



LATE *Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

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

Date: 04/02/2026

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: FIN

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB2550, HD1, RELATING TO SCHOOL MODERNIZATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the School Facilities Authority to establish a school modernization initiative through a capital improvement project planning database for school facilities statewide. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) respectfully opposes SB 2550, SD 1, HD 1. While the Department supports transparency and modernization, this bill creates overlapping systems that weaken clear accountability and statewide coordination.

The Department already maintains comprehensive, statewide data on school facilities, capital projects, enrollment, capacity, and facility conditions through existing enterprise systems and statewide assessments. These assessments are vetted by an in-house team of licensed professionals (architects and engineers) and educators. The Department also has a formal Board of Education-reviewed project prioritization process and annually reports statewide needs, methodology, and funding distribution through its six-year program and financial plan required by law. These systems provide the groundwork for a transparent and consistent basis for decision making.

In prior years, except for Budget Fiscal Year 2025, many capital projects were funded outside of this prioritization process. The recent shift to lump sum appropriations creates the conditions for a more transparent, consistent, and needs based approach, one that relies on an integrated statewide framework.

Rather than strengthening modernization, shifting these responsibilities to the Hawaii School Facilities Authority (SFA) risks disconnecting the physical design of schools from the very instructional programs they are meant to support. Modernization must be driven by those who understand student learning, complex area needs, special education requirements, early learning strategies, safety and well-being considerations, and community engagement obligations. Those responsibilities already lie squarely and appropriately within the Department.

The Department's existing enterprise systems, statewide facility assessments, and the Hawaii State Board of Education-reviewed prioritization processes already provide a comprehensive, data-driven framework for modernization. Improving and integrating these Department-led systems is the most efficient, accountable, and educationally sound path forward. Creating a parallel authority with overlapping and undefined responsibilities would dilute accountability, introduce unnecessary inconsistencies, and divert limited resources away from student-centered educational planning.

The Department supports the goals of improved transparency, risk-based prioritization, and a five-year facilities condition update cycle. However, the Department must emphasize that these goals are best achieved by strengthening and integrating the Department's current systems and processes, rather than creating a parallel structure that separates data ownership and planning responsibility. A coordinated, Department-led enterprise solution remains the most fiscally responsible and operationally sound approach to statewide school modernization.

Additionally, the Department must emphasize that planning for "modern learning environments" as referenced in SFA's testimony on the SD 1 version, is fundamentally an educational function, not an infrastructure function. School modernization is not merely a facilities exercise; it requires a deep understanding of curriculum delivery, student support needs, program design, instructional practices, and long-term academic priorities. Those areas of expertise exist within the Department, not within the SFA.

The SFA has not demonstrated a track record in leading educational planning or aligning capital decisions with instructional goals. The SFA was created to expedite construction and procurement, not to set statewide educational priorities or redesign learning environments. Redirecting portions of the Department's planning responsibilities to an agency without educational expertise creates a redundant and fragmented structure that undermines coherent statewide planning.

For these reasons, we strongly oppose assigning any portion of the Department's responsibilities to the SFA and reaffirm that modernization efforts should remain within the Department, where the State's educational expertise and statewide planning capacity reside.

The Department respectfully opposes SB 2550, SD 1, HD 1.



**Hawai'i School
Facilities Authority**

2759 S. KING STREET, ROOM H201
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

House Committee on Finance

April 2, 2026

2:00 PM

Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 308

Senate Bill 2550, Senate Draft 1, House Draft 1, Relating to School Modernization

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

The School Facilities Authority (SFA) **supports** Senate Bill 2550, Senate Draft 1, House Draft 1, which would require the SFA to establish a school modernization initiative through a capital improvement project (CIP) planning database for school facilities statewide.

This measure would establish a structured, data-driven framework to guide long-term capital planning for public school facilities across Hawai'i. For the first time, policymakers and the public would have a consolidated planning tool to evaluate school infrastructure needs using consistent criteria statewide.

The Scope of the Challenge

Hawai'i's public school system faces significant capital pressures:

- 594 buildings have been identified as beyond their expected life, with an estimated replacement cost of approximately \$1.3 billion.
- 1,834 portable classrooms, originally intended as temporary facilities, represent an estimated replacement cost of approximately \$1.2 billion.
- 17 new schools (including eight military base replacement schools and nine additional public schools) have been identified, with estimated construction costs of approximately \$3.4 billion.

These needs span seven districts and 15 complex areas statewide.

Absent a comprehensive planning framework, decisions are often made project-by-project rather than within a transparent, statewide modernization strategy.

What the Modernization Initiative Would Provide

The CIP planning database contemplated in this measure would allow SFA to systematically evaluate:

- Asset inventory (what facilities exist and where)
- Facility condition (Facilities Condition Index)
- Capacity and utilization (enrollment-to-capacity ratios)
- Infrastructure adequacy and code compliance
- Opportunities for repurposing underutilized space

Importantly, the database would allow this information to be presented geographically by Senate and House legislative districts, improving transparency and supporting informed budgetary decision-making.

With sufficient funding and access to existing data sources, SFA estimates that a prototype version of a database application meeting the intent of this measure could be ready by the 2027 legislative session.

Planning for Modern Learning Environments

Beyond identifying deferred maintenance and replacement needs, modernization must also consider how schools are designed to serve students in the decades ahead.

Across the country, school systems are increasingly incorporating:

- Flexible, reconfigurable classroom layouts
- Shared collaborative learning spaces
- Adaptable infrastructure capable of accommodating evolving instructional models

Examples of forward-looking school design include:

- Santa Monica High School's Discovery Building (Moore Ruble Yudell):
<https://www.moorerubleyudell.com/ideasimpacts/santa-monica-high-school-discovery-building-honored-for-ingenious-structural-design/>

- Case studies of flexible educational space planning: <https://www.re-thinkingthefuture.com/designing-for-typologies/a5932-10-examples-of-flexible-spaces-in-education-architecture/>
- Open school design concepts: <https://codesigncollaborative.org/open-schools/>
- Adaptable education space construction strategies: <https://www.dirtt.com/insights/constructing-flexible-and-adaptable-education-spaces/>

The proposed planning database would not prescribe specific design solutions, but it would provide the framework necessary to evaluate modernization strategies in a consistent, transparent manner statewide.

The Legislature established SFA to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public school capital improvement projects. SB2550 SD1 HD1 would provide the planning infrastructure necessary to fulfill that responsibility at scale.

By creating a transparent, data-driven modernization framework, this measure would support fiscally responsible decision-making and long-term stewardship of Hawai'i's public school facilities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Riki Fujitani
Executive Director



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TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Item: SB 2550, SD1, HD1 – Relating to School Modernization

Position: Support

Hearing: Thursday, April 2, 2026, 2:00 pm, Room 308

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

Dear Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports** S.B. 2550, SD1, HD1, which establishes a framework for a school modernization initiative to address the aging infrastructure of our public schools. Currently, school buildings in Hawai'i average sixty years in age, with approximately 594 buildings operating well beyond their expected lifespan. Although the State has appropriated an annual average of \$454,000,000 for capital improvement projects over the last twelve years, there has been no data-based process to prioritize how and why projects are funded. This bill provides a solution by creating a centralized database to track asset inventories, facility conditions, and enrollment-to-capacity ratios.

This initiative ensures that taxpayer funds are spent efficiently through an industry-standard assessment framework. By prioritizing critical infrastructure such as fire alarms, structural integrity, and air conditioning, the State can better ensure the safe operation of buildings for students and educators alike. Furthermore, organizing this data by legislative district and making it available to the public through the authority's website fosters the transparency and community-specific assessment that our schools require. We urge the committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo.



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawaii
The House of Representatives
Committee on Finance

Testimony by the
Hawaii Government Employees Association

April 2, 2026

S.B. 2550, S.D. 1, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO SCHOOL MODERNIZATION

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO wishes to provide comments on S.B. 2550, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, which requires the School Facilities Authority (SFA) to establish a school modernization initiative through a capital improvement project planning database for school facilities statewide.

We recognize and respect the Legislature's desire to adopt an industry-standard facilities assessment framework and to compile a comprehensive, accurate inventory of school facilities. These goals—greater efficiency, transparency, and more effective use of capital improvement program funds—are ones we fully support. However, for the members we represent in the Department of Education's Office of Facilities and Operations, and for those we represent at the complex area and school levels, including principals, this measure does not clearly define the authority, decision-making power, or operating scope of the SFA in relation to the Department.

Without clear statutory delineation, this bill risks deepening the confusion and misalignment that already exist between the two entities. Our members continue to experience inconsistent communication, unclear roles, and overlapping responsibilities between the SFA and the Department. These gaps are adding to the operational challenges, slow project delivery, and are making it difficult for school leaders to plan for and support capital improvements on their campuses.

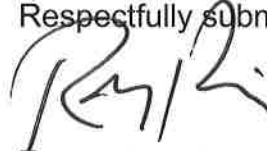
Our understanding is that the SFA has been tasked with major responsibilities, including building new preschool classrooms, developing a new school in Central Maui, and creating workforce housing for educators. While preschool classrooms have come online, we continue to hear of significant challenges related to the Central Maui school project, and the long-anticipated workforce housing development at Mililani High School has not yet materialized. These examples raise concerns about whether the SFA, as currently structured and coordinated, can take on additional responsibilities without more clearly defined roles and stronger alignment with the Department.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the Legislature refine this measure to ensure clear, non-overlapping definitions of authority and responsibility between the SFA and the Department, formalized processes for communication, coordination, and shared decision-making; and transparent accountability structures that prevent duplication, enhance efficiency, and ensure that students, schools, and communities receive the timely facilities improvements they have been promised.

Our members are committed to supporting safe and modern learning environments. To do that effectively, we need legislation that strengthens—not complicates—the governance structure guiding Hawaii’s school facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on S.B. 2550, S.D. 1, H.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randy Perreira', written in a cursive style.

Randy Perreira
Executive Director



Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: House Committee on Finance
Re: SB 2550 SD1 HD1-Relating School Modernization
Hawai'i State Capitol Room 308 & Via Videoconference April 2,
2026, 2:00 PM

Dear Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Respected Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, we respectfully submit **STRONG SUPPORT for SB 2550 SD1 HD1**, which establishes a school modernization initiative and a comprehensive capital improvement project planning database.

Safe, modern, and well-maintained school facilities are foundational to student success. The physical condition of a school directly impacts student health, safety, attendance, educator retention, and academic outcomes. When facilities are outdated or in disrepair, it is our keiki, especially those in under-resourced communities, who are most affected.

SB 2550 SD1 HD1 represents a critical step toward addressing long-standing infrastructure challenges in a strategic and transparent manner. A centralized capital improvement planning database will support data-driven decision-making, improve coordination, and enhance accountability in how public funds are allocated. This systems-level approach helps ensure that modernization investments are prioritized equitably, particularly for schools serving vulnerable and historically underserved populations.

Modernization also presents an opportunity to align school facilities with best practices in child development. Learning environments should promote not only academic achievement, but also physical health, accessibility, safety, and social-emotional well-being. Upgrades such as improved ventilation, inclusive design for students with disabilities, and flexible learning spaces can have a lasting impact on student outcomes.

SB 2550 SD1 HD1 is an important investment in educational equity and in the long-term well-being of Hawai'i's children. Mahalo for your leadership and for the opportunity to testify in strong support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support. Please **PASS SB 2550 SD1 HD1**.

SB-2550-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 6:44:18 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

2550 SB RELATING TO SCHOOL MODERNIZATION.

SB-2550-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 12:44:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
S Dyel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support bill SB2550, CIPDatabase.

SB-2550-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 2:01:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel C. Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Finance Committee,

As you know, [SB2550](#) requires the School Facilities Authority to build a statewide capital improvement planning database — tracking building conditions, asset inventories, and enrollment capacity by legislative district — so repair and construction dollars go where they're needed most. This is a good idea. Please pass the bill.

I also support SB2024 for public-private partnerships to build schools.

Mahalo and Best Regards,

Dan Smith, Pearl City

SB-2550-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 2:13:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Candace Vizcarra	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the authority to build a statewide capital improvement planning database.

SB-2550-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 2:40:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-2550-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 9:34:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Meehan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Modernizing our school facilities is critical to effective teaching and learning. **Please support SB 2550.** Thank you.

Ted Meehan