

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **3265**

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 30 2026

RE: H.B. No. 2398
H.D. 1
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred H.B. No. 2398, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO LIBRARIES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Clarify that the Board of Education, through the State Librarian, has exclusive authority over the development, use, support, and improvement and maintenance of public library system facilities;
- (2) Allow the Board of Education to authorize the State Librarian to exercise exclusive control of certain land for development or expansion purposes, subject to legislative appropriation; and
- (3) Require the Department of Education to expeditiously cooperate with the State Librarian and Hawaii State Public Library System to effectuate any project authorized by the Board of Education on certain lands.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawai'i State Public Library System and one individual.



Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Department of Education.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Board of Education.

Your Committee finds that, although operational management of the public libraries was statutorily transferred to the Board of Education and State Librarian in 1981, control over the properties that the public libraries are located on was not completed or clarified. Confusion regarding the powers, rights, and responsibilities of the Hawaii State Public Library System and Department of Education over public and school library properties has caused numerous issues, including permitting delays for construction projects. This measure will formalize the separation of public library properties to provide for their effective and efficient management, maintenance, and improvement for the benefit of the public.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting an effective date of July 31, 2055, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) Making a technical, nonsubstantive amendment for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Education that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2398, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2398, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Education,



DONNA MERCADO KIM, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-Third Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Education
EDU

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:		
HB 2398 HD 1	EDU, WAM	03/20/2026		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
KIM, Donna Mercado (C)	/			
KIDANI, Michelle N. (VC)				=
FUKUNAGA, Carol				=
HASHIMOTO, Troy N.	/			
DECORTE, Samantha	/			
TOTAL	3	0	0	2
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature:				
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink File with Committee Report Committee Drafting Agency				

*Only one measure per Record of Votes