



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

March 2, 2026
10:00 AM
State Capitol, 308

HB2415,HD2
RELATING TO TRAFFIC SAFETY

House Committee on Finance

The Department of Transportation (DOT) supports H.B. No. 2415, HD2, which appropriates funds for the installation of pedestrian safety improvements at sites abutting school properties, with consideration for other sites. This initiative aligns with our commitment to enhancing pedestrian safety, particularly around educational facilities where student safety is paramount.

When developing and funding traffic improvements, HDOT prioritizes intersections and areas based on objective criteria, including crash history and assessed risk levels. We also utilize the HDOT Safety Analytics platform, a data-driven tool that enhances roadway safety through advanced analytics, visualization, and predictive insights. It leverages spatial analysis to transform historical and real-time data into actionable strategies for safer infrastructure. In addition, HDOT is accelerating delivery of our priority multimodal network, with over \$300 million in bicycle and pedestrian projects over the next 10 years. Multimodal network project prioritization considered proximity to schools and areas with higher concentrations of youth. We recognize that pedestrian safety near schools is a shared responsibility, and investing in appropriate pedestrian safety improvements helps reduce the risk of crashes and enhances community confidence in safe travel routes.

The proposed funding mechanism in H.B. No. 2415, HD2, provides an opportunity to strategically enhance safety in critical school zones while ensuring alignment with existing HDOT safety protocols and data-driven decision-making processes. HRS 291C-3(a) establishes a safe routes to school program that shall, among other things, enhance traffic safety around Hawaii's schools, enable and encourage children to walk and bicycle to school, and make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative. Therefore, the safe routes to school program special fund is an appropriate and well-aligned funding source for pedestrian safety improvements in areas adjacent to or near schools.

We request \$5,000,000 be appropriated from the safe routes to school program special fund. Accordingly, we request the following amendments:

Delete Section 3.

“There is appropriated out of the state highway fund established pursuant to section 248-8, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the department of transportation to install pedestrian safety improvements at sites abutting school properties; provided that the department may consider other sites.”

Amend Section 4 to read as follows.

“There is appropriated out of the safe routes to school program special fund established pursuant to section 291C-4, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the sum of \$5,000,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the department of transportation to install pedestrian safety improvements at sites abutting school properties; provided that the department may consider other sites.”

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.



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

Date: 03/02/2026

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: FIN

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB2415, HD2, RELATING TO TRAFFIC SAFETY.

Purpose of Bill: Appropriates funds to the Department of Transportation to install pedestrian safety improvements at sites abutting school properties, with consideration for other sites. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD2)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports HB 2415, HD2 appropriating funds to the Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) to install all-way crosswalks at sites abutting school property.

HB 2415, HD2 strengthens student safety by addressing one of the highest-risk areas for students—crossing busy streets near schools. Approved pedestrian safety improvements, like all-way crosswalks, raised intersections, or a combination of both, enhance pedestrian safety and reduce conflict between vehicles and pedestrians and create predictable crossing conditions, critical for students who may have difficulty judging traffic movement. These simple, effective enhancements protect students during the most dangerous times of day—morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up.

The bill aligns with Safe Routes to School objectives by improving walkability, reducing near-misses, and encouraging healthier, safer travel to campus. Importantly, HB 2415, HD2 enables proactive, rather than reactive, safety improvements by allowing HDOT to identify and upgrade high-risk school-adjacent intersections before injuries occur.

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



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**The Thirty-Third Legislature
House Committees on Finance
Monday, March 2, 2026
Conference Room 308
10:00 a.m.**

TO: The Honorable Chris Todd, Chair
FROM: Keali'i S. López, State Director
RE: Strong Support for H.B. 2415 HD2 Relating to Traffic Safety

Aloha Chair Todd and Members of the Committees:

My name is Keali'i López, and I serve as the State Director of AARP Hawai'i. On behalf of AARP's more than 135,000 members statewide, I respectfully submit testimony **in strong support of H.B. 2415, H.D. 2.**

H.B. 2415, H.D. 2 makes a meaningful and timely investment in traffic safety by providing the authority and direction needed to implement **proven traffic-calming and pedestrian safety strategies**. By prioritizing safer street design in school zones and other high-risk corridors, this measure advances evidence-based solutions that are known to reduce serious injuries and save lives.

These investments align squarely with AARP's long-standing transportation and livable communities' priorities, including **Complete Streets, Safe Routes to School and Safe Routes for All**, context-sensitive roadway design, and data-driven approaches to reducing traffic fatalities. Just as importantly, they reflect a commitment to designing roadways that work for people of all ages and abilities, not just vehicles.

While the bill appropriately centers on areas near schools, its impact extends far beyond students and families. **Older adults are among the most vulnerable road users**, facing a significantly higher risk of severe injury or death when struck by a vehicle due to increased frailty and slower walking speeds. Safety features such as raised crossings and all-way pedestrian signal phases provide longer, more predictable crossing opportunities—critical improvements for older adults, people with disabilities, and anyone who needs more time to cross safely.



Reducing vehicle speeds is one of the most effective ways to improve survivability in pedestrian crashes. School zones often overlap with residential neighborhoods where older adults live, walk for exercise, access transit, attend community activities, and care for grandchildren. By allowing the Department of Transportation to also consider locations beyond school-adjacent areas, this bill creates additional opportunities to address **high-risk corridors that disproportionately endanger older pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.**

For these reasons, AARP Hawai'i **strongly urges the House Committee on Finance to pass H.B. 2415, H.D. 2.** This measure represents a practical, responsible step toward safer streets and healthier communities statewide. We appreciate your leadership and your continued commitment to protecting the lives of Hawai'i's residents, young and old alike.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.