

Honolulu, Hawaii
MAR 20 , 2026

RE: S.B. No. 896
S.D. 2
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred S.B. No. 896, S.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the Department of Education to submit annual reports to the Legislature outlining certain information concerning capital improvement projects and facilities and post the reports on its website in a searchable format;
- (2) Require that any capital improvement project funds encumbered for more than five years without commencement of construction be specifically identified and justified or be subject to legislative review for potential reversion or reassignment; and
- (3) Authorize, for a period of five years, the Superintendent of Education to redesignate and convert certain positions within the Office of Facilities and Operations that are funded but vacant as positions exempt from state civil service laws.



Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Education and Department of the Attorney General.

Your Committee finds that the Department of Education is responsible for the stewardship of a substantial and complex portfolio of public school facilities across the State. Your Committee further finds that timely, transparent, and accountable management of capital improvement projects is essential to ensuring safe, functional, and equitable learning environments for students and educators. Your Committee believes that improved public reporting on the status of capital improvement projects of the Department of Education, including the identification and justification of encumbered funds, will enhance legislative oversight and promote more efficient use of public resources.

Additionally, your Committee recognizes that persistent vacancies and recruitment challenges within the Department of Education's Office of Facilities and Operations can impede project delivery on capital improvement projects. Allowing limited flexibility for the Superintendent of Education to appoint and set the salaries of certain positions within the Office of Facilities and Operations will provide the Department with internal expertise, prevent future project failures, and effectively manage the backlog of school repairs.


Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

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 S.B. No. 896, S.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 896, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Labor.



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



JUSTIN H. WOODSON, Chair



