
M. Leilani DeMello	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I KĀKO‘O this bill and hope that more options for our keiki will be presented. Charter school students should be afforded the same facilities that "regular" DOE schools enjoy. I think that is a great place to start because a large chunk of charter school budgets go to securing facilities. I strongly urge you to support this bill.

Mahalo,

M. Leilani DeMello

‘Ōla‘a, Puna, Hawai‘i

SB-2024-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 2:48:40 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/19/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Limits on approved funding for public school facilities has been a decades long problem. Because funding and construction at public schools was limited to DOE and DAGS, Hawaii public schools lack facilities and modernization that could have been implemented if other funding opportunities had been allowable. I strongly support this bill because it will help fund and provide critically needed facilities for our keiki and teachers that will improve educational resources and opportunities.

Thank you,

Beth Anderson

Former parent of public school students, formerly on the Board of the school PTA, and former substitute teacher.