



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

Date: 02/24/2026

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: 325 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: JHA

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB2001, HD1, RELATING TO LOVE MY LIBRARY DAY.

Purpose of Bill: Designates the first Friday in February of each year as "Love My Library Day" in the State. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Department's Position:

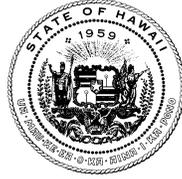
The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports HB2001 HD1.

The Department supports this measure as it recognizes and celebrates the vital role libraries, including school libraries, play in education and community enrichment. The designation of "Love My Library Day" will have a positive impact on the Department by raising the profile of school libraries and the essential work of school librarians. This increased visibility can lead to greater community understanding of the resources and support school libraries provide, potentially fostering increased volunteerism and advocacy for these crucial educational spaces. It also reinforces the importance of library services in supporting student success from early childhood through higher education, to promote the love of reading and literacy across content and student interest areas.

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

JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



STACEY A. ALDRICH
STATE LIBRARIAN
Ke Po'o Hale Waihona Puke Moku'āina

STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII STATE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
'OIHANA HALE WAIHONA PUKE AUPUNI O KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
OFFICE OF THE STATE LIBRARIAN
44 MERCHANT STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
(808) 586-3704

**House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
February 24, 2026, 2:00 pm
State Capitol, Room 325**

HB 2001 HD1 – Relating to Love My Library Day

To: Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair
Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

The Hawai'i State Public Library System (HSPLS) strongly supports HB 2001 HD1 which designates the first Friday in February of each year as "Love My Library Day" in the State.

H.B. 2001 HD1 recognizes what communities across Hawai'i already know in their hearts: **our libraries are essential to the public good**—for keiki, teens, adults, and kūpuna alike. Libraries are among the few places left where everyone is welcome, where no one has to “buy something to belong,” and where opportunity is available to all.

This bill matters because it lifts up the full truth of what libraries do every day. Our libraries are **community anchors** that promote **lifelong learning, equity, civic engagement, and access to information and culture**.

In a state as geographically spread out and diverse as ours, libraries are also one of the most powerful equalizers we have. For many families—especially in rural, underserved, and low-income communities—libraries are where people go to access broadband, computers, support for students, early literacy opportunities, job-seeking resources, and trusted help navigating essential services.

H.B. 2001 HD1 also acknowledges an important reality: **libraries strengthen democracy**. Libraries help people access government services and provide space for public dialogue—services that ensure residents can participate fully in civic life.

And in today’s fast-moving digital world, libraries have not become less relevant—they have become more vital than ever. The need for trusted information, digital skills, workforce support, and safe community space has only grown.

Designating the **first Friday in February** as “Love My Library Day” is meaningful because it invites residents across the islands to do something simple, powerful, and unifying: **show up for one another in a shared public space built on knowledge and aloha.**

This day is not a state holiday, but it is a statewide statement—a reminder that our libraries don’t just store knowledge; they **spark possibility.**

“Love My Library Day” creates an annual moment for families, schools, and communities to celebrate the ways libraries enrich lives—and to renew our shared commitment to sustaining and strengthening them for future generations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 2001 HD1 and your continued support of our communities and the Hawai‘i State Public Library System.



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Osa Tui, Jr.
President

Logan Okita
Vice President

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Andrea Eshelman
Executive Director

TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Item: HB 2001, HD1 – Relating to Love My Library Day

Position: Support

Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2026, 2:00 pm, Room 325

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

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports** H.B. 2001, HD1, which establishes the first Friday in February of each year as "Love My Library Day". Libraries serve as essential community anchors that foster lifelong learning, civic engagement, and equity. By designating this day, the State acknowledges that libraries remain critical in the digital age, providing residents with access to technology, cultural programming, and resources for professional growth.

Furthermore, school libraries are fundamental to the success of our students. Evidence highlights that students achieve higher scores in reading and math when supported by full-time librarians, and collaboration between teachers and librarians is key to better educational outcomes. This legislation will raise public awareness for the vital role librarians play and encourage the necessary investment to sustain these institutions for future generations. We urge the committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo.



February 23, 2026

Chair David Tarnas,
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

RE: HB2001 HD1, Hearing of February 24, 2026
Relating to Love My Library Day

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

Friends of the Library of Hawai'i **strongly supports** HB2001 HD1. This measure reinforces the important role libraries play in our communities and celebrates their importance as centers of learning and access to ideas and information. As an essential part of the educational ecosystem, libraries of all types provide users with the tools and resources they need to succeed, grow, and thrive.

Friends of the Library of Hawai'i supports and promotes public library services in Hawai'i. The Hawai'i State Public Library System is dedicated to inspiring curiosity and creating opportunities for all to read, learn, and connect. Public libraries serve as pillars of democracy, providing equitable access to information, opportunity, and lifelong learning for patrons of all ages and backgrounds.

Our organization is proud to have participated in past Love My Library Day celebrations organized by the Hawai'i Library Association. We commend the Hawai'i State Legislature for its efforts to recognize, on an annual basis, the essential role libraries play in strengthening our communities and supporting education across Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Nainoa Mau
Executive Director

HB-2001-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2026 5:47:07 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Krystal Kakimoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wholeheartedly support libraries and the many ways they contribute to healthy societies. Let's celebrate libraries together!

HB-2001-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 8:46:20 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amber Kanehailua	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB2001 as a citizen that loves to read and any bill that promotes or supports our public libraries in the state. I believe in education and seeking knowledge especially from a young age and at all ages for that matter. Thank you for this consideration.

HB-2001-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 10:09:59 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellen-Rae Cachola	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and committee members of the Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

Please support HB 2001 HD1 Relating to Love My Library Day. Designating the first Fridays of every February will make a strong impact through public messaging.

Today, there is a need for strong societal messages that reading is important for our keiki, students, workers, kupuna, and all people, to intellectually and empathetically engage with our society. Libraries are the public institutions that foster these skills and habits by providing access to books, media, and technology resources to all people.

By designating one day in the year to "Love My Library" will encourage all of Hawai'i's citizens because our government cares about everyone's literacy and education as a means to empower them to engage in our society. It will bring positive recognition that our library institutions are part of nurturing everyone's democratic participation.

Mahalo nui,
Ellen-Rae Cachola

HB-2001-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 10:26:54 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sunyeen Pai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Esteemed Members:

My name is Sunyeen Pai, and I am a retired community college librarian who has had the privilege of serving our community at both UH Mānoa and Kapi'olani Community College. I am here today in strong support of establishing a "Love My Library Day" in Hawai'i.

From the moment a child sits down for their first story time to the day a kupuna discovers new government services through the internet, libraries are woven into the fabric of our lives. Yet too often, we take for granted the extraordinary breadth of services they provide — quietly and without fanfare — for every member of our community.

Our school and university librarians equip students with the critical thinking and research skills they need to succeed in higher education and the workforce. They actively work to reduce the financial burden on students by lowering barriers to textbooks and technology. Our public libraries teach keiki to read, offer child-centered programs that support working parents, and serve as trusted sources of civic and democratic education for all ages. For residents without home internet access, libraries bridge the digital divide through free technology and training. And in times of crisis — from hurricanes to wildfires — our libraries have stepped up as community refuges, providing shelter, distributing emergency supplies, and connecting families with vital state and federal services.

Libraries do all of this not for a select few, but for everyone — regardless of income, background, or circumstance.

"Love My Library Day" is an opportunity to pause and acknowledge what libraries truly mean to Hawai'i. It is a chance to celebrate the dedicated librarians and staff who serve our communities every day, to educate the public about the full range of services available to them, and to reaffirm our collective commitment to funding and supporting these essential institutions.

I urge you to support this measure. Our libraries deserve to be celebrated.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sunyeen Pai, PhD, Retired Professor and Community College Librarian

HB-2001-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:01:18 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Meera Garud	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in **strong support for HB2001**, which would designate the first Friday in February of each year as "Love My Library Day" in Hawai'i.

A "Love My Library Day" would be an opportunity to raise awareness of the many ways that Hawai'i's libraries support communities island-wide. As a library professional, many say they have fond memories of their library growing up, but they are unaware of the resources available today.

People are surprised and excited to learn that with a public library card, they have free access to streaming services, ebooks and audiobooks, Mango languages, genealogy databases, and ukulele. Many are inspired to return to their library to take advantage of these resources.

People are surprised to learn that today's school librarians teach skills such as media literacy, AI literacy, and information literacy, in addition to promoting a love of reading. However, they are disappointed to learn that only one in four public schools have a licensed school librarian and wonder what can be done to increase student access.

Designating a "Love My Library Day" would provide a strong platform to raise awareness of the valuable resources available at our libraries, and learn about ways to help make libraries stronger.

Mahalo for considering this bill,

Meera Garud

HB-2001-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:02:37 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jenny Silbiger	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas and Vice Chair Poepoe and respected JHA committee members,

I wholeheartedly support the establishment of "Love My Library Day." Libraries are spaces where anyone can enter and engage in lifelong learning, access vital information needed to enrich our lives at every step of the way, and generally improve communities by making resources in a variety of media available to the public. Let's please show our appreciation for what libraries give to our communities in Hawai'i, by officially dedicating a day commemorating their resources and services.

Thank you,

Jenny Silbiger

February 23, 2026

TO: CHAIR TARNAS AND THE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

FROM: SHANA W. KUKILA, INDIVIDUAL

RE: HB2001 HD1 RELATING TO LOVE MY LIBRARY DAY

IN SUPPORT

To Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe and Committee Members,

Hawaiians were once the most literate people in the world. In the mid 1800s, more than 80% of our local population over 16 years old was able to read and write in the Hawaiian, English, and European languages. This historical fact is why Hawai'i is the perfect place to declare "Love My Library Day" a day to honor our past as we prepare for the future.

By designating a particular day to our public and private libraries, we elevate the importance of education, reading, and civic engagement. In Hawai'i, we are seeing literacy rates falling well below those of other places in the world, however, through the promotion of our libraries as an essential part of the community, we can inspire the next generation to strive for higher education and lifelong learning. This leads to better outcomes for society.

Libraries also provide families and communities with a quiet, safe space to gather, a credible place to find resources with helpful staff, and a way to connect with others in person and online using educational tools and technology. For the unsheltered, it provides a place to feel normal and to find resources which they need to survive. It is a sanctuary of learning and community enrichment through classes, informational workshops, and materials for children and the disabled to access in a safe, public space. A place for all.

In the bill, many reasons for declaring "Love My Library Day" are eloquently expressed. The following quote is one of which I fully agree and conclude my testimony, mahalo:

"The legislature acknowledges the vital role libraries play in fostering civic engagement across the United States. According to the American Library Association, roughly ninety per cent of public libraries help patrons access government services such as voter registration, tax forms, and social assistance programs. Additionally, close to eighty per cent of libraries provide a meeting space for community organizations and civic discussions, serving as a trusted, neutral hub for public dialogue. Moreover, libraries offer critical services that foster civic engagement, empowering citizens to think critically and participate in the country's democracy."

Source: <https://historichawaii.org/article/the-first-printing-a-written-hawaiian-language/>

HB-2001-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 5:11:10 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Press	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I write in support of HB 2001 HD1, which designates the first Friday in February as “Love My Library Day” in Hawai‘i. Libraries play an essential role in our communities by promoting lifelong learning, supporting students and families, and providing access to information and civic resources.

Mahalo.