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April 1, 2026

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: HB1860 HD2 SD1 – Relating to the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Paul Kosasa, President and Chief Executive Officer of ABC Stores, and Chair of the Board of Directors of the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra. I write in **strong support of HB1860 HD2 SD1**, which would designate the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra as the “State of Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra” and exempt state funds it receives from chapter 42F, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes, while requiring appropriate reporting and oversight.

The Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra serves communities statewide through performances, arts education, and outreach that strengthen Hawai‘i’s quality of life and cultural foundation for residents and visitors.

As a locally owned business, ABC Stores values the arts’ role in building vibrant communities and a well-rounded economy. Supporting institutions like the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra helps inspire creativity, strengthen arts education, and enhance Hawai‘i’s cultural offerings.

Because the measure, as amended, no longer includes a direct appropriation, we respectfully ask the Legislature and your Committee to continue to consider reliable operating support for the Symphony through the appropriate budget and grants processes. Stable support helps sustain core operations, educational outreach, and community programs, paired with the accountability measures in the bill, including annual reporting and the ability for fiscal review of state funds.

HB1860 HD2 SD1 reflects the Legislature’s commitment to preserving and promoting the arts in our State. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your consideration. I respectfully urge your support.

Mahalo,

Paul Kosasa
President & Chief Executive Officer
ABC Stores



SERVCO PACIFIC INC.
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Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

RE: HB 1860 HD2 SD1 - Relating to the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra – **In Support**
Monday, April 6, 2026; 10:32 AM
Conference room 211

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki 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 HD2 SD1, which designates the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. The bill also requires annual reports to the Legislature and exempts state funds received by the HSO from chapter 42F, HRS.

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 HD2 SD1 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 HD2 SD1. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this measure.

Peter Dames
President & CEO



TESTIMONY OF DAVE ERDMAN
INTERIM PRESIDENT & CEO
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAI'I

**IN SUPPORT OF HB 1860, HD2, SD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAI'I SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Monday, April 6, 2026, 10:32 a.m.
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dave Erdman, and I serve as Interim President and CEO of Retail Merchants of Hawai'i (RMH), a statewide nonprofit trade association representing retailers, shopping centers, restaurants operating within retail establishments, and allied businesses across Hawai'i.

Retail Merchants of Hawai'i respectfully supports HB 1860, HD2, SD1, which designates the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, requires annual reporting to the Legislature, and exempts state funds received by the organization from chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra has long served an important public purpose through cultural enrichment, education programs, and community engagement across the state. As outlined in the measure, the orchestra provides performances, supports local musicians, offers educational opportunities for students and educators, and contributes to community programming that is accessible to residents statewide. These activities reflect the orchestra's longstanding role as a cultural institution serving the broader public.

From the perspective of the retail and business community, arts and cultural organizations such as the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra also contribute to economic vitality. Performances and related events bring residents and visitors into business districts, supporting nearby restaurants, retailers, and other small businesses. These activities help strengthen neighborhood commercial areas and contribute to the overall vibrancy of Hawai'i's visitor and creative economies.

RMH also appreciates that the measure maintains accountability through required annual reporting to the Legislature while recognizing the orchestra's public service role. This balanced

approach supports continued community programming while ensuring transparency in the use of state funds.

Many RMH member businesses have long supported arts and cultural initiatives across Hawai'i. A strong cultural sector enhances quality of life for residents, supports workforce retention, and contributes to Hawai'i's appeal as a destination for visitors. The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra plays an important role in that broader ecosystem.

For these reasons, **Retail Merchants of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee on Ways and Means to support HB 1860, HD2, SD1.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Erdman
Interim President & CEO
Retail Merchants of Hawai'i



Transforming Dance for Tomorrow!

April 1, 2026

Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawai'i
Regular Session of 2026 - House Committee on Finance
Testimony by TAU DANCE THEATER - IN SUPPORT OF HB1860 HD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAI'I SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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

As the Executive and Artistic Director of Tau Dance Theater (TDT) who is celebrating 30 years as a driving artistic force for arts and culture in Hawai'i, the greater Pacific and throughout our wonderful Global Village as artistic ambassadors for Hawai'i to the world, we humbly request your support of HB1860 HD1. As the only professional dance company based in Honolulu founded and directed by a Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian), we whole heartedly support the designation of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra.

As a local boy from Waimalu and Aiea who went through the public educational system, a lifetime Hula practitioner, left Hawaii in the 1980's to New York to pursue a career as a professional ballet dancer. Upon returning home, I formed my own dance company in the 1990's. I remember when Honolulu boasted a state and city supported symphony, opera and dance company (Honolulu City Ballet)! The arts flourishing and supported in any global city is the mark of a successful and well-balanced administration. Hawai'i deserves this makana (gift) to help to enrich our daily lives. The evolution of the arts not only focusing on technique, artistry and excellence, leverages the importance of outreach, education, diversity and non-elitist inclusivity to deliver an even more immersive experience to its audiences.

In December of 2025, TDT was invited by HSO to perform live at the NBC Concert Hall for their HAPA series. This is one of the many seasonal offerings that provides a strong platform for collaboration with local and Native Hawaiian performing artists on a world class stage!

Please feel free to contact me directly for further conversation on our unanimous support of HB1860 HD1, Peter Rockford Espiritu – Mobile: 808-824-1151 email: tau@taudance.org

Mālama Pono,

Peter Rockford Espiritu
Executive & Artistic Director, Tau Dance Theater

P.O. Box 1878 Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815-1878 USA

Mobile: +1.808.824.1151 email: tau@taudance.org Website: www.taudance.org



Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawai'i
Regular Session of 2026
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Testimony by Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra
April 6, 2026

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1860 HD2 SD1
– RELATING TO THE HAWAI'I SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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 HD2 SD1**, 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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 HD2 SD1** 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

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 4:34:35 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Williams	Testifying for Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We submitted written testimony earlier on behalf of the Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association and wanted to reiterate our wholehearted support for HB1860 as this important measure advances.

The Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to the promotion, preservation, and perpetuation of traditional Hawaiian music, with a special focus on the unique and iconic sound of the Hawaiian steel guitar. Our members include students, legendary musicians, and passionate supporters of Hawaiian music worldwide. We host festivals, provide scholarships for young players, and work to keep this vital part of Hawai‘i’s cultural heritage alive and thriving.

The Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra plays a valuable role in our islands’ musical life by presenting high-quality performances and, in recent years, through innovative programming such as the HapaSymphony series. These efforts bring together symphonic musicians with talented Hawaiian artists, creating beautiful fusions that celebrate our local traditions, support musicians, educate audiences, and strengthen community connections.

HB1860 wisely designates the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra as the official State of Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra. It provides sensible accountability through annual reports to the Legislature while exempting state funds from certain provisions of Chapter 42F, HRS. These steps recognize the orchestra’s central role in our cultural ecosystem and ensure responsible use of public resources.

Formal state recognition of this historic institution strengthens Hawai‘i’s commitment to excellence in the arts and helps sustain the living traditions that make our islands unique—including the cherished sound of the Hawaiian steel guitar. In a time when cultural preservation and community connection are more important than ever, passing HB1860 sends a powerful message that Hawai‘i values its rich musical heritage.

We urge the Committee to pass HB1860 and advance this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony again and for your ongoing support of the arts in our state. We stand ready to answer any questions.

Michael Williams

Board Member

Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association www.hsga.org

4 April 2026

Senate Committee on Ways & Means (WAM)
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair

*Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of
HB 1860 HD2 SD1 – Relating to the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra*

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

I am pleased to write on behalf of Hawai'i Youth Symphony, as its President & CEO, **in strong SUPPORT of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra (HB 1860 HD2 SD1)** and of the reverberant impact that orchestral music makes in the development of artistic, educational, and intergenerational communities statewide.

Over the past 15 years, **HYS and the HSO have developed a symbiotic, resonant partnership**; one that is both dynamic and collaborative. Positive relationships between the two organizations are pervasive and found across multiple levels: among our boards, our executive & artistic leaders, our workforces (many HSO musicians are HYS faculty or staff), and our other stakeholders.

Together, our two organizations strive to encourage and inspire Hawai'i's young people, particularly via the flagship, **Side-by-Side collaborations** that we have been undertaking semiannually for HYS' [Youth Symphony I](#) and [Pacific Music Institute](#) programs.¹

For HYS students, the chance to be mentored by the working professional musicians within the HSO is akin to joining the Major Leagues. Whether or not our students themselves aspire to become career musicians, all youth can benefit from meeting professional musicians. **Music drives one's work ethic, commitment, interpersonal relationships, self-awareness/resilience, and creativity to the highest degree.** Development of these qualities are substantially impactful to our young people and transfer beyond music/the arts to all facets of everyday life.

Other HSO educational programs, like the **Beyond The Music series** (which also include HYS-presented **Instrument Petting Zoos**), provide important "Classical Music 101"-type events to help introduce kids and families to symphonic music. These programs complement (not duplicate or compete with) activities by HYS, like our long-standing Listen & Learn school concerts.

Since 2021, HYS and HSO have also collaborated on a concert series called **Na Hōkū 'Ōpio: The Young Stars**, which features high school students as its soloists. This has yielded very meaningful opportunities for the most aspiring students. Already, some 19 youth have been featured. This series complements a similar project we do at HYS; again, further extending opportunities.

All this said, we also appreciate the HSO for the many, many ways that its concerts inspire and uplift audience members of all backgrounds. Thanks to Maestro Dane Lam, **the HSO is prolific in its artistic output.** We

¹ A "Side-by-Side" is a rehearsal/concert event that takes place when the high school members of HYS sit next to an adult professional from HSO. The magnitude of what these projects mean to our shared community is best expressed here: <https://youtu.be/5L5wn2ULFOg>

applaud HSO for programming (literally) something for everyone: From their popular “Film in Concert” series (e.g. Harry Potter, Star Wars, How to Train Your Dragon), its guest film composers (e.g. Joe Hisaishi/Studio Ghibli), to their Halekulani Masterworks Series (Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Sibelius, Stravinsky, etc.), annual themed Festivals that inspire multi-arts collaborations (Beethoven Festival, Shakespeare Festival), performances of living composers (Michael-Thomas Foumai, Leilehua Lanzilotti, and others), and popular entertainers—the **HSO is home to creative capital in our state**; and one that must be protected.

When I began as HYS’ Executive Director in March 2012, most of the youth in our organization had not ever seen, let alone experienced mentorship from the Honolulu Symphony (predecessor to HSO). As I reflect on the last 15 years, it has been transformative to see the Hawai’i Symphony Orchestra develop. All the programs I mentioned earlier in this letter have been birthed in just these short years while they persevered through the Pandemic and other challenging world scenarios. In addition, **many HYS alums have joined the HSO’s ranks; a testament to our mutual role in workforce development.**²

It’s said that “the best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago; the second-best time is today.” With the advancement of **HB1860 HD2 SD1** and **SB2603 SD1 HD1**, you will help to anchor those roots so that the HSO tree of tomorrow can stake its future today.

Where will we go from here, and what more can/will HSO & HYS do together to support keiki and ‘ohana across the state?

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,



Randy Wong
President & CEO (and alum)

² Over time, we have seen many alumni of HYS join the HSO’s ranks. For years, it was difficult for our alums to imagine coming home without a professional orchestra. With HSO now an option, we are proud of the contingent who can return home to Hawai’i. They serve multiple roles in our community; not just as musicians, but as teachers, civic leaders, Royal Hawaiian Band members, and role models.

I encourage you also to read our blog post, “[From Student to Professional: HYS Alumni in the Hawai’i Symphony Orchestra](#),” for more on this burgeoning career pathway, which has many, many community benefits.

Here are a few images from recent HYS x HSO collabs that have had great meaning for youth across our state:



Side-by-Side activities bring together youth across the state (like this one, featuring 70+ students from all counties, of our Pacific Music Institute summer program) with HSO musicians



An HYS oboist sitting side-by-side the Principal Oboist of the HSO.



An HYS student cellist who was selected to perform for the Nā Hōkū ‘Ōpio: Young Stars concert series

HAWAII Youth SYMPHONY

& PACIFIC MUSIC INSTITUTE
1350 S. King Street, Suite 201 • Honolulu, HI • 96814



An HYS student sitting side-by-side professional musicians of the HSO.



An HYS alum (now HSO violinist) introducing keiki to string instruments at an Instrument Petting Zoo for HSO's "Beyond the Music" concert



HYS alumni, now musicians and/or staff of HSO

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 5:36:44 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcia Kemble	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of HB1860 HD2 SD1. This recognition would help ensure that world-class symphonic music continues to thrive in our islands, enriching our community for generations to come. It will be particularly helpful for those who live on neighbor islands.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Marcia Kemble

Makiki

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 9:51:19 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
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-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 10:43:25 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support this legislation.

David Ball

Waiialae-Kahala

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 12:04:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqueline Beckman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Legislatures:

Please support **Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State Symphony of Hawai'i.**

Mahalo,

Jacqueline Beckman

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

The Senate

The Thirty-Third Legislature, Regular Session of 2026

Hearing Date and Time: April 6, 2026 at 10:32 AM

Re: **HB 1860, HD 2, SD 1 RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

Written Testimony Only (In Support)

CHAIR LEE, VICE CHAIR INOUYE, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Lloyd Lim and I am testifying in my individual capacity in strong support of HB 1860, SD 1 designating the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) as the Hawaii State orchestra and providing partial funding. The current HSO is a vastly superior orchestra to the HSO of 20 to 50 years ago. This is an excellent orchestra on the upswing with great future potential for Hawaii. The string section sound would surprise anyone. I have heard live performances by the Vienna Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Concertgebouw of Amsterdam, the Boston Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Montreal Symphony and the St. Louis Symphony. I feel as if I have a basis for comparison. Recently, the HSO put on the Mozart Oboe Concerto and the Mahler 9 (a complex piece). I had a surreal feeling as I came out of the hall—could this fine a concert really be done in Hawaii, and with that big an audience turnout? Yes!

Many of the orchestra musicians are also music teachers in our community helping to raise our kids. Music education isn't just about making kids happy or helping them to fit into more rarefied workplaces; it is about brain development, giving kids a head start, a competitive advantage.

But you don't have to take my word for it. *Columbia Magazine* (Spring/Summer 2015) noted that Columbia Medical School considers a music background in admissions because it can assist both diagnosis skills and the motor control needed for surgery. Also, *The Great Courses* class Music and the Brain taught by Professor Anniruddh D. Patel noted that music training also has a significant overlapping effect on the development of verbal skills. A piece in the March 28, 2026 issue of *The Economist* (at p. 79) confirms that playing an instrument is good for the brain, even for amateurs.

I have gone to many HSO concerts and have been using social media to talk about HSO in the hopes that the word will get out to folks with an interest in classical music who might use it as an excuse to visit Hawaii. I interact with classical music buffs in the US mainland, Japan, Hong Kong, England, Germany and Italy. We live in a troubled world, but because most orchestral music is without words, it can form a basis for relationships that avoids contentious political issues.

Not everyone likes classical music, but that is often because they had a bad initial exposure to it. There is material for pretty much everyone in classical music, and over time you can climb into more of it as you like. The HSO has worked hard to become an orchestra that can appeal far beyond Hawaii. It would be a shame not to support it when it could do so much for us.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your favorable consideration.

Lloyd Lim 1525 Wilder Ave #1008, Honolulu, HI 96822

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 12:35:25 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

I am writing in strong support of HB1860 HD2 SD1, designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State Symphony of Hawai'i.

As an educator in Hawai'i, I see the importance of access to the arts for our students and communities. The HSO provides meaningful musical experiences, educational outreach, and opportunities for young people to engage with music across the state.

As a parent of two children who learned their instruments with the support and guidance of symphony members, I have seen this impact firsthand. Stability for the HSO helps ensure that more keiki have access to these opportunities. I also deeply value the concerts themselves—they are a source of inspiration and connection for my family and our community.

Recognizing the HSO as the State Symphony affirms Hawai'i's commitment to arts education and cultural vitality.

I respectfully urge you to support HB1860 HD2 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Yvonne Chan

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 12:52:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

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

Comments:

I fully support the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra!

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 12:55:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee,

I oppose this measure. While the appropriation has been removed from this draft, the bill still creates a clear pipeline for future taxpayer funding of a private nonprofit with reduced accountability. The official "State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra" designation exists, by the bill's own language, to allow the orchestra to regularly obtain state funds. Combined with the exemption from Chapter 42F, the state's standard grant-in-aid framework that requires accountability, anti-lobbying provisions, and audit access for all other nonprofits receiving state money, this bill builds a privileged funding channel that bypasses the safeguards every other organization must follow.

The symphony's board chair, Paul Kosasa, president and CEO of ABC Stores, is a man of considerable financial means who has previously stepped in to preserve the orchestra, including purchasing its entire asset library at auction through his family foundation after the Honolulu Symphony's 2010 bankruptcy. The symphony is not without private benefactors capable of sustaining it.

Many Hawaii taxpayers, especially low-income taxpayers who are threatened by the potential repeal of the Act 46 tax cuts, will never attend a symphony performance. It is not appropriate to build a framework that makes it easier to direct their tax dollars toward what is evidently a personal passion of some of the state's most affluent residents, individuals who are more than capable of funding it themselves.

I respectfully urge the committee to defer this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 1:00:32 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
carole richelieu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 1:09:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Richards Dona	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB1860

Aloha Chair and Members,

I am writing in strong support of HB1860, which would designate the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra as the official state symphony.

As a season ticket holder, I have experienced firsthand the vital role the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra plays in our community. The HSO provides world-class performances that enrich the cultural life of our islands, foster connection across generations, and help make the arts accessible and relevant in Hawai‘i. Their work extends beyond the concert hall through education, outreach, and community engagement that benefits residents and visitors alike.

Formal recognition of the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra would acknowledge its long-standing contributions to our state and help ensure the continued vitality of symphonic music in Hawai‘i for generations to come. I respectfully urge you to support HB1860.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Angela Richards Donà

Honolulu, Hawai‘i

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 1:13:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Barnes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Honolulu Symphony Orchestra needs your support. We are so glad to have the symphony back in our lives and want to do all we can to support it. It is amazing to sit in the audience in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and hear such outstanding music. Thank you for your support, Sara

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 1:15:19 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gary Mak	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1860.

Economic diversification in Hawaii will require, as put by Richard L. Florida, creating a creative city/state that will attract the creative class. The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is not only a beacon for the arts within our state, but also acts as a brand ambassador outside the state, signalling our innovative creativity.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 1:18:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol Dickert	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a relatively new resident of Hawaii, i want to share my impressions of The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra and indicate my support that they be designated the official State Symphony of Hawai'i. Having grown up up in Manhattan, NYC surrounded by music, musicians and all the arts, and having devoted much of my life to arts education of gifted young musicians, I was most impressed when I attended a number of performances of the Hawai'i Symphony here. There is no doubt in my mind that they are deserving of the designation and continuing support and respect of the public at large.

Mahalo,

Carol Dickert

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 1:26:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolann Biederman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I write as a resident who is deeply excited about **HB 1860 HD2 SD1**, which will recognize the vital role the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra plays in our state.

The richness and diversity of the arts in Hawai'i – music, dance, visual arts, Hawaiian culture, media, crafts – impressed and inspired me from the day I arrived 38 years ago – and I have supported the arts ever since. I've worked as a consultant to the nonprofit sector for the past 25 years in the areas of executive transition, grant writing, special events, and project management. Many of my clients are performing arts organizations. Through first-hand experience, I can say without reservation that funding that designates the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as Hawai'i's orchestra supports not only this institution, but also many wonderful artistic partnerships and creative dreams that will enrich, educate and uplift residents and visitors throughout the state now and for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Carolann Biederman, 44-391 Nilu St. #4, Kaneohe, HI 96744

cabc.consulting@gmail.com

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 2:11:27 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erik Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. We all need to support the arts, now more than ever given the current state of our world. Mahalo

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 2:16:59 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
carol bodnar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a resident of Waikiki. I lsupprt this bill that would designate the **Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State Symphony of Hawai'i**. I urge you to support this bill.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 2:26:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher LaDue	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Support on HB1860 HD2 SD1

Relating to the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra

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

I write in strong support of HB1860, which would designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra (HSO) as the official State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra and provide stable funding to expand its educational and community mission.

Music in Hawai'i is not a luxury; it is part of how we learn to listen to one another and to the world around us. Institutions like the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra play a vital role in the state's cultural and educational infrastructure. Over time, the HSO has grown into a cultural institution shaped by Hawai'i and uniquely of Hawai'i. Through initiatives such as the HapaSymphony Series, performances featuring traditional Hawaiian music, and commissions of local composers, the Orchestra brings a distinctly Pacific perspective to the symphonic tradition.

HSO's programs increasingly weave together music, culture, and environment. Original works tell stories of our ocean, native species, and cultural values, while collaborations with the University of Hawai'i, scientists, Kumu Hula, and cultural practitioners incorporate mele, hula, and visual arts alongside orchestral scores. Education efforts such as Nā Hōkū 'Ōpio (Young Stars) and partnerships with UH place this living culture directly into the hands of students and communities.

I am especially encouraged that HB1860 links funding to free and accessible opportunities for students and educators. Many children would never encounter a live orchestra without this intentional outreach. Experiences with professional musicians nurture creativity, discipline, empathy, and a deeper relationship to place, qualities that serve Hawai'i far beyond the concert hall.

Music also plays a unique role in fostering unity. In a place as culturally diverse as Hawai'i, shared musical experiences create common ground across generations, backgrounds, and communities. Sitting together in a performance, or participating in a workshop, allows people to experience connection without requiring shared language or perspective. In this way, the Symphony helps strengthen the social fabric that holds our islands together.

Designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as our State Symphony recognizes and strengthens this public service mission, enabling the orchestra to expand programs that bring music directly into schools, libraries, hospitals, and community spaces across our islands.

The bill's accountability provisions and annual reporting requirements thoughtfully balance public investment with transparency and stewardship, ensuring that state resources are used responsibly while expanding access to music education and cultural experiences for residents across Hawai'i.

Recognizing the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as our State Symphony affirms that the arts are essential public infrastructure, as necessary to our collective well-being as parks, libraries, and schools. I respectfully urge you to pass HB1860 so that music, culture, environmental awareness, and shared belonging may continue to reach keiki, educators, families, and communities across our islands.

I respectfully reiterate my strong support for this measure as it moves through the legislative process.

Mahalo for your consideration and for your continued service to the people of Hawai'i.

Christopher LaDue

Community member and supporter of arts accessibility in Hawai'i

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 2:36:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol Hirai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HSO is a benefit to the state.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 2:45:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Camilla Albert	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this HB1860 H02 SD1

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 2:49:24 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rita Starz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a frequent visitor to Hawaii, I love attending the Symphony Orchestra when I can. It is refreshing to hear the universal language of music and its traditions continuing despite the chaos in our world. It unites us while the world tries to divide. Please continue to support this orchestra to ensure it continues to lead us to a future filled with aloha.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 3:05:20 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Penelope Hazzard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support our first class symphony becoming Hawaii State Orchestra.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 3:14:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margaret ANN Renick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill! We have a world class symphony and it needs our support!

Mahalo!

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 4:08:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Autumn Woods	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of HB1860 HD2 SD1, which would designate the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra (HSO) as the official “State of Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra” and provide vital funding for its continued operations. As both a longtime subscriber and proud member of the HSO staff, I have seen firsthand the incredible reach and impact of this organization across our islands.

My family first connected with the HSO during the pandemic, when we streamed concerts from home. That experience inspired us to become Masterworks subscribers in 2021, and attending live performances has since become an important part of our lives. My daughter, a young musician, was especially impacted, she conducted the orchestra at the Waikīkī Shell, interned with the staff for a school project, and later volunteered after graduation. Today, she is pursuing music as part of her college studies, thanks in no small part to the inspiration and opportunities provided by the HSO.

Over the past year as Director of Advancement, I’ve had the privilege of witnessing how deeply this orchestra is embedded in our community. HSO musicians perform in schools, mentor students, and bring music into public parks, shopping centers, and neighborhoods—often reaching audiences who have never experienced live orchestral music before.

The Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra is more than a performance ensemble. It is a cultural cornerstone that connects people of all ages and backgrounds through music. Its musicians are not only world-class artists, but also dedicated educators and community partners who contribute to Hawai‘i’s vibrant cultural landscape.

I respectfully urge you to support HB1860 HD2 SD1 and recognize the unique role the HSO plays in enriching our state. With your help, we can ensure this treasured institution continues to inspire, educate, and connect communities across Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Autumn Woods

Director of Advancement
Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 4:28:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph A. Bobich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 5:14:19 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lawrence Shaw	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting my recommendation that the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra be declared the official State Symphony of Hawai'i. HSO is a magnificent ensemble which performs at the highest level in all forms of music. The company's concerts and outreach programs benefit the entire community and we all feel privileged to have access to this wonderful organization. The State's designation would provide valuable support that will enhance the future of HSO.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lawrence Shaw

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 5:27:24 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mariann Tesauro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of HB1860.

Mariann Tesauro



Testimony of Katie Pickman

General Manager of Hawaii News Now

Subject: Testimony in Support of HB1860 HD2 SD1 – Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Katie Pickman, and I am the General Manager of Hawaii News Now and a proud supporter of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra.

I am writing in strong support of HB1860 HD2 SD1, which would designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the "State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra" and establish a framework for continued support with appropriate accountability and oversight.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra serves communities statewide through performances, arts education, and outreach that enrich Hawai'i's cultural foundation and enhance quality of life for both residents and visitors.

At Hawaii News Now, we see firsthand the importance of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra in connecting our community, elevating local talent, and strengthening the cultural fabric of our state. It is difficult to imagine Hawai'i without a symphony orchestra - but without meaningful and consistent support, that is a very real risk.

While the amended measure no longer includes a direct appropriation, I respectfully encourage continued consideration of reliable, sustainable funding through the appropriate budget and grant processes. Stable support is essential to sustaining the Symphony's core operations, educational outreach, and community impact.

HB1860 HD2 SD1 represents an important step in preserving and promoting the arts in Hawai'i. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony, and for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Pickman".

Katie Pickman

Hawaii News Now

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 6:15:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

I write in strong support of H.B. 1860, which designates the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra and exempt state funds it receives from chapter 42F, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, while requiring appropriate reporting and oversight.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra plays a unique and important role in our state. It is not only a performing arts organization, but a cultural institution that contributes meaningfully to education, community engagement, and the overall quality of life in Hawai'i. Its work extends beyond the concert hall through free performances, student access programs, and partnerships that help develop the next generation of musicians and audiences.

This bill recognizes that reality and establishes a more consistent and appropriate relationship between the State and an organization that provides clear public benefit.

Designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is a thoughtful step. It acknowledges the Orchestra's role as a statewide cultural asset while preserving its operational independence. The bill also includes appropriate safeguards, including legislative reporting and financial oversight, ensuring transparency and accountability for the use of public funds.

Importantly, this is about sustaining a cultural cornerstone that reflects who we are as a community. The presence of a strong, professional symphony contributes to Hawai'i's cultural vitality, supports education, and enhances the State's reputation as a place that values both tradition and artistic excellence.

H.B. 1860 strikes the right balance. It provides stability without compromising autonomy and recognizes the Orchestra's longstanding public service to the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

William Weeshoff

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 6:46:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jean tsou tsukamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is currently led by an outstanding Music Director, Dane Lam. His ability to engage the audience and share his passion for music has inspired the orchestra musicians to remain in Hawaii.

Despite much lower annual salary because of the shorter season, in addition to the high cost of living, so many musicians choose to remain in Hawaii as they are committed to continue to bring orchestral music to the community.

Not only do the musicians remain in the islands to enable our community to enjoy beautiful music year round, they also are so vital to mentoring so many youth who take private lessons with them. Many of these youth are part of the Hawaii Youth Symphony. As they reach the highest level orchestras, they are required to take music lessons. Without a professional orchestra here, there will be a void that cannot be filled.

Like most mainland orchestras, Hawaii Symphony Orchestra simply cannot sustain itself through ticket sales and donations alone. Without the State's commitment to support HSO, it is not a sustainable business model. HSO and its very dedicated and talented musicians deserve the State's support.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 8:33:45 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rie Schmidt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support the designation of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State Symphony of Hawai'i.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 8:53:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Yoo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Aja Group
1450 Ala Moana Blvd. #1101
Honolulu, HI 96814

April 3, 2026

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: HB1860 HD2 SD1 – Relating to the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lauren Yoo, and I am a business owner in Hawai‘i, CEO of The Aja Group, and a board member of the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra. I respectfully offer my strong support for HB1860 HD2 SD1.

This measure is meaningful to me both professionally and personally. As a child, I was inspired by the orchestra—an experience that continues to shape my commitment to the arts.

Founded in 1900 as the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra, the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra has been a cultural cornerstone of our state for over a century. As a proud alumna of McKinley High School, I value its connection to this legacy, including the 1977 “Side-by-Side” concert that brought together symphony musicians and youth performers.

Today, the orchestra remains a source of pride for Hawai‘i. Many long-standing musicians continue to perform, reflecting a rare level of continuity and excellence that defines a truly world-class orchestra.

The orchestra is deeply woven into our community. It connects generations, introduces keiki to live orchestral music through education programs, and brings comfort and connection through performances in hospitals and senior care homes.

Beyond its cultural impact, the orchestra also contributes meaningfully to our economy—employing approximately 100 individuals and supporting many more through IATSE, venues, and production teams. As a business owner in Hawai‘i, I understand firsthand the importance of investing in institutions that create jobs, support local workers, and strengthen our state’s economic vitality.

We believe music should be accessible to all residents of Hawai‘i—across communities, across islands, and across generations.

Sustained support is especially critical at this time to ensure the orchestra can continue serving our community without interruption.

The Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra is not only a reflection of who we are—it is an investment in who we aspire to be as a community.

HB1860 HD2 SD1 represents an investment in Hawai‘i’s cultural, educational, and economic future. I respectfully urge your favorable consideration and support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lauren Yoo
CEO, The Aja Group
Board Member, Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 9:09:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Ricer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am testifying in opposition to HB1860, Relating to the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra.

Although the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra does make musical contributions to the Honolulu community as stated, there exist multiple additional symphony orchestras within the islands who also provide classical and contemporary orchestral music and educational experiences to our local communities, and who host local and global performers in concerts and events.

These orchestras include (but may not be limited to) the Kamuela Philharmonic Orchestra Society in Waimea, Big Island; the Chamber Orchestra of Kona in Kona, Big Island; the Maui Pops Orchestra in Kahului, Maui; the Orchid Isle Orchestra in Kea'au, Big Island; and the South Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra in Ka'u.

I have experienced the joy felt by musicians and communities on neighbor islands when these groups and their guests perform. I am unaware of any recent performances on neighboring islands by the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra, which has been based in Honolulu for the entirety of its existence. As a musician myself, I have also watched as members of the orchestra often hire their friends from outside of Hawai'i to work with the orchestra, either for temporary or long-term engagements, without an official selection process or audition for a substitute call list.

If our state legislature plans to designate such an entity as a State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, I would be curious to see a public proposal process open to all communities and organizations interested in taking part in this decision. I believe it would be a good opportunity to potentially provide state consideration, recognition, and funding for classical music organizations throughout all islands of Hawai'i.

I appreciate the committee's time and consideration of this matter.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 10:03:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vicky Cayetano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee:

I am writing in strong support of HB1860, HD2, SD1, a bill that designates the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony.

The musicians of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra teach, perform and contribute to the community in so many ways; from teaching and inspiring students to performing extraordinary music that uplifts us all.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is also the steward of hundreds of valuable musical charts that date back for many decades .

Having this designation acknowledges the importance of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. It acknowledges the State's value of their important work and it reflects the State's commitment to supporting a community rooted in culture and music.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Vicky Cayetano

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 4:35:00 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mona Bomgaars	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this. The Symphony not only performs high quality and an international variety of concerts. It extends educational activities within the school system in addition to the individual work and life of each musician in the community enriching all of us. The state should support our symphony monetarily..

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 7:05:28 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Connie Conover	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra becoming the Hawaii State Symphony Orchestra.

Connie Conover

Honolulu

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 8:07:20 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
H. Mitchell D'Olier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 1860,HD 2,SD1. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is an important cultural institution for our State. It provides essential support for other organizations such as the Ballet, the Opera and the Hawaii Youth Symphony. It is a wonderful source of music teachers for our community. One of my sons and a granddaughter received important, high quality instruction from a Symphony musician. Please support HB 1860,HD2,SD1.

Thank you,

Mitch D'Olier

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 9:48:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please make our Hawaii Symphony Orchestra, the state Symphony.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 10:38:29 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alma M. Nagao	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Symphony plays such a vital role in our community and with the designation of it being the State Symphony it will continue to provide many opportunities in enriching the lives of all for many generations to come.

Some symphonies may have lost the support but let's let Hawaii set an example of designating the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as THE State Orchestra and show that Hawaii realizes the importance of Arts in our State and Hawaii's commitment to the arts.

Please support this bill. Thank you very much!

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 11:24:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judith Cucco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State Symphony of Hawai'i .

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 12:37:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marianne K. Whiting	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly and fully support designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State Orchestra.

For our state during an uncertain economy to emphasize the importance of music in our communities with financial support would speak volumes of the importance of the arts in our culture. Personally, I want a portion of my tax dollars to be used for the arts.

Official designation of our symphony as our state orchestra elevates our state culturally and globally while enabling the orchestra to reach out to more people in more corners of our state. It would be a source of pride, much like that of the Royal Hawaiian Band, our state Band.

A couple examples of the symphony's impact on our island. Their 'In the Park' series brings communities together while offering invaluable music introduction to families who may not otherwise be introduced to this type of music. Ecstatic young people in the audience are invited to come on stage as 'maestro', opening doors for further music appreciation. Talented young artists have been included on their program. The joy created by these special community events is palpable.

Note the Orchestra's expanded educational and experiential opportunities via the Hawai'i Youth Orchestra supplementing school's arts programs. Their community outreach not only entertains yet educates our citizens of all ages through programs in schools to one-on-one lessons as well. Research continually demonstrates the positive impact music has on academic performance.

Repeatedly they have demonstrated their value and contribution to Hawai'i's quality of life. As a Hawai'i citizen, I would be proud of our legislature to designate a state orchestra.

The gift of music - what a wonderful gift to give to the people of Hawai'i. Please vote in favor of this bill.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 1:09:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Luanna H Meyer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am strongly in favor of our State supporting the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. We are privileged to have an orchestra of such high quality in our small state, and what is especially pleasing is how the performances reflect the various cultural and musical traditions and contributions valued locally, nationally, and internationally.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 1:31:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William J M. Evans	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is one of the true treasures of Hawai'i. With its charismatic new conductor Dane Lam, there has been a serious effort to link classical orchestral music to the rich musical heritage of the islands. There is a wonderful display of talent among the skilled musicians who make up the orchestra. They work for love but do need financial support like any other vital organization which enriches our community.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 2:31:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robin Takata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the Honolulu Symphony to be the official symphony for Hawaii.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 3:24:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lucy Xie	Testifying for Board member of HSO	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lucy Xie, one of the Board of Directors of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. I write in strong support of HB1860 HD2 SD1, which would designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the "State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra".

The Hawai i Symphony Orchestra serves communities statewide through performances, arts education, and outreach that strengthen Hawai'i's quality of life and cultural foundation for residents and visitors.

Supporting institutions like the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra helps inspire creativity, strengthen arts education, and enhance Hawai 'i's cultural offerings. We respectfully ask the Legislature and your Committee to continue to consider reliable operating support for the Symphony through the appropriate budget and grants processes. Stable support helps sustain core operations, educational outreach, and community programs, paired with the accountability measures in the bill, including annual reporting and the ability for fiscal review of state funds.

HB 1860 HD2 SD1 reflects the Legislature's commitment to preserving and promoting the arts in our State. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your consideration. I respectfully urge your support.

Lucy Xie

Board member of HSO

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 3:45:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Edwina Jo Snow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii is so lucky to have a First Rate Symphony, here in the middle of the Pacific Ocean! It is wonderful entertainment. The musicians teach our children. The musicians sacrifice to live here with low pay and a high cost of living. We must make sure the Sympony continues. Please pass this bill.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 4:49:31 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniela Jendly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my deep support for the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra and to share why its continued existence is so vital to our community.

The Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra is not only one of the finest orchestras in the Pacific region, it is also the only professional symphony of its kind here. Under the leadership of its new conductor, the orchestra has come alive in a remarkable way. Each performance carries a rare sweetness — music that touches the heart, softens the body, and opens something essential within us.

As someone who lives and works in Hawai‘i, I can say firsthand how meaningful these concerts are. The music offers more than entertainment; it offers presence, connection, and healing. In times when many people feel overwhelmed, disconnected, or exhausted by the pace of modern life, sitting in a concert hall and listening to these musicians is a reminder of what it means to be human — to feel, to listen, to breathe together.

It is painful to know that this orchestra has been struggling for years, despite the extraordinary talent, dedication, and artistry of its musicians. These are artists who have devoted their lives to their craft and who give so generously to our community through their music.

I sincerely wish more people would experience the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra, and I believe that with stronger support and visibility, many more would. Cultural institutions like this do not survive on ticket sales alone — they survive because a community and its leaders recognize their long-term value.

Supporting the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra is an investment in the cultural, emotional, and spiritual health of our islands. It is an investment in beauty, discipline, collaboration, and the quiet but powerful way music opens hearts.

I respectfully urge you to support the Hawai‘i am writing to express my deep support for the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra and to share why its continued existence is so vital to our community.

The Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra is not only one of the finest orchestras in the Pacific region, it is also the only professional symphony of its kind here. Under the leadership of its new conductor, the orchestra has come alive in a remarkable way. Each performance carries a rare

sweetness — music that touches the heart, softens the body, and opens something essential within us.

As someone who lives and works in Hawai‘i, I can say firsthand how meaningful these concerts are. The music offers more than entertainment; it offers presence, connection, and healing. In times when many people feel overwhelmed, disconnected, or exhausted by the pace of modern life, sitting in a concert hall and listening to these musicians is a reminder of what it means to be human — to feel, to listen, to breathe together.

It is painful to know that this orchestra has been struggling for years, despite the extraordinary talent, dedication, and artistry of its musicians. These are artists who have devoted their lives to their craft and who give so generously to our community through their music.

I sincerely wish more people would experience the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra, and I believe that with stronger support and visibility, many more would. Cultural institutions like this do not survive on ticket sales alone — they survive because a community and its leaders recognize their long-term value.

Supporting the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra is an investment in the cultural, emotional, and spiritual health of our islands. It is an investment in beauty, discipline, collaboration, and the quiet but powerful way music opens hearts.

I respectfully urge you to support the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra so that it may continue to inspire, uplift, and serve our community for generations to come.

With gratitude,

Daniela Jendly Orchestra so that it may continue to inspire, uplift, and serve our community for generations to come.

With gratitude,

Daniela Jendly

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 5:24:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Rokosny	Testifying for Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello, thank you for everyone's support for this bill thus far. The Hawai'i Symphony is doing such excellent work with program and education initiatives. Please grant further support for this so that the symphony can truly be effective in its mission. I am a member of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 6:19:38 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marsha Schweitzer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony on HB1860 RE: The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra

I was a musician in the Honolulu/Hawai‘i Symphony for 45 years, from 1971 to 2016. In that time I witnessed and participated in many momentous events. Each one left an indelible impression – indeed, changed my life.

One such event was the Symphony’s trip to Kaua‘i in 1992 in the aftermath of Hurricane ‘Iniki. Coconut palms had no fronds; power lines were down, roofs of buildings had blown off, but hundreds of people came to the park to hear the orchestra. They were hugging, singing, and crying when the sounds of “Hawai‘i Pono‘i” and “Hawai‘i Aloha” reached their ears. It was a great moment of healing for the entire island.

Another event was the last public performance by Rosemary Clooney on an HSO Pops Concert. I wrote about it, along with other factors that prove the Hawai‘i Symphony’s worth, in this excerpt from my book, *The Arts from the Bottom Up*:

To the Editor: On “Does Honolulu Need the Symphony?”

Let me illustrate the value of arts institutions with the Symphony’s Grammy-nominated CD of its concert with the late Rosemary Clooney. The CD was an archive of a Symphony Pops concert, part of the regular pops series that took place every few weeks on the Blaisdell Center stage, part of the symphony’s ongoing public service mission. It was a magical concert, which ended with a dying Clooney saying, “Thank you for one of the best nights of my life.”

There were many forces that made that performance happen at such a magically high artistic level, but it all began with the existence of a resident professional orchestra with the artistic depth and organizational sophistication to bring all those forces together. Simply stated, Hawaii needs an orchestra so that nights like that are possible, so that our citizens can have the opportunity to experience art of the same life-changing quality and power as in every other major city in the world. And it is not enough to listen to CDs or import touring orchestras from elsewhere. We need a resident orchestral institution that reflects and is responsive and answerable to the community that owns it.

For that reason, government recognition and funding is not just necessary, it is desirable, because it is important that the orchestra be owned by all the people, not just by the moneyed elite, so that

all of us can claim a piece of the symphony and share common responsibility for it. If the costs of the symphony are shared broadly over our entire population in the form of donations, ticket purchases, and taxpayer subsidies, each person's burden of keeping the symphony healthy and flourishing is light.

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

My name is **Kim Kiyabu** and I am submitting testimony **in strong support** of HB1860, which formally designates the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra (HSO) as the **State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra**, requires annual reports to the Legislature, and exempts state funds received by the HSO from Chapter 42F, Hawai'i Revised Statutes.

Why This Legislation Matters

1. The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is a Cultural Treasure

The HSO is one of the oldest symphony orchestras in the United States and a cornerstone of Hawai'i's artistic identity. Its musicians, many of whom have dedicated their lives to their craft, bring world-class performances to our islands and serve as cultural ambassadors for Hawai'i.

Designating the HSO as the official State Symphony Orchestra is not merely symbolic—it affirms the value we place on the arts as an essential part of Hawai'i's heritage, education, and community well-being.

2. Strengthening Arts Education and Youth Development

The HSO plays a vital role in music education across the state. Through school concerts, youth programs, and partnerships with educators, the orchestra reaches thousands of students each year. These programs nurture creativity, discipline, and cultural literacy—skills that benefit students far beyond the concert hall.

Formal state recognition supports the continuation and expansion of these programs, ensuring that future generations have access to high-quality arts education.

3. Economic and Community Impact

The HSO contributes significantly to Hawai'i's creative economy. Its performances support local jobs, attract visitors, and stimulate surrounding businesses. A thriving symphony orchestra enhances Hawai'i's reputation as a vibrant, culturally rich destination.

By providing a stable framework for state support, this bill helps safeguard an institution that delivers measurable economic and social benefits.

4. Accountability Through Annual Reporting

The requirement for annual reports to the Legislature ensures transparency and responsible stewardship of public resources. This provision strengthens trust and demonstrates the HSO's commitment to operating with integrity and accountability.

5. Exemption From Chapter 42F Is Practical and Necessary

Exempting state funds received by the HSO from Chapter 42F recognizes the unique nature of the orchestra's operations. The HSO is not a typical grant recipient—it is a statewide cultural institution with ongoing, year-round programming. This exemption allows the orchestra to plan responsibly, manage long-term artistic commitments, and maintain financial stability.

Conclusion

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra enriches our islands in ways that cannot be measured solely in dollars. It preserves our cultural legacy, inspires our keiki, strengthens our economy, and brings our community together through the universal language of music.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to **HB1860**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kim Kiyabu

Kim Kiyabu Piano Studio

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 6:50:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jill White	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My adult son with autism lives for concerts & the symphony is his favorite! Please protect access to the arts for all of Hawaii's ohana. Mahalo!

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 7:24:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brad Davis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Brad Davis, and I am the Principal Timpanist of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, as well as Lecturer of Percussion at UH Mānoa and the Production and Operations Manager for Chamber Music Hawai'i. I am a resident of Honolulu, District 6.

I am writing in strong support of HB 1860. This bill would provide much needed support and recognition to the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, whose role in the community is invaluable.

HSO presents more than 50 diverse concerts annually, including free community concerts, free educational concerts such as the Symphony of Hawaiian Birds and Symphony of the Hawai'i Forests, and Side by Side concerts with the Hawai'i Youth Symphony and through the Na Hoku Opio - Young Stars competition. The Symphony features local artists, both established and up and coming, through the HapaSymphony series, and brings in world class classical artists such as Yo-Yo Ma, Joshua Bell, and Renée Fleming for the Masterworks Series.

Hawai'i Symphony musicians are ubiquitous in the Hawai'i music community, impacting every aspect of instrumental music performance. They teach in public schools, private schools, and universities throughout the state. A great example of this is the applied music performance faculty at UH Mānoa, where over 70% of the faculty are current or former HSO members. Not only do they teach children directly, they train generation after generation of Hawai'i's music educators. Symphony Musicians can be spotted in almost every music performance context throughout the island of O'ahu, performing with organizations like Ballet Hawai'i, Hawai'i Opera Theatre, Chamber Music Hawai'i, and the Royal Hawaiian Band. You can find them performing jazz in Waikiki at the Blue Note, classical concerts throughout O'ahu, Kaua'i, and Maui, or chamber music on Molokai'i and Big Island. Whether you've been to a Hawai'i Symphony show or not, you've certainly seen an HSO musician perform.

Financially, it has been shown in study after study that the arts have an enormous impact on their local economies. A recent study commissioned by the Pittsburgh Symphony demonstrated that for every dollar the symphony spends, four dollars are generated in the local economy. Though we don't have a similar study yet for Hawai'i, we do have general arts statistics that show similar trends. You can see the economic impact of the HSO with your own eyes by walking through Chinatown before or after a concert, as patrons fan out to restaurants and bars, supporting local businesses and helping to revitalize that neighborhood.

There are no great cities in the world without a great symphony orchestra, and we must work to protect and recognize the incredible orchestra we have. Many states throughout the country support their orchestras with recognition, as well as funding, and that impact is enormous. In a time of attacks on non-profits and the arts, the State of Hawai'i has an incredible opportunity to demonstrate our shared values and codify support of one of our cultural gems, preserving the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra's impact for generations.

Mahalo nui loa,

Brad Davis

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 7:34:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mio Unosawa Herzog	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am an HSO musician from district 4 and I am in strong support of **HB1860** that will designate the HSO as the State Orchestra of Hawai'i. As an avid member of the musical community, this bill will preserve live symphonic music and spread musical literacy across our islands. Therefore, I urge you to **pass HB1860**.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 8:15:20 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathleen Long	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Kathleen Long, and I am writing in support of HB1860 to designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra (HSO) as the official state symphony of Hawai'i.

HSO is a vital cultural institution that brings high-quality live music to our communities while supporting local musicians and music education across the state. Through performances and outreach programs, the Symphony helps ensure that residents of all ages have access to the arts.

Designating HSO as the official state symphony is a meaningful way to recognize the important role it already plays in enriching Hawai'i's cultural life. This recognition affirms the value of the arts in our state and honors an organization that represents Hawai'i with excellence and pride.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony. I respectfully urge you to pass HB1860.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Long

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 8:19:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JOANNE PARKER	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill

Mahalo

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 8:26:27 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I strongly support SB 2603 and HB 1860 to designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the **State Orchestra of Hawai'i**.

As a music educator and a musician with the symphony, I see firsthand the vital role the HSO plays in our community. It sets a standard of excellence, provides meaningful educational outreach, and inspires the next generation of musicians across our state.

Recognizing the HSO in this way affirms Hawai'i's commitment to the arts and to the cultural and educational enrichment of our keiki. I respectfully urge your support.

Mahalo,
Nikki Ebisu. D.M.A.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 8:57:45 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Asia Doike	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB1860, which would designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra (HSO) as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra and provide funding to help the HSO reach even more individuals across our state.

Through projects like *Symphony of the Hawai'i Seas* and "Side-by-Side" concerts with the Hawai'i Youth Symphony, the HSO helps provide a platform for young musicians and community partners to truly thrive together. Further support of the HSO through HB1860 also celebrates Hawai'i's entire orchestral ecosystem, strengthening the stature of music education and performance across all islands.

I respectfully urge the committee to pass this measure and continue prioritizing the HSO's artistic vision and educational programs, which remain the lifeblood of its community connectivity.

Mahalo for your thoughtful consideration and support.

Asia Doike

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 9:09:29 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Jodoi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a resident of East Honolulu and I strongly support HSO to be designated as the official orchestra. In the 1980s and 1990s I participated on HSO for 13 years and it really helped develop me as a violinist and a member of an orchestra. I have 2 young sons that I plan on having join this great HSO program. Thank you.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 9:20:11 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aris Doike	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Aris Doike, a graduate of Moanalua High School, and currently a cellist with the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. I am writing in strong support of HB1860 HD2 SD1, which designates the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra enriches our community by attracting and retaining professional musicians to Hawaii, who not only provide inspirational performances, but also nurture the musical talents of Hawaii's youth. Musicians of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra are more than just musicians – we are also teachers and mentors for our keiki and community. Growing up in Honolulu, my teachers and mentors were cellists of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. I am a direct beneficiary of the Orchestra's invaluable presence and impact.

My story is just one example of the profound impact the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra has on our community. I wholeheartedly support HB1860 HD2 SD1 and am deeply committed to ensuring that future generations have access to similar opportunities.

Aris Doike

Musician, Hawaii Symphony Orchestra

Aliamanu-Salt Lake

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 9:31:16 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tommy Morrison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear members of the Senate, the Ways and Means Committee, with special recognition to chair Donovan Dela Cruz and vice chair Sharon Moriwaki,

My name is Tommy Morrison, and I have proudly served as a member of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as Principal Bassoon since Fall 2017. Since joining the Symphony, I have resided locally and am a current resident of Palolo Valley. I write this testimony in **strong support** of HB1860. Thank you for this opportunity.

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) is a foundational pillar of the artistic backbone of our city of Honolulu, our island of Oahu, and our state of Hawaii. The HSO reaches thousands upon thousands of community members across multiple avenues, which all greatly enhance our local arts scene and the education of our population from keiki to kupuna. We bring a roster of 84 musicians, comprising members of the highest levels of artistic training with degrees from some of the most prestigious institutions across the globe, to serve our population not only as skilled performers of orchestral music, but as private teachers, school educators, and citizens with a unique ability to share our experience and knowledge with the entire spectrum of our state's population. The HSO's impact is far-reaching, with concerts currently spanning across the entire island of Oahu, providing access to high level music making that can touch the hearts and minds of communities from the North Shore, to the West Side, through Town, and back across the Pali Highway to the Windward Side.

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra's intrinsic value cannot just be measured by its level of performance, but also by how many lives are changed by HSO members teaching our youth endeavoring to learn an instrument. There is an astonishing wealth of research that asserts the benefits of musical study as a tool to build problem-solving skills, and foster brain development which augments learning and language skills. It is impossible to overstate the value of having a full roster of performing musicians so readily available and capable of also fulfilling a dual role as educators and mentors. While stating the influence on our keiki's lives is of the utmost importance, it is also vital to recognize that the process of teaching is totally reflexive: our students can teach us so many things about how to approach a challenge and overcome difficulties with a collaborative and curious spirit. The HSO has cultivated a deep relationship with the Hawaii Youth Symphony, and our performances sharing the spotlight with these amazing young musicians in our recurring Side-by-Side series have been some of my favorite

concerts to date as a member of the Symphony. There is no city in America boasting a thriving youth music culture without a high-class professional orchestra operating alongside it in harmony.

This Bill's passage would be a tremendous boon to our organization's goal of continuing our upward trajectory of artistic endeavors and having our music reach even more of our great state's population. The HSO musicians are fully committed to serving our community, sharing our performances to uplift the individual and collective spirit while also acting as purveyors of audible art from all over the globe, with repertoire spanning nearly 500 years of time from the Baroque Era to the current day. We have collaborated with and featured local artists spanning many generations, from composers like Dai-Keong Lee and Michael-Thomas Foumai to performers like Robert Cazimero, Raiatea Helm, and Paula Fuga. We would love to continue to add to this impressive list, and see the HSO operate as a true vehicle of collaboration to feature Hawaii's amazing array of performing artists.

This is merely the tip of the iceberg in what we can accomplish. We look forward to the organization realizing its vision of reaching beyond the shores of Oahu, aiming to share our music with communities on other islands of our amazing state. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is one of the true jewels woven into the cultural fabric of Hawaii, and receiving a designation as the state of Hawaii's official orchestra via HB1860 would only serve to further increase our impact on all who are lucky enough to call the islands of Hawaii home.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 9:39:38 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian H Shimabukuro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, My name is Brian Shimabukuro and I am in favor of HB 1860 to designate the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the Hawaii State Symphony Orchestra. In support of and to emphasize the value of the arts in our community, designating the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra, which is the only professional Symphony Orchestra in our state is fitting to do. They truly deserve our support and assistance to be able to provide their beautiful music to our residence and visitors. Mahalo.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 9:49:37 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steve Flanter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to testify in support of HB 1860.

As a viola player in the Hawaii Symphony, it has been, and continues to be, a honor to be part of an organization that provides concerts to the people of Hawaii, including keiki and ohana. Our recent collaboration with Manoa Valley Theatre and innovative programming, including a Shakespeare Festival last month and this month's premiere of Hawaii composer Michael-Thomas Foumai's symphony called "Raise Hawaiki", show how HSO is reaching out in new and creative ways. The passage of this bill would help to keep the HSO serving the people of Hawaii for a long time to come.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 10:57:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Abe Lagrimas, Jr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Abe Lagrimas, Jr., professional musician and music educator. I am a Honolulu (96826) resident, and I am in support of this bill. I believe that the HSO is an extremely important and vital organization for our community. Their performances are a place where everyone can come together to experience artistic expression and learn about the arts. Their collaborations with local artists in their regular programming promote Hawaiian culture through mele, something that's truly unique from any other orchestra in the world. I am in support of the HSO becoming the official orchestra of the State of Hawaii. Mahalo!

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 12:34:09 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brent Ramos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Brent Ramos, a graduate of Moanalua High School, and currently a violinist with the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. I am writing in support of HB1860 to designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra (HSO) as the official state symphony of Hawai'i. The HSO is one of the reasons I chose to pursue music, and it's an incredible privilege to now perform alongside the teachers I grew up studying with and watching on stage. Beyond performance, HSO musicians are also teachers and mentors for future generations. Through outreach programs, educator partnerships, and school concerts, the orchestra reaches and inspires thousands of students. In recognizing the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official state symphony, you affirm not only its artistic excellence, but its deep and lasting impact on our communities and keiki. I respectfully urge your support of HB1860.

Thank you for your consideration,

Brent Ramos

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 2:21:17 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Chiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Senator Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Senator Moriwaki and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Please support HB 1860 HD 2 SD 1 which would designate the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) as the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. Doing so would, I think, increase opportunities for the wonderful musicians of HSO to reach more people in the State with its uplifting, enriching, healing music.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 2:31:09 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is David Nakazono, and I am honored to serve as Principal Trumpet of the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra (HSO). I submit this testimony in strong support of HB1860, which would designate the HSO as the official State Orchestra of Hawai‘i.

In January of this year, the HSO performed Mahler’s Ninth Symphony. It is a deeply introspective work—one that wrestles with mortality, fragility, and the beauty of life itself. Sitting on stage, you could feel the stillness in the hall. At the end, the music fades into near silence, and for several moments, no one moved. That shared silence—between musicians and audience—was one of the most powerful experiences I’ve had as a performer.

Moments like that remind me of what music can offer to a community. It invites reflection, connection, and a sense of something larger than ourselves.

The Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra brings this same spirit to communities across our state. As a musician, I’ve seen firsthand how a single performance can deeply impact an audience—whether it’s a student experiencing live symphonic music for the first time, an elder reconnecting with meaningful memories, or a family simply sharing in something beautiful together.

Beyond the concert hall, the HSO is committed to serving Hawai‘i through:

- Free concerts in parks and public spaces, expanding access to live music
- Educational programs such as *Symphony of the Hawaiian Birds* and *Symphony of the Hawai‘i Forests*
- Side-by-side mentorship with young musicians across the islands
- Collaborations with local artists such as Robert Cazimero and Jake Shimabukuro, reflecting Hawai‘i’s unique cultural identity
- An upcoming tour to Maui this September, with a broader vision of regular inter-island performances that bring symphonic music to communities statewide

Designating the HSO as the official State Orchestra would not simply recognize an institution—it would affirm a lasting commitment to the people of Hawai‘i. It would ensure that this work of education, cultural connection, and community enrichment continues to grow for future generations, across all islands.

I respectfully urge your support of HB1860.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

David Nakazono
Principal Trumpet, Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra



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Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

I write personally in strong support of **HB1860 HD2 SD1**, and, first and foremost to thank this committee for the vision, diligence and seriousness of purpose with which you have advanced it to this final decision-making hearing.

I write this testimony from Glasgow, Scotland, where I am conducting a major new production for Scottish Opera — a reminder that HSO's reach extends well beyond our shores, and that the case for Hawai'i as a world-class cultural destination is one I make actively, wherever I go.

We all know the impact that a professional symphony orchestra has on social cohesion, on educational and life outcomes for our young people, and on community mental health — on the more than **40,000 audience members** who attended our over 40 performances this season spanning Mozart, Star Wars, Studio Ghibli, and Keauhou. What demands further elucidation is **the importance of HSO for the entire community, whether they personally attend a concert or not.**

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is an economic driver for the state. More than 100 musicians, crew, and administrators make HSO the largest employer in the performing arts sector in Hawai'i. [A recent study by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra](#) demonstrated a return of \$125 million to the community — \$4 to the local economy for every \$1 of public investment — sustaining nearly 1,900 jobs, almost seven times its direct employee base. That multiplier effect flows through employment, associated spending at restaurants, bars, and car parks, and through the visitor activity that world-class cultural institutions reliably generate.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is one of Hawai'i's strongest ambassadors. Assembling and retaining 84 musicians of the highest international calibre in one of the world's most isolated population centres is a remarkable civic achievement — a professional ensemble of world-class performers, at a fraction of the cost of a professional sports team, with far broader reach into the life of our community. Hawai'i does not have a professional sports team. It does have a professional symphony orchestra. As the state works to attract and retain talent in medicine, technology, education, and the professions, cultural life is a decisive factor. There is no great city in the world without a symphony orchestra. State designation sends a signal — to the talent we want living here, and to the world — that Hawai'i is serious about being a great place to live, not merely a beautiful one.

HAWAI'I SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
3610 WAIALAE AVENUE
HONOLULU, HI 96816
www.myhso.org
(808) 380-7724



**HAWAI'I
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DANE LAM | MUSIC AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is the centre of cultural life across the entire state. From supplying the orchestral music to Hawai'i Opera Theatre and Ballet Hawai'i, to collaborative performances with the Hawai'i Youth Symphony, Pacific Music Institute, Mānoa Valley Theatre, Tau Dance, Hawai'i Youth Opera Chorus, and the O'ahu Choral Society; to providing stable employment to musicians playing for Chamber Music Hawai'i, the Honolulu Chamber Music Series, and various Neighbor Island orchestras — HSO is the employer that allows world-class musicians to be resident in Hawai'i, ensuring a critical mass of excellent music teachers for our keiki. Designation also gives us the possibility to restore Neighbor Island touring after a hiatus of more than a decade, extending the State Orchestra's reach to all of Hawai'i.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra represents a proud lineage of Royal patronage for music. King Kalākaua, Queen Lili'uokalani, Princess Likelike, and Prince William Pitt Leleiohoku II were all accomplished composers and devoted lovers of music. HSO still performs their legacy — and this season will perform Michael-Thomas Foumai's *Raise Hawaiki*, sung in English and 'ōlelo Hawai'i, on the maiden voyage of the Hōkūle'a. Rather than being an institution imported from elsewhere, we pair music of our shared human cultural heritage such as Beethoven and Brahms alongside music of our time and place from Hawai'i and the Asia-Pacific region. This is an orchestra of Hawai'i, shaped by Hawai'i, and accountable to all of Hawai'i.

This measure received an extraordinary volume of community support — hundreds of testimonies from musicians, educators, students, cultural organizations, and residents across the state. That breadth of support, unusual for most measures before this Legislature, reflects a simple truth: it has taken 125 years to build what we have. Designation ensures we can build on it.

I urge this committee to pass HB1860 HD2 SD1.

Me ke aloha,

Dane Lam

Music and Artistic Director, Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 4:16:44 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andy Abel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In our age of distraction and misinformation, the arts and classical music are needed more than ever to soothe, find truth, and rebuild bonds between citizens. The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is unique among its peers. I have never seen an orchestra so consciously and successfully synthesize Hawaiian culture and heritage with classical music.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 5:38:40 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Stoneham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State Orchestra of Hawaii. I am a bass trombonist and I have been a member of the Hawai'i Symphony for four years.

I have had the good fortune to perform with many orchestras across the US, and in my experience, the HSO provides some of the most meaningful programming of any orchestra in the country. We are programming music that is relevant, impactful, and with our community top of mind. We have performed across Honolulu for myriad audiences through our Music from the Heart and Community Concerts. We invite our audiences into the Neal Blaisdell Concert Hall and the Hawaii Theater Center to experience symphonic music of the highest quality, and to join us as we perform with local artists. Symphony orchestras do not only provide exceptional live music, they also uphold a community's culture and history. Our audiences will experience the journey of Hōkūle'a in our upcoming April concert. They have felt the magic of the Hawai'i birds, forests, and seas through our concerts. Imagine the impact we would be able to have statewide with this designation!

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Lisa Stoneham

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 5:45:10 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louis DeMartino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support making the Hawaii Symphony the state orchestra of Hawaii. Please approve this measure and support the Arts in Hawaii!

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 6:06:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Butin	Testifying for Hawaii Symphony Orchestra	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Mark Butin and I am a member of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra (HSO). I want to give my strong support of this bill and the HSO as a whole that is committed to live music performances and music education that directly benefits the culture and people of the State of Hawai'i.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 7:16:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anna Lenhart	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Anna Lenhart. I live in Kalihi, in House District 30. I moved to Hawai'i in 2018 after winning the symphony's principal horn audition. I brought with me 15 years of training from world renowned musical institutions.

Hawai'i was meant to be a short-term job for me, a small steppingstone on the path to a larger, well-funded orchestra.

But Hawai'i deserves better than being a rotating door for upcoming musicians.

By designating the HSO as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, you are inviting highly trained musicians to stay.

To stay for the quiet keiki who find their voice through music.

To stay for the kapuna who sing along to our Christmas carols at their retirement centers.

To stay for the woman who whispered an awestruck "wow" into the silence after we finished a Beethoven symphony.

To stay and teach. To stay and inspire. To stay and build community.

With our current resources, we can't provide our soul-healing music to everyone who wants it.

HB1860 will enable us musicians to not only stay in Hawai'i but to expand our influence to neighbor islands and underserved communities.

Thank you for helping us help your constituents.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 7:53:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emma Votapek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Emma Noël Votapek, and I am a violinist in the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra.

I am writing in support of HB1860, which would designate the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra. I joined the HSO in 2004, and some of my favorite experiences have been during outreach efforts that really underscored that we were serving the whole state of Hawai‘i: making weekly trips to Nānākuli to work with elementary school students, and then welcoming them to Blaisdell Concert Hall to make music with us; playing for a packed house in a Hilo community concert led by Aaron Mahi; playing school shows on neighbor islands for students who had never seen a violin up close.

The HSO has strong artistic and executive leadership in place who are committed to expanding our reach in the community through free concerts, collaborations with other arts organizations, and concert series that showcase local talent, but my colleagues and I would like to do even more. Now called the Hawai‘i Symphony, we have both the desire and the kuleana to live up to that name, to demonstrate that we are Hawai‘i’s orchestra. SB 441 would help make that possible, and so I ask for your support of this bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in favor of this bill, and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Emma Noël Votapek

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 8:13:04 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zane Mallett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

I am writing to express my **strong support** of HB1860. As a member of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra, I see the impact we have on the community and culture of Oahu at every concert. As one of the oldest orchestras in the US, we are an invaluable longstanding institution that deserves to be supported and acknowledged at the state level.

Thank you for your consideration,

Zane Mallett

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 8:14:32 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Tremblay	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

self intro from teacher of Hawaiian Steel Guitar at the public libraries ... and The Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra plays a vital role in Hawai‘i’s musical landscape by delivering exceptional performances and, in recent years, through creative collaborations such as the HapaSymphony series. These initiatives beautifully blend symphonic excellence with the rich sounds and talents of Hawaiian artists, fostering cultural exchange, supporting local musicians, engaging diverse audiences, and deepening community ties. HB1860 thoughtfully designates the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra as the official State of Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra. It establishes appropriate oversight through required annual reports to the Legislature and provides a targeted exemption from certain provisions of Chapter 42F, HRS, for any state funds received. These measures appropriately recognize the orchestra’s longstanding contributions while promoting transparency and responsible stewardship of public resources.

Granting formal state recognition to this historic institution reinforces Hawai‘i’s dedication to artistic excellence and helps sustain the living traditions that define our islands—including the cherished melodies and rhythms of traditional Hawaiian music that HIMELE works so hard to pass on. At a time when cultural continuity and community connection matter deeply, passage of HB1860 would affirm that Hawai‘i remains committed to honoring and investing in its unique musical heritage.

We respectfully urge the Committee to pass HB1860 and advance this important bill. Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your continued leadership in supporting the arts in our state. We are available to answer any questions you may have.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 8:27:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ignace Jang	Testifying for Hawaii Symphony Orchestra	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Employed by the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO), I joined the organization in 1997 and truly believe its leadership, board, volunteers, staff and musicians to be genuine and essential cultural ambassadors of the State. I was fortunate, as a member of HSO, to fulfill our mission on Oahu, Maui, Hawai'i and Kauai over time. To cherish our islands and all they encompass, the musical voice of HSO is paramount. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Iggy Jang

April 4, 2026

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, *Chair*
Honorable Sharon Y. Moriwaki, *Vice Chair*

Testimony IN SUPPORT of Bill# HB1860

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee,

I strongly support HB1860, which designates the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. The merits and impact of the symphony's programming speaks for itself. We provide an invaluable service to the state and deserve the recognition for an organization that traces its origins and history over 100 years.

This bill sends a message to all: that our state supports music and the arts. It supports the preservation of an orchestra that has had a weathered history, yet has persevered laser-focused on our commitment to service. Hawai'i deserves a symphony orchestra made up of world-class orchestral musicians who've attended the most prestigious conservatories and schools.

This designation serves as a public good.

Thank you,

Christopher Cabrera

Associate Principal Timpanist & Section Percussionist, Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra
HSO member of 9 years

Board of Directors, Musicians' Association of Hawaii

General Manager, Chamber Music Hawaii

Lower Punchbowl Resident - Senate District 11

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 9:20:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Fischer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra becoming the official state symphony. They have put together many programs to inspire youth and the community in the state. I am a contributor who has been volunteering to make music learning available to the community on Molokai I hope to be able to assist students to attend more of the HSO programs.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 9:32:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hannah Watanabe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing because the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra (HSO) plays a vital role in our community and truly represents the State of Hawai'i. The musicians not only perform their regular concerts, but also go out into the community to perform free concerts for schools, kupuna, and the general public. Their educational reach helps schools by sending HSO members to do work for free to schools. They serve as coaches for bands and orchestra programs who might not have the means to hire coaches. I support this bill to make HSO out state's orchestra.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 9:53:19 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Shoop-Wu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hi, I am a violinist in the Hawaii Symphony and have taught several generations of violin students across Oahu for decades. I would not be here without the symphony. I now play side by side with some of my own students who have themselves become professional musicians. Other students are concertmaster of the UH orchestra or Hawaii Youth Symphony. The HSO also brings many wonderful classical, Hawaiian and pops performers and concerts to Hawaii that otherwise wouldn't be here. Even the neighbor islands benefit because as individuals we travel to the other islands to provide music. And if we had the budget for it the whole orchestra could travel to the other islands and serve them as well as we did in the past.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 9:53:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alejandro Ramos o	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in full support of this bill.

The symphony provides invaluable asset to the entire community of Hawaii and also provides valuable exposure to young ones students and senior citizens as well to the world of classical music and popular music music as well

I've been to a few of the performances and let me tell you it's great

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 10:30:46 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonathan Flaksman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a musician employed by the Hawai'i Symphony and play the cello. I love how the Hawai'i Symphony strengthens the feeling of community here.

I support this bill.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 10:44:44 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ginny tiu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Committee members,

Thank you so much for your consideration to support HB 1860, HD2 SD1. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) is such a vital part of our state, not only uplifting us and bringing us joy from the stage, but educating and inspiring our next generation in schools and homes. Music makes such a positive impact in one's life and the life of our community.

As a professional musician, I have performed with other symphony orchestras and I can honestly say that our HSO is truly world class. It is the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra we can be so proud to call it our own.

Thank you so much for your kind consideration to support this.

With aloha,

Ginny Tiu

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 10:55:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shuo Li	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am an Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra musician, and I **strongly support HB1860**. Everyday, I am inspired by my colleagues' talent, and their dedication to music and serving the community. The recognition by designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra would ensure this world-class music treasure continue to thrive and serve our communities, for generations to come.

Mahalo.

Shuo Li

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 11:01:10 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice Kim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairperson and Committee members.

Thank you for making it easy to share these thoughts with you.

I write in support of designating the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the State symphony.

About me: I was raised in Kaimuki, attended Star of the Sea Schools from kindergarten and graduated from SOS high school. I attended the UH Manoa and later Georgetown Law. I practiced in Kaimuki for over 41 years and recently retired in 2024. Finally, after a long and demanding career, I can enjoy some of the things that years of hard work made difficult. I understand the idea that there are many needs in our community and I supported our state over decades with my tax dollars and in business. I just hope that in my senior years, I might not be overlooked. I volunteer as a greeter at the Blaisdell and I see all ages come to enjoy a moment of respite and enrichment. This symphony organization and its maestro amaze me. I learn about composers and history every time I hear the conductor turn to the audience to share his knowledge and the composers art. Maestro Lam brings the music to life and makes it more than just notes in the ear.

I'm asking that I not be overlooked. I'm asking that this state, with all its needs, set aside something for people that might feed the soul, allow seniors and all people to commune toward a little more than subsistence. In these twilight years, my evolution continues. I yearn for community beyond just earning a living. I know how hard it is to give value to those wishes but more and more of us navigate this passage after years of sacrifice and support of our State. Could you please see beyond the subsistence and recognize that this symphony organizations value dwells in realms beyond just its financial contributions to our society and its needs. Thank you.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 11:30:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nelly Kovalev	Testifying for Hawaii Symphony Orchestra	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am an HSO musician and I support this bill. This is a chance to preserve a local treasure that is very unique to our islands and to provide a platform for future Hawaii musicians and artists to come.

HB-1860-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 11:48:05 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Ellen Williams	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Having a strong symphony orchestra in Hawaii promotes a vibrant culture and an environment that promotes music education for keiki. Music is essential to life.