



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

Date: 02/10/2026

Time: 02:15 PM

Location: 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: EDN

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB1672, RELATING TO HOUSING.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the Department of Education to give reasonable consideration to making all or portions of the facilities of a public school available to housing development for certain employees of the Department when closing the public school. Requires the Department of Education to identify unused public school facilities that may be appropriate for employee housing and inventory suitable grounds available upon public school closure for potential development of employee housing.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) appreciates the opportunity to offer comments to HB 1672. While the Department recognizes the importance of workforce housing for Department teachers and staff, HB 1672 would amend Hawaii Revised Statutes §302A-1151, which would mandate the Department to prioritize residential housing development on school-designated lands and facilities. This would conflict with core statutory responsibilities, Board of Education policies, campus safety obligations, and long-term educational planning requirements. Prioritizing non-educational development alongside or in some cases, in competition with charter schools and early learning programs undermines the primary mission of safeguarding property for future educational facilities, threatens student safety, reduces operational flexibility, and creates long-term logistical burdens on the delivery of quality public education.

School lands and facilities are critical, limited, and essential for future enrollment growth and the development of supporting educational facilities. If converted to housing, the primary mission of public education for the campus is irrevocably lost. Residential development within school campuses also creates significant safety risks, security concerns, and liabilities regarding student safety and unauthorized access to school grounds.

The development of residential units on school campuses creates noise, traffic, and logistical conflicts that interfere with the learning environment and daily operations of K-12 education. Moreover, housing development on school campuses creates significant

outside the Department's expertise, resources, and statutory role. Redirecting the Department's limited capacity to non-educational functions for housing differs from its core educational mission and undermines educational service delivery.

There may be Department properties where this sort of housing would make sense, however, it should not be a required consideration or put before the core mission of the Department. The Department urges the committee to prioritize the educational needs of students and maintain the integrity of public school lands.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments.