



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:** HB1783, RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES.

**Purpose of Bill:** Requires the School Facilities Authority to establish a pilot program to develop three new public schools in areas based on demonstrated need through public-private partnerships. Authorizes the School Facilities Authority to use public-private partnerships for the development of public school facilities, including facilities at public charter schools. Requires reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments and concerns on HB 1783, which proposes a pilot program authorizing the School Facilities Authority (SFA) to develop three new schools through public-private partnerships (PPP).

The Department recognizes the Legislature's interest in identifying innovative, cost-efficient approaches to address Hawaii's high school construction costs. We also acknowledge the potential value of PPP models when appropriately structured and applied in the right educational context.

This bill aims to address the high costs of public school construction by authorizing the SFA to establish a pilot program to develop three new schools through public-private partnerships (PPPs).

Although the Department does not view the PPP structure in HB 1783 as compatible with the Department's facility development model, PPPs may be more appropriate for start-up charter schools. Start-up charters operate with greater autonomy and flexibility, are not bound to the Department's educational programming structures, and frequently rely on private or non-Department lands.

The Department also notes the continuing evolution of the SFA's authority and responsibilities. As its portfolio expands to include pilot housing initiatives and potential PPP projects, it is essential to clearly define its authority and responsibilities to avoid duplication of effort and administrative inefficiencies. Ensuring SFA's authority

and responsibilities are well-defined will improve coordination and reduce the risk of disruption to Department operations.

For these reasons, if a pilot exists, as described in this bill, it must focus exclusively on non-conversion public charter schools on non-Department-controlled land. As is currently drafted, the bill does not provide that protection.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments for HB 1783.

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

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FOR: HB 1783 RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES  
DATE: February 12, 2026  
TIME: 2:00 P.M.  
COMMITTEE: Committee on Education  
ROOM: Conference Room 309 & Videoconference  
FROM: Ed H. Noh, Ed. D., Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission ("Commission") appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 1783** which:

- 1) Allows the School Facilities Authority ('SFA') to develop and finance public charter school facilities and projects on privately-owned land;
- 2) Requires SFA to establish a pilot program for the development of three new public-private partnership schools;
- 3) Requires SFA to submit reports to the Legislature on the progress of the pilot program prior to the 2027 legislative session; and
- 4) Requires SFA to submit a final report to the Legislature on the progress of the pilot program prior to the 2028 legislative session.

Securing facilities for public charter schools continues to be an ongoing challenge that affects the performance and success of charter schools and their students. Innovative programs and proposals such as the development of public-private partnership schools by SFA are supported by the Commission as an alternative way to address charter school facility issues. There may already be indications that this model may be successful as the Commission has already opened two new Preschool-only charter schools utilizing the model of a public-private partnership.

The Commission is available to work with this committee and SFA on moving this legislation forward. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



RIKI FUJITANI  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## Hawai'i School Facilities Authority

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

### House Committee on Education

February 12, 2026  
2:00 PM

Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 309

### HB1783, Relating to Charter School Facilities

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

The School Facilities Authority (SFA) **supports** House Bill 1783, which would require the SFA to establish a pilot program to develop three new public schools in areas based on demonstrated need through public-private partnerships (P3s).

Hawai'i continues to face some of the highest public school construction costs in the nation. These escalating costs make it increasingly difficult to provide adequate educational facilities for students, particularly in communities experiencing enrollment growth and capacity constraints. At the same time, traditional school delivery timelines are often too slow to respond to urgent needs. Overcrowding, aging infrastructure, and rising costs require that the State explore new approaches that are both efficient and accountable.

Other jurisdictions have successfully used public-private partnerships to accelerate school delivery. For example, Prince George's County Public Schools in Maryland delivered six new public schools through a long-term P3 model that bundled design, construction, financing, and maintenance into a single performance-based agreement. While the district makes structured public payments over time, the approach provided faster delivery, predictable costs, and long-term accountability for facility upkeep. This illustrates the type of model Hawai'i can evaluate through this pilot program.

House Bill 1783 provides a framework for testing alternative delivery methods through a limited pilot program. Specifically, the bill would require SFA to establish a program to develop three new public schools located in different geographic areas based on demonstrated community need using P3s.

SFA supports piloting this approach because it allows the State to evaluate whether P3 models can deliver school facilities that are more cost-effective, delivered more quickly, and designed for long-term durability and quality. Importantly, P3s are not a substitute for public funding, but a tool that may allow the State to deliver facilities more efficiently while ensuring long-term upkeep, performance standards, and public oversight. In some cases, a P3 model may allow the State to deliver a school facility at a substantially lower cost than traditional procurement, potentially reducing the overall capital required for delivery.

SFA appreciates that the bill establishes clear requirements for transparency and accountability. The pilot program would be implemented through competitive requests for proposals evaluated on criteria that include:

- Cost savings to the State
- Community need and enrollment growth
- Quality of design
- Speed of delivery
- Site availability
- Compliance with applicable laws

The bill also includes legislative oversight through required interim and final reports to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot program, including costs, efficiencies, and implementation challenges.

The appropriation provided in this measure would allow SFA to develop and administer the procurement process, engage the market effectively, and ensure that proposals are realistic, financeable, and aligned with community priorities before the State makes major long-term commitments. By investing in this structured planning and procurement process, Hawai'i can make better-informed decisions and build a pipeline of viable school projects that reflect both fiscal responsibility and educational urgency.

SFA believes this bill represents an important step toward a better way of delivering school facilities in Hawai'i—one that is faster, more cost-efficient, and responsive to the needs of students and communities. We respectfully urge your support of HB1783 and

look forward to working with the Legislature as this pilot program is developed and evaluated.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Riki Fujitani  
Executive Director



**House Committee on Education**  
**House Bill 1783, Relating to Charter School Facilities**  
Thursday, February 12, 2026, 2 p.m.  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 309

**IN SUPPORT**

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

Hawai'i Technology Academy, the state's largest public charter school, strongly supports HB 1783. Facilities remain one of the largest challenges facing Hawai'i public schools — and charter schools in particular.

HTA is particularly well-positioned to address some of the acute challenges facing key constituencies. Our enrollment has surged 60% in just four years — from 1,375 students in 2021-22 to 2,203 in 2025-26 — yet we still maintain extensive waitlists. We are primed for expansion in areas where projected population growth will further strain already limited school capacity. Our 'Ewa Beach and Waipahu campuses currently serve more than 1,000 students in southwest and central O'ahu, and we are seeking to add additional schools in adjacent neighborhoods.

Currently, facilities are the primary barrier to expansion. High real estate costs, complex permitting, and the unique constraints of being a government agency create significant hurdles. We would welcome the opportunity to partner with the SFA, leveraging its technical expertise and financial relationships to unlock new opportunities for growth.

This pilot program would provide a low-risk pathway to explore options without requiring immediate, long-term state appropriations. As projects progress, an oversight framework would ensure that every school remains a responsible steward of public funds. By unifying state resources, innovative schooling, and private capital, we can secure a strong educational foundation for our keiki for generations to come.

We urge the committee to pass this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Matt Zitello  
Hawai'i Technology Academy Executive Director

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info@hawaiikidscan.org  
hawaiikidscan.org

February 10, 2026

House Committee on Education  
Representative Justin Woodson, Chair  
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair

Regarding: **Support for HB 1783 Relating to Charter School Facilities**

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee,

HawaiiKidsCAN strongly supports HB1783, which requires the School Facilities Authority to establish a pilot program to develop three new public schools in areas based on demonstrated need through public-private partnerships; authorizes the School Facilities Authority to use public-private partnerships for the development of public school facilities, including facilities at public charter schools; requires reports to the Legislature; and appropriates funds.

Founded in 2017, HawaiiKidsCAN is a local nonprofit organization committed to ensuring that Hawaii has an excellent and equitable education system that reflects the true voices of our communities and, in turn, has a transformational impact on our children and our state. We believe that all students should have access to excellent educational opportunities, regardless of family income levels and circumstances.

Perhaps more than anyone, the legislature understands how the flow of population change in our communities is putting pressure on our existing school facilities model. As certain communities age, schools are facing under-enrollment and a reliance on geographic exceptions to fill seats. In other regions, rapid community development and growth has left existing schools bursting at the seams.

Simply put, the status quo does not seem to be working. With state budgets tightening and new school construction not keeping pace with need, a new approach is clearly needed. The Hawaii School Facilities Authority (SFA) is in the perfect position to develop and execute on a new model of public school facilities development that will benefit both families and state taxpayers. The SFA has demonstrated its ability to deliver wins for Hawaii families, including leading the significant growth of new public pre-K



classrooms. The SFA has the flexibility and creativity to lead new funding initiatives, such as the public-private partnership (P3) model proposed in this bill.

Based on national best-practices, P3s create incentives for timely delivery & risk sharing. In P3 contracts, risk is shared with private partners, who have “skin in the game” to deliver on budget and on schedule, and the private sector brings project management and innovation expertise that the public sector may lack. This can reduce the risk of projects being stalled by internal capacity issues - the very obstacles highlighted in Hawaii’s capital improvement program backlog. Furthermore, P3s can expand the pool of available capital for school facilities without immediately increasing debt. Private capital can be used to build critical infrastructure now, with repayment over time, allowing urgent needs to be addressed sooner rather than waiting for constrained public budgets.

Given the frustration expressed by communities and elected officials over stalled projects and lapsing funds, a well-designed P3 pilot demonstrates a serious commitment to innovative solutions that meet Hawaii’s urgent school facility needs. Schools in Hawaii have already proven what is possible, such as the new high-end facility Kīhei Charter School developed at the cost of \$18,600,000 for a student population of over 650. In comparison, public schools such as Kūlanihākoī High School (\$440 million), East Kapolei Elementary School (\$160 million), and East Kapolei High School (\$700 million) have expected costs that feel unsustainable, especially in resource-constrained times.

Our students and families should not have to wait for access to high quality school facilities and educational experiences. We believe this P3 pilot will be a transformative step in modernizing Hawaii’s education ecosystem.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Erica Nakanishi-Stanis  
Advocacy Director  
HawaiiKidsCAN



*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 1783-Relating to Human Services  
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 Speaks! (HCAN Speaks!) I am submitting testimony in **SUPPORT OF HB 1783**, which would establish a pilot program within the School Facilities Authority to develop new public schools in areas of demonstrated need through public-private partnerships and authorize the use of these partnerships for public school facilities, including charter schools.

HCAN Speaks! is an advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that all of Hawai'i's children especially those in underserved communities have access to the opportunities and resources they need to thrive. Safe, modern, and well-resourced school facilities are foundational to student success.

Across Hawai'i, communities are facing aging infrastructure, overcrowding, and limited facility capacity. These challenges directly impact students' learning environments and can constrain educational opportunity. HB 1783 offers an innovative approach to expanding and improving public school facilities by leveraging public-private partnerships to accelerate development in high-need areas.

Charter schools are an important part of Hawai'i's public education system, often serving diverse and historically underserved communities. Yet charter school facilities have long faced funding and infrastructure barriers. By explicitly allowing the School Facilities Authority to utilize public-private partnerships for charter school facilities, this measure helps promote greater equity across our public school system.

Public-private partnerships can bring additional expertise, flexibility, and capital to school development while maintaining public accountability. Establishing a pilot program allows the State to test this approach thoughtfully and report back to the Legislature, ensuring transparency and data-driven decision-making.

Investing in school facilities is investing in our keiki. All public school students whether attending traditional or charter schools deserve safe, high-quality learning environments that support their academic growth and well-being.

For these reasons, HCAN Speaks! respectfully urges the Committee to pass HB 1783.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support in **SUPPORT HB 1783**.



**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. 1783 – RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO wishes to provide comments on H.B. 1783 which requires the School Facilities Authority (SFA) to establish a pilot program to develop three new public schools in areas based on demonstrated need through public-private partnerships and authorizes the SFA to use public-private partnerships for the development of public school facilities, including facilities at public charter schools.

We recognize and respect the Legislature's desire to prioritize cost-efficiency and community needs but oppose the State entering into public-private partnerships for the development of school facilities, in particular, what that means for the maintenance and upkeep of these schools, duties that historically were provided by civil service employees. 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 of Education, Department of Accounting and General Services, the Hawaii Public Charter School Commission, and the respective charter school governing boards.

Without clear statutory delineation, this bill risks deepening the confusion and misalignment that already exist between these entities. 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 can take on additional responsibilities without more clearly defined roles and stronger coordination with the State departments and governing bodies aforementioned.

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, the DOE, DAGS, HSPCSC, and the charter school governing bodies. There should be formalized processes for communication, coordination, and shared decision-making; and

transparent accountability structures that prevent duplication, enhance efficiency, and ensure that private partners are not allowed to prioritize profit over the needs of our students, schools, and communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on H.B. 1783.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randy Perreira', written in a cursive style.

Randy Perreira  
Executive Director



## UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS

AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2026**

**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

Rep. Justin Woodson, Chair  
Rep. Trish La Chica, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 12, 2026, 2:00 PM  
Conference Room 309 & Videoconference

**Re: Testimony on HB1783 – RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES**

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

The United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO (“UPW”) is the exclusive bargaining representative for approximately 14,000 public employees, which includes blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 1 and institutional, health, and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and various counties.

UPW **opposes** HB1783, which requires the School Facilities Authority (“SFA”) to establish a pilot program to develop three new public schools in areas based on demonstrated need through public-private partnerships. This measure also authorizes the SFA to use public-private partnerships for the development of public school facilities, including facilities at public charter schools.

UPW is opposed to legislation that authorizes the possible privatization of the duties that have historically been performed by public employees. We are concerned with language (page 4, lines 4-5) that would allow the SFA to enter into partnerships for the maintenance of any project. Based on prior private-public partnerships in state government, our concern is that the maintenance of the proposed projects would be contracted out rather than utilizing public workers who can perform these duties. Should this committee choose to pass this measure, we would ask that this language be removed.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**HEADQUARTERS**

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Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-1914  
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**KAUAI**

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**MAUI**

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Toll Free - *Molokai/Lanai only*

# HOALOHA PROJECT

*Serving foster keiki of Hawai'i*

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee,

Hoaloha Project respectfully offers **strong support** for HB1783. Public-private partnerships can help Hawai'i build needed school facilities more quickly and responsively, giving our keiki access to quality learning environments without the delays that traditional construction timelines often bring. Hoaloha Project supports this innovative approach, provided that projects are selected based on true demonstrated need and that community input remains central throughout the process.

One area of **clear need is the expansion of Kaiapuni** (Hawaiian language immersion) school facilities. Over the past decade, Kaiapuni enrollment has grown by approximately 68 percent statewide, yet middle and high school options remain limited. In communities like Waiau, keiki must leave their home district to continue immersion education, disrupting continuity in language and culture-based learning. Nearly half of Hawai'i's foster keiki are Native Hawaiian, and providing access to Hawaiian Immersion programs can be a vital way to support their well-being while connecting them to their language, culture, and heritage.

We respectfully request that, if enacted, the School Facilities Authority give strong consideration to demonstrated demand for Kaiapuni middle or high school capacity – including potential public charter models – in communities such as Waiau, where options are currently limited or nonexistent.

Mahalo for your commitment to Hawai'i's keiki.



**HB-1783**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 9:16:31 PM

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

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

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry Support

1783 HB RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES.

**HB-1783**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 1:19:49 AM

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

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
M. Leilani DeMello	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I KĀKO‘O this bill.

Mahalo,

M. Leilani DeMello

‘Ōla‘a, Puna, Hawai‘i

**HB-1783**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 7:08:22 PM

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

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Deanna Espinas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony submitted in support of HB 1783. Thank you.

**HB-1783**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 9:53:05 PM

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

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Larry Veray	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Totally in support of HB1783

**HB-1783**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:41:09 PM

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

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Daniel C. Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Good to refine the concept with a pilot project. Get the schools built where needed.

Daniel C. Smith

Pearl City

**HB-1783**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 11:26:06 PM

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

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ted Meehan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

New schools are desperately needed. Please support HB 1783. Thank you.

Ted Meehan