



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

Date: 02/17/2026
Time: 09:00 AM
Location: 411 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Committee: WAL

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB2056, MAKING APPROPRIATIONS TO THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU.

Purpose of Bill: Appropriates moneys to the Department of Housing and Land Management and Department of Design and Construction of the City and County of Honolulu as grants-in-aid to comply with the requirements of Act 206, SLH 2017, and Act 210, SLH 2018.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) is in support of HB 2056. In 2004, the Legislature approved Act 51, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2004, which is now known as the Reinventing Education Act of 2004 (Act 51). Under this landmark measure, the Legislature found that significant changes were needed to enhance Hawaii's public education system. Among the innovative efforts to public education, Act 51 helped to streamline management of the public works program by completely transferring management of construction projects for schools from the Department of Accounting and General Services to the Department. This enabled the Department to directly involve school-level educators and other support services in the discussion of planning, design, and construction of its campuses.

Today, the split ownership of public school lands remains a significant challenge in the Department's effort to redevelop, construct, and maintain facilities within its portfolio. Split ownership of land has resulted in delays with permitting, related entitlements, and delivery of vital capital improvements throughout the public school system. It has also hampered the Department's ability to plan and truly modernize its aging capital assets to support current advancements in educational excellence.

Soon after the enactment of Act 206, SLH 2017, and Act 210, SLH 2018, the Department met with the City and County of Honolulu (City) and the Department of Land Management to coordinate the required land transfers. Although a \$100,000 appropriation was approved under Act 206, sufficient resources for the City to transfer

these properties continue to be a challenge. For most of the properties identified in Acts 206 and 210, resources are required to verify title information and surveys to define property definition needed for easements, parcel consolidation or subdivision, and to identify possible encroachments.

As part of its testimony in support of this bill, the Department would also like to make a point of clarification. Act 206 required that fee simple interest be transferred to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), subsequently, Act 210 required fee simple transfer of City-owned school properties to the Department. Then, in 2022, Act 307 required transfers of state-owned school properties from the DLNR to the Department. Accordingly, we request that this bill be amended to require, notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the transfer of City-owned school campuses to the Department and to name the Department as grantee.

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

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT
KA 'OIHANA HO'OLĀLĀ KŪKULU HALE A ME KA HO'OKELE 'ĀINA
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

650 SOUTH KING STREET, FLOOR 3 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 768-4277 • FAX: (808) 768-4296 • WEBSITE: www.honolulu.gov/dhlm

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



KEVIN D. AUGER
DIRECTOR
PO'O

CATHERINE A. TASCHNER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O

February 12, 2026

The Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair
and Members of the Housing Committee on Water & Land
Hawaii'i House of Representatives
Hawaii'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii'i 96813

**SUBJECT: Support for House Bill 2056
Relating to Appropriations**

Dear Chair Hashem and Committee Members:

The Department of Housing and Land Management (DHLM) **strongly supports** House Bill 2056, which provides grant-in-aid funding to the City and County of Honolulu to carry out required transfers of City-owned lands on which State Department of Education public schools are sited.

Through Acts 206 (2017) and 210 (2018), the State directed the City to transfer ownership of 97 school sites to the State so that the Department of Education would have full control over those parcels. While the policy decision was made at the State level, the responsibility of completing these transfers was placed on the City without sufficient funding to carry them out.

These transfers are complex. Each parcel requires surveying, title research, mapping, easement analysis, and legal work to resolve decades-old issues before a transfer can occur. Completing this work across 97 separate properties represents a substantial, multi-year workload that exceeds the City's existing capacity without additional resources.

To date, the City has already incurred approximately \$355,000 to advance title research, survey field work, and mapping. Based on experience from work already completed, the remaining effort required to finalize transfers for all 97 school sites is estimated at \$3.25 million. Absent this funding, it will not be possible to complete the school land transfers.

The Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair
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For these reasons, the Department of Housing and Land Management respectfully urges the Committee to pass House Bill 2056.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Gavin Thornton, Director of Housing Policy, at (808) 768-4277.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin D. Auger", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Kevin D. Auger
Director