



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

Date: 02/12/2026

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: EDN

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB1778, RELATING TO SCHOOL MODERNIZATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the School Facilities Authority to establish a school modernization initiative through a capital improvement project planning database for school facilities statewide. Appropriates funds.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) appreciates the Legislature's continued attention to addressing the needs of the Department's statewide capital improvement program (CIP). We share the goal of modernizing our schools and provide the following comments to ensure the most efficient use of state resources.

The bill requires the School Facilities Authority (SFA) to establish a project planning database and a school modernization initiative. While the Department supports data-driven planning, we believe creating a separate database and initiative under the SFA would duplicate work already underway and introduce unnecessary confusion between agencies. As the SFA continues to establish its role in support of the Department, the Office of Facilities and Operations is already actively strengthening its existing processes, including filling critical vacancies, improving data systems, and increasing transparency.

The Department is uniquely positioned to manage this data because its various branches including the Facilities Development Branch (FDB), Facilities Maintenance Branch (FMB), and Auxiliary Services Branch already maintain the necessary facilities and infrastructure information.

Asset Inventory: The Department currently utilizes a Maximo database for its asset inventory, and maintaining this as a current living record is an ongoing task for our facilities team. This is further supplemented by building specific data maintained by the Department.

Facilities Condition Index: The Hawaii Facilities Inspection Tool served as the Department's primary condition index from 2020 to 2023. The Department recognizes that this data requires an update to become an effective planning tool.

Enrollment Data: Enrollment-to-capacity ratio data is already actively collected and maintained by the Office of Strategy, Innovation, and Performance within the Department.

Because these datasets are critical for daily operations and strategic initiatives like school consolidation and capacity needs, this information should reside with the Department to ensure data continuity and data governance. Creating a parallel structure at the SFA risks institutional fragmentation rather than the intended modernization.

Regarding the establishment of a school modernization initiative and the prioritization of facility projects, the Department has shared with the Legislature its established lump-sum system and the modernization efforts currently underway. Managed by the FDB in close coordination with educators in Complex Areas and the FMB, this system ensures that project decisions remain directly aligned with educational priorities and long-term planning.

If \$4 million is to be appropriated for a planning database, the Department respectfully requests that these funds be used to strengthen existing systems within the Department and develop more robust, centralized databases for the CIP program. Consolidating information within the Department, where the data is actively used for daily operations, is a more efficient use of state resources than spreading it between two agencies.

For these reasons, the Department respectfully offers these comments with the goal of optimizing state resources and looks forward to collaborating with the Legislature to strengthen the existing systems already in place for prioritizing the capital improvement needs of Hawaii's public schools.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer comments to HB 1778.



Hawai'i School Facilities Authority

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

House Committee on Education

Thursday, February 12, 2026
2:00 PM

Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 309

House Bill 1778, Relating to School Modernization

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

The Hawai'i School Facilities Authority (SFA) **supports** House Bill 1778, which would require the SFA to establish a school modernization initiative through a capital improvement project planning database for school facilities statewide.

The school capital improvement project (CIP) modernization initiative contemplated by this measure would provide the Legislature, Governor, Board of Education, Department of Education, SFA, and the public with data and information to help answer fundamental school CIP questions:

- **Why Build?**

- What do we have? (Asset inventory)
- What is the condition? (Facilities Condition Index)
- What is the utilization? (Enrollment to Capacity Ratio)

- **What to Build?**

- Key Infrastructure
- Capacity
- Functional Adequacy
- Legal Compliance

- **How and Where to Repurpose?**

- o Should underutilized classrooms, buildings, facilities, and land be used for other purposes?

- Charter schools?
- Early learning or child care programs?
- Workforce housing projects?
- State agency offices?

In addition, this information should be presented using a geographic interface based upon legislative districts (25 Senate districts and 52 House districts). With sufficient funding and access to existing information and data sources, SFA estimates a prototype version of a database application that meets the intent of this measure could be ready by the 2027 legislative session. SFA believes the \$4,000,000 contemplated by this measure is sufficient for this goal.

We offer one recommended change. On Page 3, Line 4, we recommend updating the condition rating of a school facility to no less than every five years instead of three. We believe an update every five years for any school facility still provides relatively accurate information for a facilities condition index while using fewer resources.

The Legislature established the SFA to “be responsible for the development, planning, and construction of public school capital improvement projects and help improve the efficiency of school construction while more directly addressing the education needs of students” (Conference Committee Rep. No. 148, 2021). The school CIP modernization initiative could be game changing in how SFA fulfills its role.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Riki Fujitani
Executive Director



1200 Ala Kapuna Street • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 • Fax: (808) 839-7106 • Web: www.hsta.org

Osa Tui, Jr.
President

Logan Okita
Vice President

Cheney Kaku
Secretary-Treasurer

Andrea Eshelman
Executive Director

TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Item: HB 1778 – Relating to School Modernization

Position: Support

Hearing: Thursday, February 12, 2026, 2:00 pm, Room 309

Submitter: Osa Tui, Jr., President - Hawai'i State Teachers Association

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports** H.B. 1778, which establishes a framework for a school modernization initiative to address the aging infrastructure of our public schools. Currently, school buildings in Hawai'i average sixty years in age, with approximately 594 buildings operating well beyond their expected lifespan. Although the State has appropriated an annual average of \$454,000,000 for capital improvement projects over the last twelve years, there has been no data-based process to prioritize how and why projects are funded. This bill provides a solution by creating a centralized database to track asset inventories, facility conditions, and enrollment-to-capacity ratios.

This initiative ensures that taxpayer funds are spent efficiently through an industry-standard assessment framework. By prioritizing critical infrastructure such as fire alarms, structural integrity, and air conditioning, the State can better ensure the safe operation of buildings for students and educators alike. Furthermore, organizing this data by legislative district and making it available to the public through the authority's website fosters the transparency and community-specific assessment that our schools require. We urge the committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo.



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
House of Representatives
Committee on Education

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 12, 2026

H.B. 1778 – RELATING TO SCHOOL MODERNIZATION

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO wishes to provide comments on H.B. 1778 which requires the School Facilities Authority (SFA) to establish a school modernization initiative through a capital improvement project planning database for school facilities statewide.

We recognize and respect the Legislature's desire to adopt an industry-standard facilities assessment framework and to compile a comprehensive, accurate inventory of school facilities. These goals—greater efficiency, transparency, and more effective use of capital improvement program funds—are ones we fully support. However, for the members we represent in the Department of Education's Office of Facilities and Operations, and for those we represent at the complex area and school levels, including principals, 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.

Without clear statutory delineation, this bill risks deepening the confusion and misalignment that already exist between the two entities. Our members continue to experience inconsistent communication, unclear roles, and overlapping responsibilities between the SFA and the Department. These gaps are adding to the operational challenges, slow project delivery, and are making it difficult for school leaders to plan for and support capital improvements on their campuses.

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, as currently structured and coordinated, can take on additional responsibilities without more clearly defined roles and stronger alignment with the Department.

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 and the Department of Education, formalized processes for communication, coordination, and shared decision-making; and transparent accountability structures that prevent duplication, enhance efficiency, and ensure that students, schools, and communities receive the timely facilities improvements they have been promised.

Our members are committed to supporting safe and modern learning environments. To do that effectively, we need legislation that strengthens—not complicates—the governance structure guiding Hawaii’s school facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on H.B. 1778.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randy Perreira', written over a faint, illegible background.

Randy Perreira
Executive Director



Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: House Committee on Education
Re: HB 1778-Relating to School Modernization
Hawai'i State Capitol room 309 & Via Videoconference Friday,
February 12, 2026, 2:00 PM

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice La Chica, and Respected Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, we respectfully submit **STRONG SUPPORT for HB 1778**, which establishes a school modernization initiative and a comprehensive capital improvement project planning database.

Safe, modern, and well-maintained school facilities are foundational to student success. The physical condition of a school directly impacts student health, safety, attendance, educator retention, and academic outcomes. When facilities are outdated or in disrepair, it is our keiki, especially those in under-resourced communities, who are most affected.

HB 1778 represents a critical step toward addressing long-standing infrastructure challenges in a strategic and transparent manner. A centralized capital improvement planning database will support data-driven decision-making, improve coordination, and enhance accountability in how public funds are allocated. This systems-level approach helps ensure that modernization investments are prioritized equitably, particularly for schools serving vulnerable and historically underserved populations.

Modernization also presents an opportunity to align school facilities with best practices in child development. Learning environments should promote not only academic achievement, but also physical health, accessibility, safety, and social-emotional well-being. Upgrades such as improved ventilation, inclusive design for students with disabilities, and flexible learning spaces can have a lasting impact on student outcomes.

HB 1778 is an important investment in educational equity and in the long-term well-being of Hawai'i's children. Mahalo for your leadership and for the opportunity to testify in strong support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 1778**.

HB-1778

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 10:02:59 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Meehan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB 1778.

With over 40 years of experience in an executive position with regards to Capital Improvements and Facilities Management, I can attest to the financial benefits of preventative maintenance and appropriate capital planning.

Deferring maintenance **increases** facilities costs. Effective planning and execution of capital and non-capital expenditures is fiscally sound and in effect, **saves dollars.**

Please support HB 1778. Thank you.

Ted Meehan

HB-1778

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 9:17:11 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnne-Mae L. Perry Support

1778 HB RELATING TO SCHOOL MODERNIZATION

HB-1778

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 9:56:26 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

The state of our public schools is a scandal. So often, I see dilapidated and poorly kept buildings. Buildings that often lack proper insulation and A/C. And we have an education department that seems unable to properly spend the money on maintenance it needs to perform. Something must change. This proposal is a basic step in the right direction and I **STRONGLY** urge the committee to **SUPPORT** this bill!

HB-1778

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 6:55:07 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deanna Espinas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of this measure which prioritizes needed school repairs.

HB-1778

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 6:58:14 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dawn Morais Webster Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii's public school system was once a model to be admired and emulated. It no longer is, not because teachers lack dedication but because we have failed to invest in ensuring that the schools are well-maintained and conducive to student learning. This bill is a step in the right direction to address that neglect. Please pass this bill for the sake of our public school students and teachers who have been shortchanged for too long.

HB-1778

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:43:29 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel C. Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support the bill. With a good inventory and evaluations we can get the schools renovated.

Daniel C. Smith

Pearl City

HB-1778

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 6:31:12 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/12/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gaius	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Gaius Dupio am in full support in maintenance work on public schools