



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

Date: 04/08/2026

Time: 01:04 PM

Location: CR 224 & Videoconference

Committee: WLA

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB2001, HD2, 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. (HD2)

Department's Position:

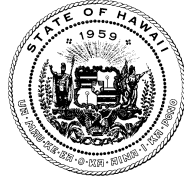
The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports HB2001 HD2.

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

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
April 8, 2026, 1:04pm
State Capitol, Room 224

HB 2001 HD2 – Relating to Love My Library Day

To: Sen. Chris Lee, Chair
Sen. Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

The Hawai'i State Public Library System (HSPLS) strongly supports HB 2001 HD2 which designates the first Friday in February of each year as "Love My Library Day" in the State.

H.B. 2001 HD2 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 HD2 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

Cheney Kaku
Secretary-Treasurer

Andrea Eshelman
Executive Director

TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Item: HB 2001, HD2 – Relating to Love My Library Day

Position: Support

Hearing: Wednesday, April 8, 2026, 1:04 pm, Room 224

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

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports** H.B. 2001, HD2, 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.



April 6, 2026

Chair Chris Lee,
Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

RE: HB2001 HD2, Hearing of April 8, 2026
Relating to Love My Library Day

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

Friends of the Library of Hawai'i **strongly supports** HB2001 HD2. This measure reinforces the important role libraries play in our communities and celebrates their importance as centers of learning and points of 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 through our statewide public library system. Public libraries serve as pillars of democracy, providing equitable access to information, opportunity, and lifelong learning for patrons of all ages and backgrounds. The Hawai'i State Public Library System is dedicated to inspiring curiosity and creating opportunities for all to read, learn, and connect.

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-2

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 10:26:19 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/8/2026 1:04:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, 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. Mahalo for passing its senate companion bill SB2147 earlier this session. I hope you will move the house version forward as well.

As a library professional myself, many of my friends and community members say they have fond memories of their library growing up, but they are unaware of the resources available today. 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.

For example, people are surprised and excited to learn that our public libraries provide 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 and for supporting strong libraries.

Meera Garud

HB-2001-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 4:31:06 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/8/2026 1:04:00 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 state at both UH Mānoa and Kapi'olani Community College. I am here today in strong support of HB 2001, HD2, Relating to Love My Library Day.

From the moment a keiki 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 and our public reminded of these invaluable services that our state provides.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sunyeen Pai, PhD, Retired Professor and Community College Librarian

Testimony

TO: Committee on Water, Land, Culture, and The Arts
Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

HEARING: Wednesday, April 8, 2026
1:04 PM
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 224

FROM: Melanie Ducsak

RE: HB 2001 HD2

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Melanie Ducsak, and I am in strong support of HB 2001 HD2.

Libraries play an essential role in supporting individuals, families, and communities across Hawai'i. As highlighted in this bill, libraries are more than just places to access books. They serve as safe, inclusive spaces where people can access education resources, technology, job support, and community programming.

Through my work with children and families, I have seen how important it is to have free and accessible community spaces that support learning, connection, and growth. Libraries often serve as one of the few places where individuals of all backgrounds and abilities can access resources without barriers. This is especially important for families who may be navigating financial stress, limited access to technology, or other challenges.

Designating a "Love My Library Day" is a meaningful way to recognize the value that libraries bring to our communities. It also helps encourage community engagement, awareness, and continued support for these essential spaces.

From both a professional and personal perspective, I strongly support this bill and the message it promotes about the importance of access, equity, and lifelong learning.

Sincerely,
Melanie Ducsak

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 219
415 South Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

6 April 2026

Dear Chair Senator Lee, Vice Chair Senator Inouye, and Honorable WLA Members
Senators Chang, Lamosao, and DeCorte:

I am writing to you in **very strong support** of **HB2001** to give legislative approval for **Love my Library Day**. I'm writing as a lifelong lover of libraries, but also as someone who has researched and taught librarianship here at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa for over two decades. Of course I am not writing in an official capacity, but I want you to know that librarians here are doing so many amazing things to foster lifelong learning, help people nurture a love of the host culture as well as our other cultures. They also help people to learn how to resist misinformation and become participants of our precious democratic forum. Public, school and academic librarians are all helping to also promote literacy and recreational reading that leads to good reading behavior for informational purposes as well. They also connect kupuna with the internet and help people find new skills and prepare for the ever-changing workplace.

As a proud Democrat, I should add that this echoes the PLATFORM OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII (As Adopted at the 2022 State Convention, May 18, 2024, p3):

*We support establishing a dedicated funding source to deliver a **quality public education and library services to every student**, regardless of learning capacity or ability to pay, in an environment conducive to the learning process. These **resources shall be made available at every level**, from preschool through higher education, including life-long learning.*

I also hope that local Republicans also would equally support strong libraries for all.

Again, I must reiterate that these views don't necessarily represent the views of my employer, but I would be remiss if I didn't express my personal and professional conviction that libraries are changing and helping our people to learn and grow. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions at my personal email drew.wertheimer@gmail.com. Thank you again for considering my very strong support for this resolution.

Yours with Aloha,



Andrew B. Wertheimer, MLS, Ph.D.

To: Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair
Members, Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

From: Sarah Hanson

Re: HB 2001 HD2

Date: Wednesday, April 8, 2026
1:04 p.m., Conference Room 224

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and committee members:

My name is Sarah Hanson, and I am a graduate social work student at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. I am writing in **strong support of HB 2001 HD2**, which designates the first Friday in February as “Love My Library Day” in the State of Hawai‘i.

Libraries have been a meaningful and constant presence throughout my life. As a child, I visited my local library weekly for story time, books, audiobooks, and even toy rentals. As I grew older, libraries became a reliable place to study, access resources, and have a quiet place to focus. Today, as a graduate student, I continue to depend on both school and public libraries as supportive environments for learning. Through my own experiences, and by seeing how libraries have enriched the lives of my friends and family, I see that they are not just places to borrow books, but foundational spaces that offer opportunities to individuals and families at every stage of life.

Through my practicum experiences with the State of Hawai‘i Juvenile Drug Court and Kupu Community Program, I have witnessed firsthand how many support services for adolescents and families are difficult to access due to eligibility requirements, stigma, or limited availability. Libraries stand apart. They are low-barrier, welcoming spaces where no one needs to meet specific criteria to walk through the door. Anyone can access internet and computer services, educational materials, equipment rentals, and community programming. In this way, libraries provide an equitable space where individuals from all backgrounds can learn, grow, and access opportunities to move forward.

Libraries also play an important role in strengthening communities more broadly. They support early literacy, provide safe spaces for youth, serve as gathering places for families and neighbors, and function as resource hubs in times of crisis. Given the rich history of a statewide public library system in the State of Hawai‘i, recognizing and celebrating the role of these institutions through “Love My Library Day” is a meaningful way to acknowledge their contributions and the people who sustain them.

As a future social worker, I am committed to supporting programs, spaces, and systems that equitably and effectively serve our communities. HB 2001 HD2 does exactly that. By designating a day to celebrate libraries, this bill encourages ongoing engagement, appreciation, and investment in resources that every resident of Hawai‘i deserves access to.

For these reasons, I strongly support HB 2001 HD2.

Respectfully,

Sarah Hanson

Master of Social Work Student

Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

hanson77@hawaii.edu

HB-2001-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 10:54:09 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/8/2026 1:04:00 PM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and members of the Water, Land, Culture and Arts Committee,

Please support HB 2001 HD1, designating the first Fridays of every February as Love My Library Day.

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

By designating one day in the year as "Love My Library" will encourage all of Hawai'i's citizens to care about our libraries because they are places where literacy and education is nurtured for cultural, educational, and civic empowerment.

Mahalo,
Ellen-Rae Cachola