



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
and
House Committee on Education
Tuesday, February 10, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Garret T. Yoshimi, Vice President for Information Technology/Chief Information Officer
University of Hawai'i System

HB 1676 – RELATING TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Chairs Garrett and Woodson, Vice Chairs Amato and La Chica, and Members of the
Committees:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports the intent of HB 1676 and respectfully offers comments. HB 1676 establishes a task force that will develop important safeguards to support the procurement and use of AI in Hawai'i's public educational system. UH respectfully notes that state of AI technologies and products are quickly evolving, and rapidly becoming complex and highly sophisticated offerings. The challenging work of the task force will likely require resources over and above the time that individual task force members and invited participants bring to the table; the task force will require funding to support the resources to ensure the task force can complete its work to fully address the complex issues of AI adoption, integration and recommend mitigating controls to ensure the safety of our community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB 1676.

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 1676 RELATING TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
DATE: February 10, 2026
TIME: 2:00 P.M.
COMMITTEE: Committee on Higher Education & Committee on Education
ROOM: Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
FROM: Ed H. Noh, Ed. D., Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Garrett, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 1676** which establishes an Artificial Intelligence in Education Task Force to develop guidelines and recommendations for the use of artificial intelligence in state public education.

The Commission appreciates the efforts of the Legislature to proactively address the complexities of Artificial Intelligence and how it will be used effectively in the scope of education. The Commission authorized an AI and Science based charter school which opened in SY 24-25. The Commission requests the committees consider amending the measure to include charter schools on the task force that is to be created.

The Commission is prepared to work with the committees, the DOE, and public charter schools in support of goals of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



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

Date: 02/10/2026

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: HED/EDN

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB1676, RELATING TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.

Purpose of Bill: Establishes an Artificial Intelligence in Education Task Force to develop guidelines and recommendations for the use of artificial intelligence in state public education. Requires the Superintendent of Education and Chief Financial Officer of the University of Hawaii to receive certain documentation from a vendor of an artificial intelligence tool before the procurement or use of the artificial intelligence tool. Appropriates funds.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) agrees with the ideas put forward in HB 1676 but cannot support the bill as currently written. The Department agrees with the Legislature that artificial intelligence (AI) holds potential to support personalized learning and that unregulated deployment must be safeguarded against. The Department respectfully expresses concerns with the mandate to implement a statutory Artificial Intelligence in Education Task Force and specific procurement standards, as these measures duplicate the Department's ongoing efforts to establish AI safety frameworks and may inadvertently create administrative bottlenecks that hinder the timely acquisition of necessary educational tools.

1. Duplication of Existing Guidance and Tools (Section 2): As part of the Hawaii State Board of Education's 2023-2029 Strategic Plan, the Department has established an internal cross-office workgroup. The Department is committed to continuing the work with AI both internally and with external partners. At this time, the Department has already developed and published the core guidance and frameworks proposed for the "Artificial Intelligence in Education Task Force." Specifically, the Department has released:

- **HIDOE AI Guidance for Employees:** This framework, released in May 2024, aligns AI usage with the Department's strategic learning goals and professional accountability standards while ensuring stringent data security, pedagogical alignment, and the universal protection of student and staff privacy.
- **HIDOE AI Guidance for Students:** These guidelines, released in January 2025, establish a holistic framework for AI integration by balancing academic integrity and

responsible student conduct with rigorous data privacy and legal compliance.

- **HIDOE AI Readiness Toolkit:** Designed for administrators at the school, complex area, and state levels, this toolkit provides a structured, three-phase implementation roadmap to support the integration of AI into operations and curriculum, while intentionally aligning with the Department's 2023–2029 Strategic Plan.

Statutory mandates for a temporary task force may slow the Department's ability to update these living documents as technology evolves. We believe that utilizing the existing structures and ongoing statewide professional development sessions, alongside initiatives like the Department's Hawaii Computer Science Professional Development Summit, the AI in Education Summit, and resources from our 'Enehana digital magazine, will ensure our guidance remains both current and impactful.

2. Procurement Standards (Section 4): The Department currently supports a rigorous pathway for AI Program Requests to ensure compliance with federal regulations and Board policies regarding data privacy. This process is rooted in our Acceptable Use Guidelines, Technology Responsible Use Guidelines, and Student Code of Conduct, requiring that every tool undergo a systematic review of network security and student data privacy, while providing advisory feedback on instructional best practices. Codifying specific vendor certification requirements in statute may inadvertently hinder the procurement of necessary educational tools that are already vetted through these established, multi-domain internal governance processes.

Given the fiscal constraints facing the state, the Department respectfully asks that funding instead be appropriated to priorities identified in its Board-approved budget.

The Department looks forward to working with the Legislature to find a way forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



The House Committees on Higher Education and Education
February 10, 2026
Room 309
2:00 PM

RE: **HB 1676, Relating to Artificial Intelligence**

Attention: Chairs Andrew Takuya Garrett, Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chairs Terez Amato, Trish La Chica, and Members of the Committees

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA), the exclusive bargaining representative for all University of Hawai'i faculty members across Hawai'i's statewide 10-campus system, **supports HB 1676 with amendments.**

We recognize that artificial intelligence holds significant potential to reduce educator workload while presenting complex challenges regarding privacy and equity. We commend the legislature's proactive approach to establishing statewide guidance and safeguards for its responsible integration into our educational systems.

Request for Faculty Representation. While we support the measure, we respectfully request an amendment to Section 2(c) to ensure the proposed Artificial Intelligence in Education Task Force includes adequate representation for the workforce directly impacted by these changes in higher education. Currently, the bill includes the Hawaii State Teachers Association to represent K-12 educators but excludes the exclusive representative for University of Hawai'i faculty. Inclusion of the exclusive representative for University faculty is critical to ensuring that statewide AI guidelines reflect the unique realities of higher education. As the frontline practitioners responsible for implementing these tools across diverse fields, faculty members must have a voice in establishing the professional development guidelines and evaluation frameworks that will govern their work. Unlike K-12 education, higher education requires a flexible approach where faculty retain the autonomy to determine how AI tools are best utilized within their specific disciplines.

With the amendment to include UHPA on the task force, we support the passage of HB 1676.

Respectfully submitted,

Christian L. Fern
Executive Director
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly

University of Hawaii
Professional Assembly

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HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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The Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
Committee on Higher Education
Committee on Education

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 10, 2026

H.B. 1676 — RELATING TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO wishes to provide comments on H.B. 1676, which establishes an Artificial Intelligence in Education Task Force to develop guidelines and recommendations for the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in public education.

Because this measure establishes statewide guidance, safeguards, and support for the responsible use of AI in Hawaii's public schools and higher education institutions, we request that the Artificial Intelligence in Education Task Force also include two additional HGEA representatives: a classified HIDEOE employee and an employee included in bargaining unit 08 which consists of the administrative, professional, and technical employees of the University of Hawaii.

Given the diversity of our membership, these representatives should be included on the task force, along with teachers and school administrators, because their perspectives will strengthen the development of AI instructional frameworks, standards, and professional development tools, and help ensure digital equity for rural and neighbor island communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments on H.B. 1676 for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

HB-1676

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:03:14 PM

Testimony for HED on 2/10/2026 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 so that our teachers, administration, and learners can be better equipped to handle the onslaught of AI that is happening way faster than our government can keep up with. Please expedite this process with the mindset that there are both good and bad consequences of utilizing this technology and it is best to gather everyone as soon as possible to ensure that our schools are safe and protected.

Mahalo,

M. Leilani DeMello

‘Ōla‘a, Puna, Hawai‘i

My name is Christian Kaakua, and I am a high school student from Oahu, testifying in support of HB1676, establishing a task force to develop guidelines and recommendations for the use of artificial intelligence in state public education.

As a current student, I've seen the boom AI has had on how my classmates and I learn, and I've seen a shocking lack of AI literacy both inside and outside of the classroom. I've been fortunate enough to have done a lot of research on AI for an independent project, so I know a lot about the pros and cons of artificial intelligence; however, I also recognize that this is not the same for a lot of other kids. Whether we accept it or not, artificial intelligence is going to have a huge impact on our society, especially my generation, as we grow up in the AI Age; therefore, the State ought to work to prepare kids to live in this new world.

Furthermore, I've also seen a lot of research done on how artificial intelligence can be used by teachers to benefit their students and overall learning. A form of machine learning, artificial general intelligence, in particular, has huge applications. "AGI can be used... [to] modify the pace, material, and teaching tactics according to [a] student's progress, preferences, and learning styles, fostering a more enjoyable and productive learning environment" ([Latif et al., 2023](#)). The same study further goes on to note: "AGI technology could help education systems by using data to improve educational equity and quality. For instance, AGI can analyze student performance, attendance, and engagement data to identify areas where intervention is needed, such as providing additional resources for struggling students. This can help to ensure that students receive the support they need to succeed, regardless of their background or socioeconomic status" ([Latif et al., 2023](#)). Some raise concerns about AGI replacing teachers; however, "AGI should be viewed as a tool that complements and enhances a teacher's capabilities rather than a threat to their profession... Furthermore, AGI's versatility... makes it an invaluable resource for students at all educational levels" ([Latif et al., 2023](#)).

For these reasons, this bill, HB1676, ought to be passed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Work Cited

Latif, Ehsan, et al. "AGI: Artificial General Intelligence for Education." *Arxiv*, 13 March 2024, <https://arxiv.org/pdf/2304.12479>. Accessed 5 February 2026.

HB-1676

Submitted on: 2/6/2026 7:30:18 PM

Testimony for HED on 2/10/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Wiencek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Hawaii is rapidly falling behind on the adoption and integration of artificial intelligence capabilities. It is rapidly transforming key parts of our economy and society. We've got to left of this evolving field *now*. It is beyond time to get this proposal passed.

I STRONGLY URGE THIS COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT HB1676!

HB-1676

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 11:18:54 AM

Testimony for HED on 2/10/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Meera Garud	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am providing comments for HB 1676, which would establish an AI in education task force and require documentation from AI vendors prior to using AI tools.

I agree that guidelines and documentation are essential. I appreciate that the task force would include students and would be charged with addressing digital equity.

I suggest adding to Part II Section 2d to clarify that public school teachers, including school librarians and school counselors, and UH faculty, including UH librarians, be invited to join the task force, because:

- Educators have on-the-ground experience important insights about ways to best integrate AI tools in learning.
- School librarians are teachers and have a unique skill set that includes technology integration and a commitment to privacy and addressing the digital divide.
- School counselors are also teachers and have a strong understanding of how technology use affects emotions and cognition.

Inviting a range of educators to join the task force will bring valuable perspectives and ensure that guidelines and recommendations are practical in the classroom.

Mahalo for considering this critical issue.

HB-1676

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 10:06:05 AM

Testimony for HED on 2/10/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Olderr	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While I appreciate the attempt to help teachers fight the tide of AI in the classroom, I have to push back against using any form of AI. AI is a snake oil bubble on the verge of bursting, and I dont want to get our teachers caught in the crossfire. We have seen AI companies and tech promise the world and have again and again shown us with little actual results, broken promises, more workd and sometimes destroyed lives. I know the ease of AI is enticing, but sometimes things shouldn't be easy, and thats ok. Do not support this bill or any AI bills this session