



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

Date: 03/03/2026

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: FIN

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB1803, HD1, RELATING TO STUDENT HEAT EXPOSURE.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the Board of Education to adopt a heat acclimatization and practice policy based on the Hawaii Athletic Trainers Association's Hawaii High School Athletic Association Heat Acclimatization and Practice Policy of 2017 for students in grades kindergarten to twelve in Department of Education schools and public charter schools statewide for certain physical activities. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawai'i State Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of HB1803 HD1 to protect students from heat-related illness during school activities and acknowledges the requirement for the Board of Education (BOE) to adopt a statewide heat acclimatization and practice policy for students in grades kindergarten through twelve. However, the Department has concerns with the bill and cannot support it in its current form.

The Department respectfully notes that the term "activities" is not clearly defined in the bill, and the 2017 Heat Acclimatization and Practice Policy, on which this measure is based, was developed primarily for high school athletics and may require adaptation for broader school settings such as recess and elementary physical education. The Department respectfully recommends providing flexibility in applying such a policy across diverse settings and activities.

Implementation will require on-site monitoring of wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) at all 258 Department schools, along with ongoing maintenance, calibration, and eventual replacement of WBGT devices. The Department appreciates the one-time appropriation of \$143,000 for initial equipment, which, at approximately \$250 per mid-level device, is expected to provide about two units per school on average. However, larger or geographically spread campuses will need additional devices.

As these requirements would be ongoing, the Department estimates that recurring costs for calibration, routine maintenance, repairs, and a replacement reserve will total approximately \$70,000 to \$80,000 annually, with an additional \$20,000 to \$30,000

needed for statewide coordination, resulting in an estimated need of about \$100,000 per year. Additionally, the Department took a prudent approach in crafting its budget under the current fiscal landscape, and this appropriation was not included as a priority in its request to the Board of Education and the Governor.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



ROY M. TAKUMI
CHAIRPERSON

**STATE OF HAWAII
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PAPA HO'ONA'AUAO**

P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**House Committee on Finance
Tuesday, March 3, 2026
2:00 p.m.
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 308**

Measure: House Bill 1803 HD1, Relating to Student Heat Exposure

Purpose of Measure:

Requires the Board of Education to adopt a heat acclimatization and practice policy based on the Hawaii Athletic Trainers Association's Hawaii High School Athletic Association Heat Acclimatization and Practice Policy of 2017 for students in grades kindergarten to twelve in Department of Education schools and public charter schools statewide for certain physical activities. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000.

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The Board of Education (Board) recognizes the importance of protecting our students from heat-related risks, and respectfully offers comments on House Bill 1803 HD1.

The Board appreciates the flexibility to formulate policy that best serves our students and schools.

While the Hawaii Athletic Trainers Association's Hawaii High School Athletic Association Heat Acclimatization and Practice Policy of 2017 was tailored for high school athletics, its application to other school settings may require adjustments. As such, the Board respectfully recommends that flexibility be provided in the crafting of related policy, to help ensure such a policy is effective across the diverse types of school settings and activities.

The Board defers to the Department and charter schools regarding implementation and funding.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Board.

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 1803 HD1 RELATING TO STUDENT HEAT EXPOSURE
DATE: March 3, 2026
TIME: 2:00 P.M.
COMMITTEE: Committee on Finance
ROOM: Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
FROM: Ed H. Noh, Ed. D., Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 1803 HD1** which:

1. Requires the Board of Education to adopt a heat acclimation and practice policy for students in grades kindergarten to twelve in Department of Education schools and public charter schools; and
2. Appropriates funds for training and implementation of the policy and for the purchase of wet-bulb globe temperature thermometers for all public schools.

The Commission appreciates the inclusion of public charter schools in this measure; both for the implications of this policy and in providing the necessary funding to implement the requirements of this legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



HIPHI Board

May Okihiro, MD, MS
Chair

John A. Burns School of Medicine,
Department of Pediatrics

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Hawai'i Health Partners

Misty Pacheco, DrPH
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

Kathleen Roche, MS, RN, CENP
Kaiser Permanente

Dina Shek, JD
Medical-Legal Partnership
For Children in Hawai'i

Garret Sugai
HMSA

JoAnn Tsark, MPH
John A. Burns School of Medicine, Native
Hawaiian Research Office

HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community-Based Research &
Evaluation

Community Health
Worker Initiatives

COVID-19 Response

Environmental Health

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol-Free Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Network

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective/Healthy Aging &
Community Living

Public Health Workforce Development

Date: March 2, 2026

To: Representative Chris Todd, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance

RE: Support for HB 1803 HD1, Relating to Student Heat Exposure

Hrg: Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 2:00 PM, Conference Room 308

Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI), in partnership with the Climate Change and Health Working Group (CCHWG), **strongly supports HB 1803 HD1**, which requires the Board of Education to adopt a heat acclimatization and practice policy for certain physical activities.

This bill would require all Department of Education and public charter schools to provide sufficient breaks during athletics practices when heat risks are elevated, providing protection for our student-athletes. This also provides funds for the tools needed to effectively measure heat risks.

Extreme Heat is a Growing Public Health Risk for Children in Hawai'i

As global temperatures rise, extreme heat events are becoming an increasingly urgent public health concern in Hawai'i. Over the past century, the state's average air temperature has increased by approximately 0.76°F,¹ and high humidity further limits the body's ability to cool itself. Prolonged heat exposure can lead to dehydration, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and, in severe cases, organ failure or death.²

Heat-Related Illness Already Affecting Hawai'i Students

In West O'ahu, students have already experienced heat-related illness during school activities, including incidents requiring emergency medical care. Children are particularly vulnerable: they acclimatize more slowly to heat, regulate body temperature less efficiently than adults, and often lack control over the timing and conditions of outdoor activities such as recess, physical education, and athletics. Limited access to hydration and shaded rest further increases risk.

Heat Safety Policies Protect Health Without Discouraging Play or Learning

Outdoor play and physical activity are essential for healthy child development and well-being. Heat safety policies must protect students without unnecessarily limiting movement and must remain feasible and supportive for educators and school staff.

¹[Regional Temperature Trends in Hawai'i: A Century of Change, 1916-2015](#), Marie McKenzie. 2016.

²[Twenty-Seven Ways a Heat Wave Can Kill You](#), Mora, Counsell, Bielecki, Louis. 2017.



HB 1803 HD1 strikes this balance by establishing clear, evidence-based guardrails that help schools make informed, real-time decisions about modifying, postponing, or safely conducting activities during extreme heat.

A Practical, Evidence-Based, and Preventive Approach

The bill appropriately relies on wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT), the nationally recognized gold standard for assessing heat stress and the metric used by the U.S. military, OSHA, the NCAA, and professional sports organizations. WBGT accounts for temperature, humidity, wind, and sun exposure, providing a more complete picture of heat risk than temperature alone. While the Hawai'i Athletic Trainers Association standards currently recommend WBGT guidance, this bill would require its use, promoting consistency and clarity across schools.³

This approach reflects real conditions in Hawai'i. Local schools are now piloting WBGT monitoring to guide safer decision-making. HB 1803 HD1 builds on these lessons and scales them statewide, rather than waiting for additional incidents to occur.

Acting Before More Deaths Occur

Other states, like Georgia and California, have adopted heat safety policies after the deaths of student athletes from exertional heat illness, outcomes that were largely preventable with proper protocols and monitoring.^{4,5} We can protect students before more harm occurs by adopting these safety guidelines.

Extreme heat is already affecting our keiki, and the risks will continue to grow. HIPHI and the Climate Change and Health Working Group respectfully urge the committee to pass HB 1803 HD1 to provide a safe athletics experience for all of our students.

Proposed Amendments

We've heard concerns from both the Department of Education and the Attorney General's Office about clarifying what is meant by "activities," and we agree that added clarity would be helpful. Experts at the Korey Stringer Institute advise that heat-based modifications are well supported for PE, recess, and athletics, but there is less standardized data to require specific thresholds for more variable activities such as marching band, ROTC, and field trips. In those cases, WBGT monitoring and situational decision-making are more appropriate.

Consistent with this guidance, we recommend requiring heat-based modifications for physical education, recess, and athletics, while not mandating prescriptive thresholds for marching band, ROTC, and field trips. Schools would still have access to WBGT devices and be encouraged to factor heat conditions into decisions, as there is not yet sufficient data to support specific thresholds for those activities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James McCallen".

James McCallen, MPH
Director of Community Preparedness and Resilience

³[Hawai'i High School Athletic Association Heat Acclimatization and Practice Policy](#). 2017.

⁴[Heat Policy Revision for Georgia High School Football Practices Based on Data-Driven Research](#). Cooper et. al, 2020.

⁵[California Senate Bill 1248](#). 2024



March 1, 2026

To: COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Chris Todd, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Re: SUPPORT of HB1803 HD1 RELATING TO STUDENT HEAT EXPOSURE

Hrg: March 3rd at 2:00 PM

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 450 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. Our mission is to promote public health in Hawai'i through leadership, collaboration, education and advocacy.

Hawai'i is getting hotter, and our keiki are already feeling the effects. High temperatures combined with humidity make outdoor activities like recess, physical education, and sports more dangerous, especially for children. Kids' bodies heat up faster than adults', they may not recognize early warning signs, and many feel pressure to push through discomfort instead of speaking up.

This bill is important because it gives schools clear guidance and the right tools to keep students safe. It would require statewide heat safety policies and ensure every public and charter school has funding to purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, including temperature, humidity, sun, and wind, not just how hot it feels outside.

This bill is a practical, common-sense step to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt safely to a warming climate.

The climate crisis is a health crisis. As the state association representing public health, we urge you to support HB1803 HD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important public health issue.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Holly Kessler". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Holly Kessler
Executive Director

To: House Committee on Finance
Re: **HB1803 HD1 – Relating to Student Heat Exposure**
Hawai'i State Capitol & Via Videoconference
March 3, 2026, 2:00 PM

Dear Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing in **SUPPORT of HB1803 HD1**. This bill requires the Board of Education to adopt a heat acclimatization and practice policy based for students in grades kindergarten to twelve in Department of Education schools and public charter schools statewide for certain physical activities and also appropriates funds.

This bill is a reasonable and needed response to health risks associated with heat exposure during physical activities at schools. It would ensure that schools adopt science-based standards to prevent heat illness.

Keiki are especially vulnerable to heat stress due to immature thermoregulation and slower acclimatization to rising temperatures. Our state's high heat and humidity further challenges the body's ability to cool itself.

The bill includes an appropriation to equip every public and charter school with wet-bulb globe temperature thermometers — recognized as the gold standard for assessing environmental heat risk. These tools help teachers and coaches to make informed decisions about modifying or postponing activities based on actual heat stress conditions, rather than their judgment alone.

The long-term costs of heat-related emergencies — in health care, student absences, or potential litigation — far outweigh the relatively small initial investment in thermometers and policy development that this bill would provide.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony. **Please pass HB1803 HD1**



'Ahahui o nā Kauka

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E-mail huikauka@gmail.com

2025-2026 Advocacy Committee

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President

Kapono Chong-Hanssen, MD
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February 28, 2026

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Group Testimony in Support of HB1803HD1 RELATING TO STUDENT HEAT EXPOSURE

'Ahahui o nā Kauka is an organization of Native Hawaiian physicians dedicated to the health of the people of Hawai'i and Native Hawaiians in particular. We are writing in support of HB1803.

As practicing physicians from multiple specialties located across the state of Hawai'i and beyond, our physician members are faced with the rise in heat-related illnesses in our population as Hawai'i gets hotter. Keiki are especially sensitive to extreme heat. High temperatures combined with humidity make outdoor activities like recess, physical education, and sports more dangerous, especially for children. Kids are more vulnerable to heat stress compared to adults because kids' bodies heat up faster, they may not recognize early warning signs, and many feel pressured to push through discomfort instead of speaking up. Extreme heat exposure in infancy and early childhood has been linked to learning loss, sleep disruption, immune and metabolic stress, and activation of toxic stress pathways.

This bill is important because it gives schools clear guidance and the right tools to keep students safe. It would require statewide heat safety policies and ensure every public and charter school has funding to purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, including temperature, humidity, sun, and wind, not just how hot it feels outside. Other states such as Georgia have successfully implemented such policies and tools, with a reported decrease in heat illnesses, and the prevention of any heat-related deaths among high school football players—a reality which occurred in 2023 when a 12-year-old student in California died from heat illness during on-campus physical

education despite weather warnings, which led to legislation that directs the California DOE to develop statewide guidelines to minimize student exposure to hazardous heat conditions.

We know that environmental exposures and safe schools are fundamental determinants of health that impact overall Maui Ola (health and wellness). ‘Ahahui o nā Kauka especially recognizes the link between the health of the land/environment and the health of our people. This bill is a practical, common-sense step to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt safely to a warming environment.

The heat crisis is a Health crisis. We urge you to support HB1803. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to our shared vision of a thriving, climate-resilient Hawai‘i. We are deeply grateful for your consideration of this important legislation.

Mahalo,
‘Ahahui o nā Kauka
Advocacy Committee



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

March 3, 2026

2:00 PM

Conference Room 308

In **SUPPORT** of **HB1803 HD1**: RELATING TO STUDENT HEAT EXPOSURE

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS HB1803 HD1**, which would prompt the development and implementation of statewide safety guidelines to prevent heat-related illness among our students.

With our record temperatures certain to increase in the years and decades to come, we must begin to explore proactive measures to prevent and minimize heat-related illnesses, injuries, and even deaths – especially for our keiki, who have played no part in creating the climate crisis they have inherited, and who may be particularly vulnerable our ever-increasing temperatures and heat waves. This measure will ensure that the process for protective planning and action for our keiki begins now, and not after students have suffered the otherwise avoidable impacts of heat stress during school activities.

Notably, this measure may be particularly needed to alleviate the disproportionate heat burden placed on students living in leeward and urban areas, where weather patterns and urban “heat island” effects can exacerbate the risks they face.

Therefore, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2026 6:18:14 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kate McLellan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

During the hottest parts of August and early September, my 3 children have come home from school sweaty and with headaches that take hours to go away long after they've cooled down and rehydrated. The classrooms don't have A/C, the fans blow hot air, and there's no where for them to play when the temperatures are extremely hot.

When my son has after school practices, he'll see friends get lightheaded, nauseous, and experience other symptoms of heat exhaustion. The coaches push the athletes to practice in unhealthy conditions that are dangerous and worsen their performance over time.

Please give us a standardized way to measure the heat/humidity index that is easy to understand and a rule that can be implemented for all activities where students might suffer heat-related injuries.

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2026 6:27:57 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann Dorsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge you to support HB1803.

Hawai‘i is getting hotter, and our children are already feeling the effects. High temperatures combined with humidity make outdoor activities like recess, physical education, and sports more dangerous, especially for children. Kids’ bodies heat up faster than adults, they may not recognize early warning signs, and many feel pressure to push through discomfort instead of speaking up.

This bill is important because it gives schools clear guidance and the right tools to keep students safe. It would require statewide heat safety policies and ensure every public and charter school has funding to purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, including temperature, humidity, sun, and wind, not just how hot it feels outside.

Other states have experienced tragic and preventable student deaths from heat illness. States that adopted strong heat safety guidelines have not seen these tragedies continue. We have the opportunity to learn from those lessons and make heat-related illness a “never event” in Hawai‘i schools.

This bill is a practical, common-sense step to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt safely to a warming climate.

Thank you

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 6:04:28 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Militello	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai‘i is getting hotter, and our keiki are already feeling the effects. High temperatures combined with humidity make outdoor activities like recess, physical education, and sports more dangerous, especially for children. Kids’ bodies heat up faster than adults, they may not recognize early warning signs, and many feel pressure to push through discomfort instead of speaking up.

This bill is important because it gives schools clear guidance and the right tools to keep students safe. It would require statewide heat safety policies and ensure every public and charter school has funding to purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, including temperature, humidity, sun, and wind, not just how hot it feels outside.

Other states have experienced tragic and preventable student deaths from heat illness. States that adopted strong heat safety guidelines have not seen these tragedies continue. We have the opportunity to learn from those lessons and make heat-related illness a “never event” in Hawai‘i schools.

This bill is a practical, common-sense step to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt safely to a warming climate. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 8:44:58 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melanie Reis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Melanie Reis and **I support HB1803 HD1.**

As global temperatures rise, extreme heat events are becoming an increasing public health concern in Hawai'i. Over the past century, the state's average air temperature has risen by 0.76°F (0.42°C). This warming trend poses serious health risks, as prolonged heat exposure can lead to heat exhaustion, heat stroke, dehydration, and fatigue.

Hawai'i is getting hotter, and our keiki are already feeling the effects. High temperatures combined with humidity make outdoor activities like recess, physical education, and sports more dangerous, especially for children. Kids' bodies heat up faster than adults', they may not recognize early warning signs, and many feel pressure to push through discomfort instead of speaking up.

This bill is important because it gives schools clear guidance and the right tools to keep students safe. It would require statewide heat safety policies and ensure every public and charter school has funding to purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, including temperature, humidity, sun, and wind, not just how hot it feels outside.

This bill is a practical, common-sense step to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt safely to a warming climate. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

The climate crisis is a health crisis. I urge you to support HB1803 HD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Melanie Reis

MPH Student

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 10:11:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i is getting hotter, and our keiki are already feeling the effects. High temperatures combined with humidity make outdoor activities like recess, physical education, and sports more dangerous, especially for children. Kids' bodies heat up faster than adults, they may not recognize early warning signs, and many feel pressure to push through discomfort instead of speaking up.

This bill is important because it gives schools clear guidance and the right tools to keep students safe. It would require statewide heat safety policies and ensure every public and charter school has funding to purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, including temperature, humidity, sun, and wind, not just how hot it feels outside.

This bill is a practical, common-sense step to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt safely to a warming climate. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 1:52:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peggy Brandt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please protect our keiki.

Hawai‘i is getting hotter, and schools need clear, consistent protections to keep students safe during outdoor learning, recess, and sports. High temperatures combined with humidity increase the risk of heat illness, and these conditions are already affecting students across the state.

Children are especially vulnerable to heat-related illness. Their bodies heat up faster and cool down more slowly than adults, they spend significant time outdoors during the hottest parts of the day, and younger students may not recognize or communicate early warning signs. Students may also feel pressure to push through discomfort to avoid letting down a coach, teacher, or peers.

States that have adopted comprehensive heat safety guidelines have prevented severe heat illness and student deaths. Hawai‘i has the opportunity to learn from these successes and make heat-related illness a “never event” in our schools, while giving educators and coaches the guidance and resources they need to keep students safe as the climate continues to warm.

Let's join other informed states and adopt these guidelines.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Peggy Brandt

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 2:59:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Millikan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Debbie Millikan, and I support HB1803.

My students conducted a project last summer recording wet-bulb temperatures on school campuses across the island. There are clear differences between private and public schools and that has to change. Private school coaches are armored with expensive equipment, training and protocols to safeguard their students, public school coaches are not. We need to adopt best practices (they already exist) and outfit our public schools with proper equipment. It's simple. Let's do what's right for our young athletes who are suffering the consequences of rising temperatures.

Hawai'i is getting hotter, and our keiki are already feeling the effects. High temperatures combined with humidity make outdoor activities like recess, physical education, and sports more dangerous, especially for children. Kids' bodies heat up faster than adults', they may not recognize early warning signs, and many feel pressure to push through discomfort instead of speaking up.

This bill is important because it gives schools clear guidance and the right tools to keep students safe. It would require statewide heat safety policies and ensure every public and charter school has funding to purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, including temperature, humidity, sun, and wind, not just how hot it feels outside.

This bill is a practical, common-sense step to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt safely to a warming climate. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

The climate crisis is a health crisis. I urge you to support HB1803.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Debbie Millikan

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 5:11:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maria Moreno-Chow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i is getting hotter, and our keiki are already feeling the impacts. As temperatures rise and humidity increases, outdoor activities like recess, PE, and sports become more hazardous, especially for children. Kids' bodies heat up more quickly than adults' do, so they may miss early warning signs of heat illness, and many feel pressure to keep going instead of speaking up when they feel unwell.

This bill matters because it gives schools clear, consistent guidance and the tools they need to keep students safe. It would establish statewide heat safety policies and provide funding so every public and charter school can purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is considered the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, accounting for temperature, humidity, sun, and wind, not just the air temperature.

This bill is a practical, common-sense measure to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt responsibly to a warming climate. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 7:39:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolyn Eaton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Carolyn Eaton and I am a resident of Honolulu.

I appreciate this opportunity to express strong support for this measure which would set statewide heat safety standards and provide tools to prevent heat-related illness in student athletics. Student harm due to over-exertion in high temperatures, high humidity is a hazard we can avoid with understanding and the use of wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometers.

Mahalo for your hard work and concern for improving the lives, preventing unnecessary deaths, of the people of Hawai'i.

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 10:23:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bryan Mih	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Bryan Mih, and I am a parent and pediatrician. I strongly support this common sense bill. Statewide heat safety policies and the appropriate resources for all schools would provide clear guidelines and reduce the risk of preventable student deaths from heat illness

Mahalo,

Bryan Mih, MD MPH FAAP

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Dr. Martina Kamaka and I am a family physician and Professor at the University of Hawai'i, John A. Burns School of Medicine. I am writing in **strong support of HB1803 HD1**.

As a physician, I am concerned that our children are not prepared for a Hawai'i that is getting hotter and that these temperatures, combined with our higher humidity are making outdoor activities like recess, physical education, and sports more dangerous, especially for children. Kids' bodies heat up faster than adults'; they may not recognize early warning signs which can be confusing even to parents, coaches or adults overseeing activities. Students may also feel pressure to continue playing even when feeling poorly in order to not appear weak in front of coaches and teammates especially if it may adversely impact the team or "let the team down."

This bill is important because it gives schools clear guidance and the right tools to keep students safe. It would require statewide heat safety policies and ensure every public and charter school has funding to purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, including temperature, humidity, sun, and wind. It is not dependent on just "hot it feels." Other states, after having students fall ill and even die, have implemented rules and guidelines that for example, indicate when it is safe to play, how often water breaks and rest periods are provided, etc. WBGT provides critical data to guide these important decisions.

This bill is a practical, common-sense step to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt safely to a warming climate. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to our shared vision of a healthy Hawai'i and for your consideration of this important legislation.

Mahalo,

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

Martina Kamaka, MD

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 11:41:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
An Vo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is An and I'm a public health student in O'ahu.

Hawai'i is getting hotter, and our keiki are already feeling the effects. High temperatures combined with humidity make outdoor activities like recess, physical education, and sports more dangerous, especially for children. Kids' bodies heat up faster than adults, they may not recognize early warning signs, and many feel pressure to push through discomfort instead of speaking up.

This bill is important because it gives schools clear guidance and the right tools to keep students safe. It would require statewide heat safety policies and ensure every public and charter school has funding to purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, including temperature, humidity, sun, and wind, not just how hot it feels outside.

This bill is a practical, common-sense step to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt safely to a warming climate. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Mahalo,
An
Honolulu

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 7:06:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Mahealani Lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Dr. Nicole M. Lum, and I reside in District 7. I am writing in **support of HB1803 HD1.**

As a family medicine physician, I am faced with the rise in health problems amongst my patients due to environmental exposures, like heat. Hawai'i is getting hotter, and our keiki are already feeling the effects. High temperatures combined with humidity make outdoor activities like recess, physical education, and sports more dangerous, especially for children. Kids' bodies heat up faster than adults', they may not recognize early warning signs, and many feel pressure to push through discomfort instead of speaking up.

This bill is important because it gives schools clear guidance and the right tools to keep students safe. It would require statewide heat safety policies and ensure every public and charter school has funding to purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, including temperature, humidity, sun, and wind, not just how hot it feels outside.

The heat crisis is a health crisis. I urge you to support HB1803 HD1. This bill is a practical, common-sense step to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt safely to a warming climate.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,

Dr. Nicole M. Lum, D.O.

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 7:48:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Kiefer	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

In support of BH 1803 HD1

Good afternoon Chair Tood, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee.

My name is Dr. Elizabeth Kiefer. I'm an internal medicine physician, also trained in epidemiology, on faculty at JABSOM, and the mom of two teenage boys. I'm testifying today as an individual, but I am a member of the Climate Change and Health Working Group, and helped author this bill, which **I strongly support**.

From a clinical perspective, heat-related illness in children is preventable. As practitioners, we think of severe heat illness as a never event — something that should not happen when basic safety systems are in place. And yet, we are seeing warning signs here in Hawai'i.

Children are uniquely vulnerable to heat. They acclimatize more slowly, may be taking meds that impair heat regulation, like ADHD meds, and often don't have control over when or how long they are outside. Clinically, heat illness often starts subtly with headache, nausea, irritability — before escalating quickly.

We are already seeing impacts. At a recent PE conference, teachers shared concerns about how to keep students safe as temperatures rise and in fact, informed us that students are already experiencing heat illness during the day, including an incident that required evaluation in the emergency department. Those conversations prompted us to act quickly, leading to a wet-bulb globe temperature pilot we're conducting in a West O'ahu school.

But a pilot in one area is not enough.

This bill places wet-bulb globe temperature devices in Department of Education and charter schools statewide and pairs them with Hawai'i's existing Athletic Trainers Association heat acclimatization policy. Together, they provide clear, evidence-based guidance that protects students but also protects coaches and teachers by removing guesswork from safety decisions.

We know this works and as Hawai'i gets hotter, we need these tools in place now to prevent a preventable injury.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill,

Elizabeth Kiefer MD MPH

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 10:32:58 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **strong support** of HB1803, a vital measure that would establish statewide heat safety policies to protect our keiki from the very real and growing dangers of heat-related illness.

Climate change is not a distant threat; it is here, and it is making our schools hotter. Rising temperatures and high humidity levels across Hawai'i are increasing the risks to children, particularly during outdoor activities like sports practices, physical education, and even recess . Children are more vulnerable to heat stress than adults, and without proper precautions, a routine practice can quickly become a health emergency.

Currently, there is no statewide standard to protect students from excessive heat. Some schools may have informal guidelines, but others do not, leaving our keiki's safety up to chance. HB1803 would change that by requiring the Department of Education to implement uniform heat safety policies and provide every public and charter school with the tools they need to prevent heat-related illness in student athletics.

This legislation builds on important foundational work already underway. A recent resolution (HR179, 2025) requested a study on managing heat exposure in schools, recognizing that rising temperatures demand action. That resolution specifically called for exploring the use of wet-bulb globe temperature—the gold standard for measuring heat stress—and developing protocols for hydration, staff training, and student acclimatization. HB1803 takes the next logical step by turning study into action and guidelines into requirements.

We already know that heat illness is preventable when the right protocols are in place. Organizations like the HHSAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee have developed heat illness prevention guidelines, but without a statewide mandate, implementation is inconsistent. HB1803 would ensure that every coach, every athletic trainer, and every physical education teacher has the training and tools they need to keep our kids safe.

The bill is especially necessary given the trajectory we are on. As temperatures continue to climb due to climate change, the frequency and severity of heat events will only increase. Our keiki will be spending more time in extreme heat, not less. We cannot wait for a tragedy to occur before we act. We must be proactive in safeguarding the health of our students.

HB1803 is a common-sense investment in the well-being of Hawai'i's next generation. It says that no matter what school a child attends, they will be protected from the dangers of excessive heat. For the safety of our keiki and the peace of mind of our families, I urge you to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 4:50:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of. Thank you.

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 7:01:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Bernstein	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Todd and members of the FIN committee:

I'm writing in support of HB1803 HD1, which requires the Board of Education to adopt a heat acclimatization and practice policy for certain physical activities. This bill would require all Department of Education and public charter schools to provide sufficient breaks during athletics practices when heat risks are elevated, providing protection for our student-athletes.

Climate change is clearly upon us. Over the past century, the state's average air temperature has increased by approximately 0.76°F, and average humidity has increased. These two factors make it harder for the body's ability to cool itself. Such conditions are especially dangerous for young children and those participating in sports.

We owe it to our keiki to take steps to protect them against the dangers of climate change. This bill provides funds for the tools needed to effectively measure heat risks, which can then be used to limit our keiki's exposure to unneeded health risks.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo nui,

Paul Bernstein

Honolulu

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 9:30:38 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Kingdon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Legislators:

I urge you to support HB1803. In concur with the Hawaii Public Health Institute in their following observations and recommendations. As a paramedic and a public health researcher and practitioner, I have personal and professional experience with the threats of climate change.

Hawai'i is getting hotter, and our keiki are already feeling the effects. High temperatures combined with humidity make outdoor activities like recess, physical education, and sports more dangerous, especially for children. Kids' bodies heat up faster than adults, they may not recognize early warning signs, and many feel pressure to push through discomfort instead of speaking up.

This bill is important because it gives schools clear guidance and the right tools to keep students safe. It would require statewide heat safety policies and ensure every public and charter school has funding to purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, including temperature, humidity, sun, and wind, not just how hot it feels outside.

This bill is a practical, common-sense step to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt safely to a warming climate. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,

David Kingdon, MPH, Paramedic

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 10:39:34 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jotis Russell-Christian	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i is getting hotter, and our keiki are already feeling the effects. High temperatures combined with humidity make outdoor activities like recess, physical education, and sports more dangerous, especially for children. Kids' bodies heat up faster than adults, they may not recognize early warning signs, and many feel pressure to push through discomfort instead of speaking up.

This bill is important because it gives schools clear guidance and the right tools to keep students safe. It would require statewide heat safety policies and ensure every public and charter school has funding to purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, including temperature, humidity, sun, and wind, not just how hot it feels outside.

This bill is a practical, common-sense step to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt safely to a warming climate. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Jotis Russell-Christian

Kapahulu, Hawai'i

Dear House Committee on Finance Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee,

HB1803/SB2583

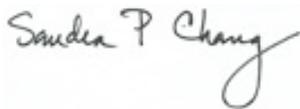
I am writing in support of HB1803 “Relating To Student Heat Exposure”.

My name is Sandra Chang and I reside in Nuuanu, Oahu. I am providing testimony as an individual in favor of HB1803/SB2583.

I am a Professor at the John A Burns School of Medicine and a steering committee member of the Hawaii Climate Change and Health Working Group. In recent years, Hawaii has experienced record-breaking heat. **Heat in the schools is an important health issue because children are highly vulnerable to high temperatures.** This summer, I worked with a group of high school students who monitored outdoor heat on various public school campuses on Oahu. Using a wet-bulb globe temperature thermometer, the students recorded high wet-bulb temperature levels above the standards for safe physical activity during certain school day hours on school campuses. Their observations supported the need for statewide requirements for managing extreme heat during outdoor school activities, including during physical education classes and sports practices and events. I strongly support the adoption of a heat acclimatization and practice policy by the board of education and provisioning of appropriate funds for training and implementation of this policy. **The modest request of \$180,000 for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the training and implementation of this policy as well as wet-bulb globe temperature thermometer purchase for public and charter schools will be a worthwhile investment to ensure the safety and health of Hawaii’s keiki in a warming climate.**

In conclusion, I strongly recommend your support of HB1803.

I thank the committee for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra P. Chang". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Sandra Chang, PhD

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 5:39:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy Shaver	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christy Shaver. I am a Hawai'i resident, educator, and graduate student in Environmental Studies focused on climate resilience and public health. I submit this testimony in strong support of this bill relating to student heat exposure safety.

Hawai'i is getting hotter. We all feel it. Our keiki feel it. Rising air temperatures combined with high humidity create dangerous conditions for exertional heat illness. Unlike dry heat environments, our humid climate limits the body's ability to cool itself through sweat evaporation. This makes heat stress both more likely and more difficult to recognize before it becomes serious.

Children are uniquely vulnerable. They acclimatize more slowly than adults. They rely on adults to determine when activities occur. They may not recognize early symptoms of heat distress or may push through discomfort due to peer pressure or coaching expectations. Recess, physical education, conditioning drills, and team practices are not optional experiences for many students. They deserve to be protected by evidence-based safety standards.

The use of wet-bulb globe temperature, rather than standard heat index measurements, reflects current best practice. WBGT is widely recognized by the United States military, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the National Collegiate Athletic Association, and professional athletic organizations as the gold standard for assessing heat stress risk. Adopting the Hawai'i Athletic Trainers Association Heat Acclimatization and Practice Policy statewide ensures that our public and charter schools are using science-based thresholds for modifying or canceling activities when conditions become unsafe.

This bill is not about limiting opportunity. It is about creating clear, consistent guardrails so that educators and coaches are not forced to make difficult safety decisions without guidance or equipment. It provides:

- Standardized WBGT-based thresholds for activity modification
- Onsite measurement requirements rather than relying on distant weather reports
- Hydration protocols
- Staff training to recognize and respond to exertional heat illness
- Safeguards for students with medical vulnerabilities
- Structured acclimatization procedures

Most importantly, it ensures that every school across the state follows the same protective framework.

The appropriation for training and the \$180,000 allocation for wet-bulb globe thermometers represent a modest investment compared to the potential human and financial cost of preventable heat stroke. A single severe incident can have lifelong consequences. Prevention is far less costly than emergency response.

As climate change continues to intensify heat events in Hawai'i, proactive policy is essential. We cannot wait for tragedy to mandate action. This bill aligns with public health best practices and demonstrates that Hawai'i prioritizes the safety and well-being of its students. Our keiki should not have to bear the risks of a warming climate without protection. This legislation provides a practical, evidence-based pathway to safeguard them.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass this bill.
Mahalo for your consideration.
Christy Shaver
Hawai'i Resident and Educator

HB-1803-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 2:37:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Kohn MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai‘i is getting hotter, and our keiki are already feeling the effects. High temperatures combined with humidity make outdoor activities like recess, physical education, and sports more dangerous, especially for children. Kids’ bodies heat up faster than adults, they may not recognize early warning signs, and many feel pressure to push through discomfort instead of speaking up.

This bill is important because it gives schools clear guidance and the right tools to keep students safe. It would require statewide heat safety policies and ensure every public and charter school has funding to purchase a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) thermometer. WBGT is the gold standard for heat safety because it measures heat the way the body actually experiences it, including temperature, humidity, sun, and wind, not just how hot it feels outside.

This bill is a practical, common-sense step to protect students, support educators and coaches, and help our schools adapt safely to a warming climate. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.