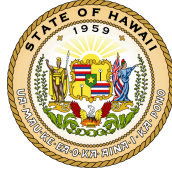


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



ROY M. TAKUMI
CHAIRPERSON

**STATE OF HAWAII
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PAPA HO'ONA'AUAO**
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**House Committee on Economic Development & Technology
Friday, March 27, 2026
9:30 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 423**

Measure: HCR183 / HR173, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP, ADOPT, AND IMPLEMENT A STANDARDIZED EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN GOVERNING IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY AT OR WITHIN ONE THOUSAND FEET OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ADOPT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY AT CERTAIN SCHOOL-RELATED LOCATIONS AND EVENTS

Aloha Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and Members of the Committee:

The Board of Education (Board) greatly appreciates the Legislature's concern regarding the safety and well-being of our students, and supports House Concurrent Resolution 183 and House Resolution 173, noting that the Hawaii Department of Education currently has procedures and guidance in place to respond to law enforcement activity, including that of federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

On January 20, 2025, the current presidential administration rescinded a policy that protected certain areas, including schools, from immigration enforcement activities. Since then, ICE officials have been regularly detaining and apprehending students and parents as they arrive at or leave public school campuses throughout the country, creating an atmosphere of fear and anxiety in the very public spaces within which children should feel safest. In many cases, this has resulted in children feeling too unsafe to even attend school.

Such activities are also having a devastating impact on teachers and their ability to do their jobs. In September 2025, the American Federation of Teachers and the National

Education Association joined an ongoing lawsuit challenging the rescission of the policy around protected areas. Court filing included testimony from teachers across 18 states describing the disruption, including increased absenteeism, disruption to approvals for special education services for fear that signing documents would draw ICE attention, and being unable to console the fears and anxieties students are bringing with them into the classroom.

Having recognized the ramifications early on, the Board passed a resolution at its April 10, 2025, general business meeting, declaring that Department schools “should be places where its students can learn and thrive free of fear, conflict, and stress.” The resolution also:

- Denounces “immigration and enforcement activity at Department schools unless exigent circumstances exist, such as those that relate to preservation of life or prevention of catastrophic outcomes, as has been defined by the United States Department of Homeland Security, or applicable state and federal law”; and
- Recognizes and supports the Department's existing policy of not asking families for their immigration status and not recording such information in student records, as it has no bearing on the responsibility to keep all of our students safe and to empower them to innovate, serve, and lead.

The Board does note that the Department does not have jurisdiction over areas within a thousand feet of school campuses if they are outside school property. Accordingly, the Committee may wish to amend these resolutions such that the standardized emergency response plan governs immigration enforcement activity on campus grounds only.

The Board defers to the Department regarding its procedures and guidance that addresses conduct at schools by all law enforcement agencies.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Board.



March 25, 2026

Position: **SUPPORT of HCR183/HR173**, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP, ADOPT, AND IMPLEMENT A STANDARDIZED EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN GOVERNING IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY AT OR WITHIN ONE THOUSAND FEET OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ADOPT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY AT CERTAIN SCHOOL-RELATED LOCATIONS AND EVENTS

To: Representative Greggor Ilagan, Chair
Representative Ikaika Hussey, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Technology

From: Llasmin Chaine, LSW, Executive Director, Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HCR183/HR173, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP, ADOPT, AND IMPLEMENT A STANDARDIZED EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN GOVERNING IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY AT OR WITHIN ONE THOUSAND FEET OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ADOPT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY AT CERTAIN SCHOOL-RELATED LOCATIONS AND EVENTS

Hearing: Friday, March 27, 2026, 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room 423, State Capitol

Ensuring that essential locations remain safe and accessible is fundamental to the Commission's mission and our promotion of equity, safety, health, and opportunity for all women and girls. The Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women is in **support of HCR183/HR173**.

This resolution requests the development and implementation of clear statewide standards and emergency response plans regarding immigration enforcement activity within or near public schools. Such standards are vital for the protection of student safety and emotional well-being, and the reduction of fears and barriers, particularly for families who may otherwise avoid these locations and who's children may miss out on these educational opportunities, due to concerns about immigration status.

By requiring the Department of Education (DOE) to develop, adopt and implement policies and procedures, and provide staff training, this resolution takes important steps to foster trust between our public schools and the communities they serve. **These measures align with the Commission's goals to eliminate barriers to safety and empowerment for all girls and women, regardless of immigration status.**

The Commission urges this Committee to **pass HCR183/HR173**. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.