



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

Date: 02/26/2026

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: FIN

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB2117, HD1, RELATING TO THE ARTS.

Purpose of Bill: Establishes the Mapping of Arts Data for Education Task Force to conduct a study and develop a comprehensive, publicly available statewide database and geographic information systems map of arts entities and programs engaged in arts and arts education. Requires interim and final reports to the Legislature. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education supports HB 2117 H.D.1 but would defer to the Hawaii Youth Symphony in regards to the implementation of the task force.

The Fine Arts program, including music and dance is foundational to the development of the whole child. By integrating the Fine Arts into our students' learning, we empower our students to express their creativity and explore imagination. Student learning that embraces the Fine Arts enables students to bridge the connections between logic and wonder, connecting to themselves and their environment. Mapping the Fine Arts programs offered by schools, municipal services, nonprofits, and private businesses may be a means to bridge the gap between our existing arts resources and the communities, thus increasing opportunities for students to further explore the arts.

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

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE ARTS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that arts programs play a
2 critical role in supporting student learning, cultural
3 preservation, community well-being, workforce development, and
4 the State's creative economy. Arts education and programming
5 are delivered across a wide range of settings, including public
6 and private schools, municipal services, nonprofit
7 organizations, and private businesses.

8 The legislature further finds that while certain counties
9 have developed robust geographic information system databases
10 and mapping tools to support planning and public access to
11 information, those tools are limited in geographic scope and do
12 not comprehensively capture statewide data relating to arts
13 education or the creative economy. The State lacks a
14 centralized, comprehensive, and publicly accessible statewide
15 database that identifies the availability, geographic
16 distribution, and scope of arts programs and services across all
17 counties. The absence of this information makes it difficult



1 for nonprofit administrators, business leaders, philanthropists,
2 lawmakers, educators, and grant makers to identify gaps in
3 access, coordinate services, and make informed decisions
4 regarding policy, funding, and program development.

5 The legislature further finds that advances in geographic
6 information systems and open data platforms provide an
7 opportunity to collect, organize, and present arts data in a
8 manner that is transparent, accessible, and useful to
9 communities statewide.

10 The purpose of this Act is to establish a task force to:

- 11 (1) Conduct a statewide survey of schools, municipal
12 services, nonprofit organizations, and private
13 businesses engaged in arts and arts education; and
14 (2) Develop a comprehensive, publicly accessible statewide
15 database and geographic information system map of arts
16 entities and programs.

17 SECTION 2. (a) There is established an arts data and
18 mapping task force, to be known as the mapping of arts data for
19 education task force, or the MADE task force. The task force
20 shall consist of the following members or their designees:



- 1 (1) The president and chief executive officer of the
- 2 Hawaii Youth Symphony, who shall serve as the
- 3 chairperson of the task force;
- 4 (2) The executive director of the Hawaii Arts Alliance;
- 5 (3) The arts and culture program director of the Hawaii
- 6 Community Foundation;
- 7 (4) The chair of the senate standing committee with
- 8 primary jurisdiction over culture and the arts;
- 9 (5) The chair of the house standing committee with primary
- 10 jurisdiction over culture and the arts;
- 11 (6) The Hawaii statewide geographical information systems
- 12 program manager;
- 13 (7) A representative from the Hawaii Data Collaborative;
- 14 (8) A representative from the state foundation on culture
- 15 and the arts;
- 16 (9) A representative from the department of education;
- 17 (10) An alumni or student from the Hawaii Youth Symphony;
- 18 (11) A representative from the Hawaii Association of
- 19 Independent Schools;
- 20 (12) A representative from the state public charter school
- 21 commission; and



- 1 (13) A representative of a neighbor island arts education
2 program.
- 3 (b) The task force shall:
- 4 (1) Design and conduct a statewide survey of public and
5 private schools, municipal services, nonprofit
6 organizations, and private businesses engaged in arts
7 or arts education;
- 8 (2) Identify the types of programs, services, populations
9 served, and geographic distribution of arts activities
10 statewide;
- 11 (3) Develop and maintain a comprehensive statewide
12 database of arts entities and programs;
- 13 (4) Create a publicly accessible geographic information
14 system map of the data collected pursuant to this
15 section;
- 16 (5) Identify barriers to access and underserved areas; and
- 17 (6) Make recommendations regarding the ongoing collection,
18 maintenance, and public dissemination of arts data.
- 19 (c) The mapping of arts data for education task force
20 shall be responsible for developing a statewide dataset that
21 supports equitable access to arts education. The dataset shall



1 be descriptive in nature and designed to identify the
2 availability and geographic distribution of arts education
3 opportunities in Hawaii. The dataset shall not measure the
4 quality, outcomes, or effectiveness of any program, service, or
5 entity included in the database.

6 (d) The mapping of arts data for education task force
7 shall submit an interim report of its findings related to music
8 and dance to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to
9 the convening of the regular session of 2027. The task force
10 shall submit a final report of its findings and recommendations,
11 including any proposed legislation, on the arts in general and
12 arts education programming to the legislature no later than
13 twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of
14 2029.

15 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

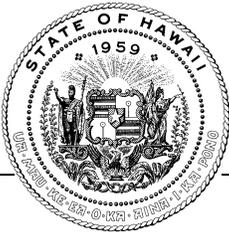
Arts; Art Education; Geographic Data Mapping; Task Force

Description:

Establishes the Mapping of Arts Data for Education Task Force to conduct a study and develop a comprehensive, publicly available statewide database and geographic information systems map of arts entities and programs engaged in arts and arts education. Requires interim and final reports to the Legislature. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.





**STATE OF HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF PLANNING
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS, Director

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Thursday, February 26, 2026, 10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

in consideration of
HB 2117, HD1
RELATING TO THE ARTS.

Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance, the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (**OPSD**) **supports** HB 2117, HD1, which establishes the Mapping of Arts Data for Education (MADE) Task Force to conduct a study and develop a comprehensive, publicly available statewide database and geographic information systems (GIS) map of arts entities and programs engaged in arts and arts education.

A statewide database will help artists and practitioners, students, parents, educators, and policy makers better understand the ecosystem of arts organizations and arts education opportunities in Hawai'i – where they are located, the programs and supports they offer, the communities they serve, and the gaps that exist. Furthermore, combining this data with other data in a GIS can provide additional context, revealing opportunities for investment and collaboration, and supporting informed decision making.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



No. 1 Capitol District Building
250 South Hotel Street
Second Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813

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

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

**HOUSE BILL 2117
RELATING TO THE ARTS**

Dear Chair Todd and members of the Committee,

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

SFCA **SUPPORTS** H.B. 2117_HD1 which establishes the Mapping of Arts Data for Education (MADE) Task Force to create a comprehensive, publicly accessible statewide database and geographic information system map of arts entities and programs.

Arts data mapping is essential because it makes the creative work of Hawaii's communities visible, measurable, and protectable. Artists, cultural organizations, and creative spaces are often underrepresented from traditional data sources. When they are not counted, they are easily overlooked in funding decisions, policy development, and long-term planning.

Mapping arts data helps us understand where cultural activity actually happens, who is being served, and who is being left out. It reveals inequities in access to resources and allows public and private funders to invest more fairly and effectively.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts requests that there is ample time for the Taskforce to convene and develop a plan to establish a solid foundation and criteria for the data mapping project. The SFCA will also have the capacity to house and manage the data once the development of the project is set.

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

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 2:00:31 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erica Mau-SChank	Hawaii Youth Symphony	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As the board chair of Hawai'i Youth Symphony, and an alumna of the organization, I have experienced myself and witnessed first-hand the power music and music education holds within our community, which is why I strongly SUPPORT HB 2117. A comprehensive arts database will increase visibility, strengthen collaboration, and build awareness for all. When arts data is layered with income, housing, and education indicators, it positions music as essential infrastructure for youth development. Publicly-accessible data also give philanthropic partners confidence to make sustained investments in Hawai'i's next generation, and more ways for us to champion the benefits of music and arts education for young people.

This information will help organizations like HYS to boost their efforts with intention and purpose so that we can serve more of our community.



LE JARDIN ACADEMY

917 Kalanianaʻole Hwy., Kailua, HI 96734 | T: 808.261.0707 F: 808.262.9339 | www.lejardinacademy.org

Aloha Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Le Jardin Academy, I write in strong support of HB 2117, HD1, establishing the Mapping of Arts Data for Education (MADE) Task Force and a statewide, publicly accessible GIS database of music and arts education programs across Hawai‘i.

As a Head of School and former Superintendent of Schools, I believe deeply in the union of public and private resources to advance arts education for all children. Mapping arts assets statewide is the first step toward improved stewardship of our scarce resources— ensuring we understand, support, and strengthen the resources that serve our keiki and ‘ohana.

This measure enhances visibility for existing school and community programs, strengthens collaboration across sectors, and affirms that the arts are essential to student success and community well-being. By layering arts data with indicators such as income and educational attainment, the State provides a critical resource for policy entrepreneurs, potential funders and the arts community to steward resources for maximum access and greatest impact.

HB 2117, HD1 reflects a shared commitment to access, collaboration and opportunity for all students across our islands. Le Jardin Academy respectfully urges your support.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Earl T. Kim
Head of School
Le Jardin Academy

TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
The Honorable Chris Todd, Chair
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Committee

FROM: Elise Inouye, Director of Policy and Public Affairs

RE: Testimony in Support for HB 2117 HD 1, Relating to the Arts

DATE: Thursday, February 26, 2026 at 10:00 am

LOCATION: Conference Room 308

The Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) **supports** HB 2117 HD 1, relating to the creation of the Mapping of Arts Data for Education Task Force.

HCF has a long history of partnering with the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to increase access to arts education at public and charter schools through the Artists in the Schools program. While this program provides insight into the great demand for arts education, there is also a need to gather data to identify gaps and better coordinate services and resources throughout the state.

HCF believes that when opportunities to practice and participate in arts and culture are inclusive and accessible to everyone, from keiki to kūpuna, we will have a healthier community in Hawai'i. That is why we are committed to increasing access to arts and culture as a priority area within HCF's CHANGE Framework.

This task force will help develop a much-needed comprehensive database of arts data, to facilitate equitable access to arts education statewide and inform prioritization of access for participants that face the greatest barriers to accessing arts education.

Supporting the arts and culture community contributes significantly to the holistic well-being of Hawai'i's residents. **Please advance HB 2117 HD 1** to continue to affirm the importance of arts and culture in Hawai'i.



HAWAI'I
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

DANE LAM | MUSIC AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB2117 – RELATING TO
THE ARTS – MAPPING OF ARTS DATA FOR EDUCATION TASK FORCE**

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

I write in strong support of HB2117, which will deliver the comprehensive arts education data Hawai'i urgently needs, empowering organizations like the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra and others to better understand where support is most needed and to more effectively serve the children of our communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your serious consideration of this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Iwano".

Amy Iwano
President & CEO
Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra



Hawai'i Arts Alliance

Testimony in Support of HB2117 (HD1) Relating to Arts Data Mapping

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

ROOM: 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

COMMITTEE: FINANCE

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

The Hawai'i Arts Alliance stands in **strong support** of this bill and is grateful for the invitation to serve on the Mapping of Arts Data for Education (MADE) Task Force.

This bill takes a critical first step toward building a comprehensive, publicly accessible statewide map of arts and arts education programs. As the measure correctly notes, Hawai'i currently lacks centralized data showing where services exist—and where gaps remain—making it difficult for educators, funders, nonprofits, and policymakers to coordinate efforts and invest strategically.

We need this data. Without it, we cannot ensure equitable access to arts education across islands, communities, and student populations. Pulling together a cross-sector task force to plan for and conduct a statewide survey—and develop a shared database—is an excellent and necessary starting point.

At Hawai'i Arts Alliance, we work closely with teaching artists, schools, and community organizations statewide. We see firsthand both the incredible programs that exist and the disparities in access. HB2117 (HD1) provides the tools to move from anecdotes to actionable insight—supporting smarter policy, stronger partnerships, and more targeted investment.

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

Gaye Humphrey
Executive Director
Hawai'i Arts Alliance

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 6:14:25 PM

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

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

Comments:

As a 40 year music educator on the Island of Hawaii, I strongly advocate the acceptance of this bill. I also dabble in art and am associated with Wailoa Center in Hilo, an institution devoted to promoting the arts and art education. Working with children, their potential for music and art should be addressed in the public school system. This would make them healthier and happier individuals.

Thank you,

Gerdine Markus, Director Pacific Academy of Music



February 25th, 2026

Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

Bill Number: HB 2117 Relating to the Arts
Hearing Date and Time: February 26th 2026 at 10:00 AM (Room 308)
Re: Testimony of Hawai'i Data Collaborative in support

Aloha e Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee:

We are writing **in strong support on** HB 2117 Relating to the Arts.

This bill will establish the Mapping of Arts Data for Education Task Force to conduct a study and develop a comprehensive, publicly available statewide database and geographic information systems map of arts entities and program engaged in arts and arts education.

The work that will be conducted by the Mapping of Arts Data for Education Task Force will codify a statewide arts data inventory that is transparent and public, strengthening the capacity of educators, non-profit practitioners, cultural institutions, and philanthropists to use data to identify service gaps, guide resource allocation, and create more equitable access to arts education across Hawai'i's diverse communities. A centralized arts education dataset with a geographic component will allow users to see where programs exist, where resources are lacking, and how arts opportunities intersect with broader education, workforce, and community well-being indicators.

Hawai'i Data Collaborative (HDC) firmly believes that data informs our understanding of what's happening, why it's happening, and what we can do about it. Data helps identify opportunities, guide decisions, and create systems of accountability so we, as a community, can achieve better outcomes for all. Because HDC's focus is to improve the household need space, we partner with government, philanthropy, and community based organizations (CBO) to improve the data ecosystem in Hawai'i.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2117.

Thomas Lee, PhD, MPH
Director of Government Partnerships
Hawai'i Data Collaborative



24 February 2026

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 2117 HD 1 – Relating to the Arts

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

I write in **strong support** of HB 2117, H.D.1, which establishes the Mapping of Arts Data for Education (MADE) Task Force. This measure will survey public, private, and community-based music, dance, and arts education programs to create a comprehensive, publicly accessible statewide database and geographic information system (GIS) map of available opportunities.

The purpose of this effort is to identify program types, populations served, and geographic distribution so that leaders may make data-informed decisions with a clear, statewide perspective on equitable access. A bird's-eye view of arts education infrastructure will allow policymakers and community partners to better understand both strengths and gaps across our islands.

Importantly, the proposed dataset is descriptive rather than evaluative. It maps availability and distribution without judging program quality. This distinction encourages broad participation while establishing essential infrastructure for long-term planning in education, workforce development, and community well-being.

The task force's composition is thoughtfully designed to ensure inclusive input and output. By engaging representatives from public, charter, and independent school systems; statewide arts organizations; music and dance specialists; data and mapping professionals; community members; and neighbor island practitioners, the bill reflects the shared responsibility of building a comprehensive and accurate resource.

As an arts administrator, community member, and citizen, I witness daily how access to music and arts education strengthens young people and the communities in which they live. HB 2117, H.D.1 reinforces the essential role of the arts in our schools, for our kūpuna, and for all generations.

With the proper tools and data, Hawai'i can build public infrastructure that supports equitable access to the arts and positions our state as a leader in thoughtful, data-driven cultural policy.

Thank you for your consideration and support of this important measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Wong". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Randy Wong

President & CEO, Hawai'i Youth Symphony

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 6:59:31 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill. Mahalo.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 3:03:47 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Serena Takahashi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a parent of a 5th grade violin player (and a former flautist of Hawaii Youth Symphony many moons ago), I support HB 2117, HD1. I have personally seen the positive impact music had on my life and is currently having on my son's life. Music propels students forward in their education. Also, keeps students striving for a positive goal and out of trouble. I feel every child should have access to music education, especially those that may not be able to afford it.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 3:15:19 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dennis Higashiguchi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT HB2117 because a statewide arts data map will help communities like mine see where arts education exists and where it doesn't. This information will help organizations like the Hawai'i Youth Symphony apply for funding, plan programs, and serve more students equitably across our islands.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 3:16:20 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachel Schultz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a supporter of music education in our schools and communities, I strongly SUPPORT HB 2117, HD1. Many excellent school and community music programs already exist, but a comprehensive arts database increases visibility, strengthens collaboration, and builds awareness for all. When arts data is layered with income, housing, and education indicators, it positions music as essential infrastructure for youth development. Publicly-accessible data also give philanthropic partners confidence to make sustained investments in Hawai'i's next generation, and more ways for us to champion the benefits of music and arts education for young people.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 2:50:32 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JENNIFER TOWNSEND	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- - As a **supporter of music education in our schools and communities**, I strongly SUPPORT HB 2117, HD1. Many excellent school and community music programs already exist, but a comprehensive arts database increases visibility, strengthens collaboration, and builds awareness for all. When arts data is layered with income, housing, and education indicators, it positions music as essential infrastructure for youth development. Publicly-accessible data also give philanthropic partners confidence to make sustained investments in Hawai'i's next generation, and more ways for us to champion the benefits of music and arts education for young people.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 3:47:00 PM

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

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

Comments:

- **As a supporter of music education in our schools and communities**, I strongly SUPPORT HB 2117, HD1. Many excellent school and community music programs already exist, but a comprehensive arts database increases visibility, strengthens collaboration, and builds awareness for all. When arts data is layered with income, housing, and education indicators, it positions music as essential infrastructure for youth development. Publicly-accessible data also give philanthropic partners confidence to make sustained investments in Hawai‘i’s next generation, and more ways for us to champion the benefits of music and arts education for young people.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 3:56:02 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Carlson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Amy Carlson and I am a resident of Kaimuki. I support the HB2117, the creation of a task force to map and assess access to the arts and arts education across Hawaii. The arts-- whether aural or visual--are incredibly important for the education of our young people. It provides people with a foundation and a way to express themselves, to learn and hone a skill, and to connect with other artisans in our community. This resulting database would equalize access to arts and music programs, regardless of income level. This is a game changer for many students, and their families. This may seem like a luxury, but connecting students to arts programs can give them a new way to communicate, to experience life, and to grow.

**Written Testimony in Support of HB2117
Relating to Arts Education — Arts Education Mapping Task Force**

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

My name is **Yvonne Manipon**, and I submit this testimony **in strong support of HB2117**, which would create a statewide **Arts Education Mapping Task Force**.

HB2117 proposes an important and practical step toward strengthening arts education in Hawai‘i by identifying and mapping arts and arts education programs across **schools, nonprofit organizations, and community-based spaces**. The outcome—a **free, public online map**—will clearly show **where programs exist, who they serve, and where gaps remain**.

As someone who works closely with teaching artists, cultural practitioners, educators, and community organizations statewide, I have seen firsthand how arts education opportunities are often **unevenly distributed**. Many communities—particularly rural areas, Native Hawaiian communities, and underserved populations—have limited access to consistent, culturally relevant arts learning. At the same time, valuable programs and practitioners often remain **invisible** because there is no centralized way to document or share this information.

This mapping effort is a critical tool for advancing **equitable access to the arts**. It will support better coordination across agencies, inform policy and funding decisions, and help ensure that future investments reach communities with the greatest need. Just as importantly, it creates an opportunity to recognize **community-based, folk, and traditional arts education** that often takes place outside of formal school settings but plays a vital role in cultural continuity and community well-being.

HB2117 lays the groundwork for a more informed, inclusive, and strategic approach to arts education in Hawai‘i. I respectfully urge your support of this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

Yvonne Manipon

[Title / Affiliation, if appropriate]

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 5:37:11 PM

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

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

Comments:

I strongly SUPPORT HB 2117, HD1. It is important for Hawaii to develop a comprehensive arts database. It will greatly benefit students of school music programs by facilitating increased visibility, stronger collaboration, and greater awareness of the value of music and the arts for the whole community. When arts data is layered with income, housing, and education indicators, it positions music as essential infrastructure for youth development and provides philanthropic partners with information to make sustained investments in Hawai'i's next generation, and will open up more ways for our State to champion the benefits of music and arts education for young people. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in **strong support** of HB 2117, HD1.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 6:36:47 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leyla Stevens	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a student, I SUPPORT HB2117, HD1 because students like me are able to gain more opportunities where music programs are easy to access and well supported. Having a statewide arts map would help students and their family's build awareness to opportunities nearby and it allows these programs to shape, strengthen, and build connections for students. Music and arts education is crucial for student success, starting from school ensembles to other community groups and programs. Having this bill allows more students across the Hawaiian Islands access music education.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 6:38:20 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alyssa Kawamura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a supporter of music education in our schools and communities, I strongly SUPPORT HB 2117, HD1. Many excellent school and community music programs already exist, but a comprehensive arts database increases visibility, strengthens collaboration, and builds awareness for all. When arts data is layered with income, housing, and education indicators, it positions music as essential infrastructure for youth development. Publicly-accessible data also give philanthropic partners confidence to make sustained investments in Hawai'i's next generation, and more ways for us to champion the benefits of music and arts education for young people.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 8:57:44 PM

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

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

Comments:

Would help determining resources

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 9:07:06 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laurel Nakanishi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

I am writing to express my support for HB 2117. I appreciate that this bill establishes the MADE task force to survey arts programs and build a public GIS mapping database. This bill will assure crucial arts education data to help arts educators and law makers understand the needs and strengths of the arts in the islands.

Mahalo,
Laurel

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 11:20:14 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Collin Hoo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an advocate for music education in our communities, I strongly SUPPORT HB 2117, HD1.

Music and the arts are essential to student growth and community well-being. While many excellent programs already exist across our islands, families and communities often lack clear, centralized information about available opportunities. A statewide arts and music education database would increase visibility, strengthen coordination, and help identify gaps in access for funders.

By recognizing arts education as measurable community infrastructure, this bill also supports more strategic and sustained philanthropic investment ensuring that students in every neighborhood have the opportunity to participate.

All keiki in Hawai'i deserve equal access to music education. HB 2117, HD1 is a meaningful step toward making that access more equitable and transparent.

Mahalo for your support.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 5:58:37 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cristin Gallagher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of HB 2117 HD1. I offer this testimony as a parent from a Neighbor Island perspective, where access to fine arts education continues to lag behind that of O‘ahu and where arts programs are often treated as secondary to academy-driven career pathways.

In many of our public schools, the focus has shifted heavily toward academies and workforce preparation tracks. While career readiness is important, this emphasis has come at the expense of comprehensive arts education. Music programs are underfunded, understaffed, and in some cases reduced to minimal elective offerings. Students are being guided toward careers before they are given the opportunity to fully explore creativity, culture, and self-expression.

On Neighbor Islands, the inequities are particularly visible. Schools often lack music teachers, working instruments, performance spaces, and sustained funding. Programs depend on community donations, parent fundraising, or the personal sacrifice of dedicated teachers. When budgets tighten, arts are among the first areas cut. This creates a troubling message: that the arts are optional, rather than foundational.

The arts are not extracurricular luxuries. They are essential to cognitive development, cultural literacy, emotional resilience, and community identity. In Hawai‘i, where cultural expression, storytelling and music are integral to who we are, failing to invest in arts education undermines our values and heritage.

Furthermore, prioritizing only career pathways without balanced arts exposure narrows students’ growth. Innovation in science, engineering, healthcare, entrepreneurship requires creativity. Employers consistently value communication skills, collaboration, and critical thinking, all of which are strengthened through art and music education.

HB 2117 HD1 represents an important step toward correcting these disparities and affirming that students on Neighbor Islands deserve equitable access to quality fine arts instruction. Our keiki should not have fewer opportunities simply because of geography.

I respectfully urge you to pass HB 2117 HD1 and ensure that the arts are not an afterthought, but a core component of a well-rounded education system across all islands. Mahalo for your consideration and for your commitment to Hawai‘i’s students.

Respectfully,

Cristin Gallagher
Hilo, Hawai'i

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 7:37:01 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keira Ida Ayu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a neighbor island student and a member of the Hawaii Youth Symphony, I've seen first hand the inequities between Oahu and Hawaii Island.

I hope this bill will pass so that more funding will be available to outer islands.

Music education should be available to all students

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 8:14:12 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
R. Scott Simon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a supporter of music education in our schools and communities, I strongly SUPPORT HB 2117, HD1. Many excellent school and community music programs already exist, but a comprehensive arts database increases visibility, strengthens collaboration, and builds awareness for all. When arts data is layered with income, housing, and education indicators, it positions music as essential infrastructure for youth development. Publicly-accessible data also give philanthropic partners confidence to make sustained investments in Hawai'i's next generation, and more ways for us to champion the benefits of music and arts education for young people.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 8:16:58 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kirk Shitaoka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Kirk Shitaoka, a parent of the Hawai'i Youth Symphony and resident of Honolulu. I strongly support, and respectfully urge the Committee to pass and advance HB 2117, HD1 Relating To The Arts. I believe that any form of Art plays an important role in a student's education, and in particular playing music has been proven to enhance the development of a youth's cognitive skills, language ability, and physical dexterity. Your support of this measure will help to serve more students equitably across our islands. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 2117, HD1.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 8:41:08 AM

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

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

Comments:

As a supporter of music education in our schools and communities, I strongly SUPPORT HB 2117, HD1. Many excellent school and community music programs already exist, but a comprehensive arts database increases visibility, strengthens collaboration, and builds awareness for all. When arts data is layered with income, housing, and education indicators, it positions music as essential infrastructure for youth development. Publicly-accessible data also give philanthropic partners confidence to make sustained investments in Hawai'i's next generation, and more ways for us to champion the benefits of music and arts education for young people.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 9:32:36 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emi Horii	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 2117, which would establish the Mapping of Arts Data for Education (MADE) Task Force to create a comprehensive, publicly accessible statewide database and geographic information system map of arts entities and programs.

The creation of a statewide arts database will support more informed decision-making among nonprofits, schools, and philanthropic partners. I believe it will likewise be a meaningful resource for legislators and the general public.

By mapping arts opportunities through GIS, we can layer different data maps, including district boundaries. This will give legislators a clear idea of what programs and resources exist within their districts, where gaps remain, and which communities may be underserved. Ultimately, this tool will help lawmakers better understand and serve their communities.

Making this information available on a public website will also create a practical resource for the general public. Young people interested in exploring the arts, as well as adults seeking creative opportunities nearby, will be able to easily discover programs that might otherwise be harder to find. Too often, awareness of arts opportunities depends on individual organizations' outreach efforts. A centralized, statewide database will help ensure that more people can take advantage of the many arts programs Hawaii has to offer.

On a personal note, I am a proud Hawaii Youth Symphony (HYS) alumna, and the arts programming in Hawaii has had a significant impact on my life. Through opportunities like HYS, I developed a lifelong passion for violin, found a community of fellow musicians, and learned the value of discipline, teamwork, and attention to detail. The arts offer meaningful benefits to students, and improved data can strengthen access to the arts across the state.

I respectfully urge your support for this measure.

Sincerely,

Emi Horii

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 3:26:04 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randall John Francisco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support and recognition of this legislation. It will serve to create a much-needed and important inventory and baseline for present and future metrics as the arts continues to be challenged in its current environment. Data will help all stewards, arts providers, supporters and, artists the information needed to make important critical budget and policy decisions and, empower them as members of Hawaii's multicultural arts environment, society and industry. I humbly ask for your consideration and support of HB2117 HD1. Aloha. Randall Francisco, Hanapepe, Kauai, HI.

HB-2117-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 3:32:39 PM

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

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

Comments:

I'm in support of this bill for our arts community.