



**HAWAII**  
STATE FOUNDATION on  
CULTURE and the ARTS

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Honolulu, HI 96813

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**Testimony of KAREN EWALD, Executive Director  
State Foundation on Culture and the Arts**

**Before the  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2026 Conference Room 308 at 10:00AM**

**HOUSE BILL 1860\_HD1  
RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

Dear Chair Todd and members of the Committee,

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), is dedicated to the promotion, perpetuation, and preservation of culture and the arts in Hawai'i.

SFCA **SUPPORTS** H.B. 1860\_HD1 which designates the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. Requires annual reports to the Legislature. Appropriates moneys.

Public funding plays a crucial role in sustaining and enriching music performances, especially in ways that the private market alone often cannot. Public investment also has clear economic and social benefits. Music performances generate local employment, attract tourism, and contribute to lively public spaces. Beyond economics, they foster social cohesion by bringing people together, encouraging shared experiences, and strengthening community identity.

Grants and subsidies provide reliable support that helps artists and venues survive fluctuations in ticket sales, sponsorships, or economic downturns, ensuring long-term sustainability.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts encourages funding for arts and culture organizations throughout the state, including the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra.

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



**SERVCO PACIFIC INC.**  
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Representative Chris Todd, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair  
Committee on Finance

RE: HB 1860 HD1 - Relating to the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra – **In Support**  
Thursday, February 26, 2026; 10:00 AM  
Conference room 308

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi and members of the committee:

As a Board of Director of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) and on-behalf of Servco Pacific, Inc., I am writing in strong support of HB 1860 HD1, which designates the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra.

Founded in 1900, the HSO has become an integral part of our community, not only by hosting diverse concerts and programs featuring international performing artists but also by promoting local talent within Hawaii through its outreach and educational opportunities such as the Hapa Concert Series and No Hoku Opio youth competition. HSO also provides free concerts in parks, public spaces, and live streams to ensure access to all of Hawaii's residents.

By designating Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the "State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra," HB 1860 HD1 will enable HSO to obtain state funds and continue to deliver accessible and meaningful programs that benefits Hawaii's families, students, and communities.

We respectfully urge the Committee to pass HB 1860 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this measure.

Peter Dames  
President & CEO



1350 S. King Street, Suite 201 • Honolulu, HI • 96814

25 February 2026

*Testimony in Strong Support of HB 1860 HD 1 – Relating to the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra*

**Dear Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,**

Thank you for your consideration of **HB1860 HD1**, which would designate the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra. I am writing to you in **STRONG SUPPORT** for these efforts, notably for the **public value** that professional symphony orchestras bring to the community, from keiki to kupuna and all in between.

We are in particular support for the activities mentioned in the sixth paragraph of HD1; that is, that **“community program initiatives exemplify the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra's service and dedication to the public,”** such as the **Side-by-Side concerts** it performs with **Hawai‘i Youth Symphony**. While the HSO undertakes many other community initiatives, it is the **two Side-by-Side concerts** it performs with HYS and our summer intensive, the Pacific Music Institute, that contribute greatly to the growth and inspiration of our young people.

The ripple effects of projects like these are huge. They immediately transfer tacit knowledge, both tangible (e.g. tone production, technical skills) and psychological (how musicians lead, how to problem solve, how to work nonverbally). They help youth to form their own identities, understand belonging, and think about college/career pipelines. Similarly, adult professionals also benefit from their organization’s undertaking of educational programs, as they reflect on their own journeys in relation to mentorship and pedagogy; building intergenerational and therefore community relationships.

Beyond these direct projects, State investment in the HSO sends a meaningful message to all in our islands who believe in the power of music to connect, transform, and heal. State funding for the HSO helps to establish a cultural norm, in which we collectively recognize artistic excellence as a public good, not a luxury commodity or privilege for a few. Supporting HSO financially also takes care of its corps of musicians, who educate and take part in community activities in immense and numerous ways.

I wrote in previous testimony, which I stand behind, that the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra exemplifies the balance between artistic integrity and civic purpose. We respectfully encourage the continued prioritization of the HSO’s **FREE educational programs for youth and families**, which are the lifeblood of its community connectivity and a natural extension of its artistic mission.

Granting an appropriation to the HSO will help their team to focus on the delivery of aforementioned public programs, which will benefit youth, kupuna, and everyone in between.

Thank you, FIN Committee, for strengthening the stature and impact of the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra, and recognizing the importance of orchestral music for our communities statewide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Wong". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Randy" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Wong".

Randy Wong  
President & CEO, Hawai‘i Youth Symphony  
Musician, Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 6:25:47 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gerdine Markus	Pacific Academy of Music	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill.

Gerdine Markus, Director Pacific Academy of Music

Pahoa, HI



## Hawai'i Arts Alliance

### Testimony in Support of HB1860 (HD1) Relating to the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra

**HEARING DATE & TIME:** 02/26/2026 10:00 AM

**ROOM:** 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**COMMITTEE:** FINANCE

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

The Hawai'i Arts Alliance stands in **support** of this bill.

This measure recognizes the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra's long-standing public service and formally designates it as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, while providing operating support in exchange for community and educational services.

As a former performing artist, I know firsthand how access to live music and arts education shapes young people, strengthens communities, and contributes to Hawai'i's cultural vitality. The Symphony's free performances, school partnerships, and youth engagement exemplify this impact.

HB1860 (HD1) represents a meaningful investment in arts access, education, and creative workforce sustainability.

We respectfully urge your support. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Gaye Humphrey  
Executive Director  
Hawai'i Arts Alliance



HAWAI'I  
SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA

DANE LAM | MUSIC AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawai'i  
Regular Session of 2026  
House Committee on Finance  
Testimony by Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra  
February 26, 2026

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1860 HD1**  
**- RELATING TO THE HAWAI'I SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

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

As Music and Artistic Director and President and CEO, respectively, of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra, and we request your support of **HB1860 HD1**, which would designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. This designation would ensure **equal access to world-class symphonic music for all residents, regardless of where they live.**

Music is not only entertainment; it helps mental health, physical health, brain development, and socialization. It teaches concentration, perseverance, listening, and working together. Music brings people together and uplifts our communities, and HSO is a community service provider.

Providing State designation is important for both HSO and our state for a number of reasons:

**1. HSO Provides Significant Public Service to the State**

HSO delivers meaningful public service through cultural, educational, and artistic programming. It enhances access to high-quality music and promotes cultural engagement across Hawai'i. We are proud of all we offer at HSO, such as:

- More than 40 diverse concerts annually
- Free community concerts
- Free education concerts including Symphony of the Hawai'i Seas
- Our Na Hoku Opio - Young Stars competition that showcases the talented young Hawai'i students
- Side-by-side projects with Hawai'i Youth Symphony

- A Masterworks Series that brings the world's best music and greatest artists to Hawai'i

Our HapaSymphony concerts that combine the talents of Hawai'i's most revered musicians including Keola Beamer, Jake Shimabukuro, and Raiatea Helm with the power of a full symphony orchestra

- Commissioning new works by living composers from around our Pacific region, embracing our geography as a Pacific orchestra
- Uniting the state's most important arts organizations under one umbrella in our groundbreaking Beethoven Festival and this year's Sounds of Shakespeare Festival
- The musicians are our greatest asset: We employ some of the United States' finest musicians to play in the HSO. They don't only play in the orchestra, though; they also play the vital role of educating our children
- Sharing live symphonic music that has been linked in numerous studies with vastly improved academic performance, better outcomes for young people, and increased social cohesion

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## **2. HSO Has Deep Historical Roots in Hawai'i**

HSO (formerly the Honolulu Symphony) was founded in **1902**, making it one of the oldest orchestras in the United States west of the Rockies. Its longevity reflects a century-long bond with Hawai'i's communities and cultural heritage. This long history includes surviving world wars, the Great Depression, and major financial crises — demonstrating resilience that mirrors the perseverance of Hawai'i itself.

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## **3. HSO is a Vital Cultural Institution Delivering Essential Public Service**

The orchestra's educational initiatives support thousands of children, addressing unequal distribution of arts education and improving academic and social outcomes through exposure to music.

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## **4. It Reflects and Elevates Hawai'i's Cultural Identity**

HSO works with both world-renowned guest artists and local musicians, promoting Hawai'i-based talent and fostering cultural collaborations that reflect Hawai'i's unique heritage. Our programming includes classical masterworks, film concerts, pops performances, Hawaiian collaborations, and more, showcasing the cultural diversity of the islands and enriching local artistic life – for residents and visitors alike.

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## **5. It Supports Local Musicians and Strengthens Hawai'i's Creative Economy**

HSO employs **85 professional musicians** and regularly commissions or collaborates with top-tier artists. This contributes to Hawai'i's creative economy and provides stable professional opportunities within the arts sector.

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## In Summary

Designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State Orchestra of Hawai'i is supported by strong evidence that HSO:

- Serves the public good statewide
- Preserves and elevates Hawai'i's cultural identity
- Expands arts access and education
- Supports local professionals and the arts economy
- Has a 125-year historical legacy worth honoring

A **designated State Orchestra** would be a **cultural and economic asset**, supporting local jobs, driving tourism, and strengthening our communities through music.

Thank you for your support of **HB1860 HD1** to make symphonic music a lasting and meaningful part of life for all Hawai'i residents.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.



Dane Lam  
Music and Artistic Director



Amy Iwano  
President and CEO



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February 24, 2026

Chair Chris Todd  
Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi  
House Committee Members on Finance

### **HB1860 HD1 – Relating to the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra**

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

My name is Paul Kosasa, and I am the President and Chief Executive Officer of ABC Stores, a locally owned business that has proudly served Hawai‘i’s communities for more than seven decades. I also currently serve as Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra, a role I have held for the past 15 years.

I write in **strong support of HB1860 HD1**, relating to the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra. The Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra is a vital cultural institution that enriches our state through world-class musical performances, educational programming, and meaningful community engagement. Its contributions enhance Hawai‘i’s quality of life, support arts education, and strengthen the cultural fabric that benefits both residents and visitors alike. As a business deeply rooted in Hawai‘i, ABC Stores recognizes the important role that the arts play in fostering strong communities and a well-rounded economy. Institutions such as the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra help attract talent, inspire creativity, and reinforce Hawai‘i’s reputation as a place where culture and community are valued. HB1860 HD1 supports the continued sustainability and success of the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra and reflects the Legislature’s commitment to preserving and promoting the arts in our state. This measure will help ensure that future generations can continue to experience the educational and cultural benefits the Symphony provides. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your consideration of HB1860 HD1. We respectfully urge your support.

Mahalo,

Paul Kosasa  
President & CEO  
ABC Stores

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 10:14:07 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
lynne matusow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is great. To finally have an official state orchestra. Since its formation several years ago the Hawai'i Symphony has travelled statewide and in addition to performing paid concerts also provides free concerts in the community. Please move this bill forward.

lynne matusow

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 10:56:03 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Winston R Welch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

I am in full support of this bill regarding the Hawaii Symphony.

Thank you,

Winsotn Welch, Honolulu

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 2:00:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Erica Mau-SChank	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**As a supporter of the Hawai'i Youth Symphony, I also strongly support H.B. 1860 HD1,** which designates the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra and provides ongoing funding for its artistic and educational activities. The HSO is a vital artistic institution that enriches our communities through free and accessible performances, educational partnerships, and outreach to schools and families. This designation will help stabilize its operations, increase public access to orchestral music, and reinforce the value of the arts in the cultural and educational life of our state.

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 2:36:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Peter Hayashida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

When it comes to orchestral music, Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra defines excellence in our state. This community asset deserves support and funding from our kama'aina, as represented by the Hawai'i legislature. As a Hawai'i voter and resident, I cherish the existing arts organizations and urge the legislature to expand resources, strengthen their community outreach, and provide for their sustainability. Passing 1860 HB will be a testament to the love we collectively feel for HSO and an investment ensuring future generations have access to classical music.

Please support this bill to advance the arts in Hawai'i.

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 2:42:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Thiago Cossi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I understand that the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra has long served as a cornerstone of the State's cultural and artistic life, providing performances that enrich community education, showcase local talent, and connect Hawaii to international artistic traditions. Therefore, I believe it would be beneficial for it to be designated as the "state of Hawaii's orchestra" similarly to the Royal Hawaiian Band. This would allow for a higher quality orchestra, as well as a reputation for the state in the world of symphonic music.

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 2:48:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jack Yamada	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In this age of increasing digitization of everything the State should strive to protect and promote the Arts in all "analog" forms and continuing the legacy of the Honolulu Symphony should be foremost in that effort (and by extension the playing of instruments in all genres).

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 2:51:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
JENNIFER TOWNSEND	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a supporter of the Hawai'i Youth Symphony, I also strongly support H.B. 1860 HD1, which designates the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra and provides ongoing funding for its artistic and educational activities. The HSO is a vital artistic institution that enriches our communities through free and accessible performances, educational partnerships, and outreach to schools and families. This designation will help stabilize its operations, increase public access to orchestral music, and reinforce the value of the arts in the cultural and educational life of our state.

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 2:53:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brenner Danielson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I respectfully urge you to reconsider the use of public funds for the general operating costs of the HSO at this time. Hawai‘i’s economy continues to face significant challenges, and every dollar from the general fund carries real consequences for families and small businesses across our islands. Directing limited state funds toward ongoing operational support for an organization that many already voluntarily choose to support privately must be weighed against urgent public needs.

I believe that the arts are best supported through voluntary, private contributions from the community and donors who choose to invest in them. That model respects individual choice, encourages community engagement, and preserves public dollars for core priorities such as education, healthcare, public safety, and housing — all areas that directly affect the well-being of our residents.

I would also like to address the written testimony submitted by Mr. Paul Kosasa, President and CEO of ABC Stores and Chairperson of the Board of the Honolulu Symphony.

Mr. Kosasa leads one of Hawai‘i’s most prominent and longstanding local businesses. **Individuals like Mr. Kosasa, in positions of significant financial capacity and influence are fully capable of sustaining and expanding support for the HSO through private donations, corporate sponsorships, and fundraising leadership.** That approach allows those who are passionate about the Symphony to invest in it directly, without requiring working families across the state to subsidize it through tax dollars.

Voluntary private support respects both the value of the arts and the financial realities facing everyday residents. It allows cultural institutions to thrive based on community enthusiasm and philanthropic commitment rather than legislative mandate.

For these reasons, I oppose this measure and respectfully urge this Committee to consider fiscal priorities and accountability and to allow individuals to choose how they support the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra rather than obligating the state’s general fund through this bill.

Mahalo for your time and consideration of this testimony.



**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 3:11:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lucille Frances	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

One symphony orchestra with superior skills and commitment to music education in Hawaii. the orchestra exhibits the broad scope of musical knowledge internationally as well as local, all genres.

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 3:23:55 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Richard E. Duggan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My wife and I have supported HSO since we moved here 31years ago. The orchestra is world class with very accomplished musicians and excellent leadership. The music they perform is targeted toward a large audience of all ages and cultures. We must support them!

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 3:30:56 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maya Sypert	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please accept this testimony in full support of HB1860. As a professional musician, Professor of Music and Associate Chair of the Department of Music at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, and as a member of this community for almost 20 years, I can attest to the significance of this organization on several levels. Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra is a world class orchestra that is dedicated to excellence. As a professional singer who has sung all over the world, I have been honored to perform with this orchestra several times, and they continue to be outstanding for their combination of outstanding musicality, collegiality, warmth, and aloha. Students of all ages from keiki to kupuna have learned from this orchestra in concert, classrooms, and in the community. In the past few years alone, HSO has reached tens of thousands of children through revolutionary projects like the *Symphony of the Birds* and *Raise Hawaiki*-- two exemplary pieces by local composers that weave Hawaiian culture and traditions into the fabric of a classical symphony orchestra.

This orchestra IS Hawaii's orchestra- from local composers and the greatest Hawaiian music artists to internationally acclaimed conductors and musicians and everything in between, the HSO represents the best of music, the best of Hawai‘i, and the best promise for ensuring that great music remains an integral part our community. Thank you for honoring them in the process thus far, and please designate the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra as the official state symphony. If any orchestra has ever deserved this honor, it is our symphony.

Mahalo for your support and consideration,

Dr. Maya Sypert, Professor of Music and Associate Chair, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa  
Department of Music

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 3:47:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Maurer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- **As a supporter of the Hawai‘i Youth Symphony, I also strongly support H.B. 1860 HD1**, which designates the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra as the official State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra and provides ongoing funding for its artistic and educational activities. The HSO is a vital artistic institution that enriches our communities through free and accessible performances, educational partnerships, and outreach to schools and families. This designation will help stabilize its operations, increase public access to orchestral music, and reinforce the value of the arts in the cultural and educational life of our state.

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 4:00:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Yvonne Manipon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1860 to designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, strengthening its role in our cultural identity and arts ecosystem. This bill will enhance the sustainability, community reach, and statewide access to symphonic music for residents of all ages.

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 4:29:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nancy and Errol Rubin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We support the our honolulu symphony to become our state official. They do so much for our community and are ready to do much more

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 5:12:56 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carol Fahy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please make the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra, the official symphony of Hawaii. It adds so much to the experience of living in Hawaii to have a high caliber orchestra that provides entertainment nearly every weekend of the year. Visitors love the Hawaii Symphony as well. Please designate the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra the official orchestra of Hawaii!

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 5:38:56 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sonia Blackiston	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha - music and the arts are crucial components of community. I support this measure and urge you to do the same. Mahalo!

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 6:40:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alyssa Kawamura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**As a supporter of the Hawai'i Youth Symphony, I also strongly support H.B. 1860 HD1,** which designates the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra and provides ongoing funding for its artistic and educational activities. The HSO is a vital artistic institution that enriches our communities through free and accessible performances, educational partnerships, and outreach to schools and families. This designation will help stabilize its operations, increase public access to orchestral music, and reinforce the value of the arts in the cultural and educational life of our state.

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 5:43:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorrin Hirano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**As a supporter of the Hawai'i Youth Symphony, I strongly support H.B. 1860 HD1.** This measure designates the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra and provides ongoing funding for its artistic and educational activities. The HSO is critical to the culture of Hawaii and the stability of the arts community. It provides free and accessible performances, educational partnerships, outreach to schools and families, and a professional standard to which our students may aspire. This designation will help stabilize its operations, increase public access to orchestral music, and reinforce the value of the arts in the life of our State. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **strong support** of HB 1860, HD1.

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 9:00:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carol Hirai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Recognition of the HSO as an essential community resource for promoting the arts.

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 10:51:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Oppose

1860 HB RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.

HSO CONCERT AT WAI'ANAE DISTRICT PARKS, LIKE KAILUA?

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 6:27:08 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
James Shattuck	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Honorable Legislators,

I am in strong favor of the important role that the arts play in strengthening our communities and supporting a well-rounded economy. The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra attracts talent, inspires creativity, and reinforces Hawai'i's reputation as a place where culture and community are valued. HB1860 supports the continued sustainability and success of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra and reflects the Legislature's commitment to preserving and promoting the arts in our state. I believe this measure will ensure future generations can continue to experience the educational and cultural benefits the Symphony provides for the community it serves, the State of Hawai'i..

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 7:32:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Keira Ida Ayu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a letter I recently wrote to Ms. Iwano Designating HSO as the state symphony would help make this happen

Thank you for your consideration

Dear Amy Iwano,

My name is Keira Ida Ayu, and I am a junior at Waiākea High School on Hawai‘i Island. I am also a member of Hawai‘i Youth Symphony (YSII). I am writing to respectfully ask if the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra will return to Hawai‘i Island for performances and student education programs.

I know that touring requires significant planning, funding, and coordination. I also understand that the Orchestra has gone through several changes in the past decade. Still, I hope you will consider how meaningful it would be for students and families here to once again experience a full professional orchestra live in our own community.

Historically, the symphony toured neighboring islands and provided educational concerts for students across the state. For many young musicians, those performances were transformative. Today, many students on Hawai‘i Island have never experienced a full professional orchestra in person.

We are incredibly grateful for the work of local ensembles such as the Kamuela Philharmonic Orchestra and the Orchid Isle Orchestra, which do so much work here. A visit from the Hawai‘i Symphony would not replace their work, but simply elevate and complement it by giving students the opportunity to hear a professional orchestra performing at the highest level.

I would like to offer not only a request, but also a partnership. I am committed to helping organize community support and fundraising efforts on Hawai‘i Island to make a tour possible. I am working to gather community leaders, educators, and arts supporters to explore sponsorships,

grants, and local contributions that could help offset travel and production costs. My hope is to build a sustainable model that could support future visits as well.

As discussions continue at the state level about recognizing the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as our state orchestra, I believe neighbor island access is an important part of that vision. Students across all islands should have the opportunity to experience the symphony live.

If you would be willing, I would be honored to schedule a conversation to learn what it would take to make a Hawai'i Island performance possible. I am eager to listen and to work collaboratively toward a realistic plan.

Thank you for your leadership and for everything you and the musicians of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra do for our state.

With respect and hope,

Keira Ida Ayu  
Junior, Waiākea High School  
Member, Hawai'i Youth Symphony YSII

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 8:42:47 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lauren Sergent	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**As a supporter of the Hawai'i Youth Symphony, I also strongly support H.B. 1860 HD1,** which designates the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra and provides ongoing funding for its artistic and educational activities. The HSO is a vital artistic institution that enriches our communities through free and accessible performances, educational partnerships, and outreach to schools and families. This designation will help stabilize its operations, increase public access to orchestral music, and reinforce the value of the arts in the cultural and educational life of our state.

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 8:54:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Susan Browne	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official state orchestra. This will insure that Hawai'i has a professional orchestra that can thrive and survive in today's complex world. In additon, it helps with educating our children in music appreciation as well as furthering music education for those with gifts in this area.

Susan Browne

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 9:22:08 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jennifer Chiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Please support HB 1860 HD 1. Designating the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra will, I think, enable the Orchestra to reach more people in Hawaii and will be so beneficial to them. The music provided by the wonderful musicians of this Orchestra can uplift, enrich and heal.

Again, please support HB 1860 HD 1.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

**HB-1860-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 9:48:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lynn Murakami Akatsuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB 1860, HD 1 passage this legislative session. Their community outreach and plans for more statewide performances is awesome.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 1860, HD 1.