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GOVERNOR



RIKI FUJITANI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Hawai'i School Facilities Authority

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

House Committee on Education

March 24, 2026

2:00 PM

Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 309

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

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee:

The School Facilities Authority (SFA) **supports** Senate Bill 2550, Senate 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 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



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

Date: 03/24/2026

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: EDN

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB2550, SD1, 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. Appropriates funds. (SD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) offers comments and must respectfully express significant concerns with the approach proposed in SB 2550, SD 1. While the Department shares the Legislature's intent to improve transparency, accountability, and modernization of public school facilities, the bill, as written, duplicates existing systems, creates parallel processes, and undermines coordinated statewide facilities planning.

The Department already maintains existing facilities and project data systems and has a project prioritization process, all of which could be strengthened through modernization funding provided under this bill. Fixed asset information is managed through Maximo; project tracking is maintained in the Capital Project Tracking system; enrollment and capacity data are maintained by the Office of Strategy, Innovation, and Performance; and statewide facilities condition data were collected through HI-FIT assessments from 2020 to 2023. These systems were developed to support operational needs and regulatory compliance and together form an established framework for identifying, prioritizing, and budgeting school facility needs. Creating a separate framework housed in another agency would fragment this work and weaken statewide consistency.

The Department has a formal project identification and prioritization process. Project submission procedures include evaluation criteria, scoring considerations, and the Hawaii State Board of Education review that govern how projects advance through the budget cycle. Projects are evaluated for health and safety, regulatory compliance, capacity needs, and educational program support before inclusion in the capital improvement request. The Department annually submits its Six-Year Program and Financial Plan for School Repair and Maintenance legislative report pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes § 302A-1312, which details statewide repair and maintenance backlogs, categories of need, prioritization methodology, and funding distribution. This

process provides a structured and transparent basis for statewide planning.

Establishing a separate modernization initiative and project-planning database within the Hawaii School Facilities Authority (SFA) would create a parallel system operating outside of the Department. Such duplication introduces the risk of inconsistent data, conflicting priorities, and most importantly, unclear decision-making. At a time when Hawaii's school facilities require coordinated, unified leadership, creating a second, stand-alone database and planning structure would make statewide modernization more difficult, not more effective.

The \$4 million appropriation proposed by the bill would be used more effectively by directly strengthening the systems already in place within the Department. The Department has convened a working group from its finance, Information Technology, and facilities offices to assess and evaluate system improvements, strengthen consolidated reporting, and coordination between schools and its state offices. Targeting resources toward this work would advance modernization without creating new organizational layers that complicate planning and delay results.

In prior years, except for the Budget Fiscal Year 2025, the Department was required to execute a large number of CIP line-item projects that were not generated through the Department's prioritization process. The recent shift to lump-sum appropriations is a meaningful shift that improves flexibility and creates the conditions for a more transparent, consistent, and modernized prioritization process.

While SB 2550, SD 1 assigns the SFA a central role in a 'modernized' prioritization process, the bill provides no criteria, methodology, or decision-making framework to define how that process would function. Without these fundamentals, the bill creates change without showing that it would produce better outcomes.

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.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on SB 2550, SD 1.



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TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Item: SB 2550, SD1 – Relating to School Modernization

Position: Support

Hearing: Tuesday, March 24, 2026, 2:00 pm, Room 309

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

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports** S.B. 2550, SD1, 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.



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 Education
Re: SB 2550 SD1-Relating School Modernization
Hawai'i State Capitol Room 309 & Via Videoconference March
24, 2026, 2:00 PM

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Respected Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, we respectfully submit **STRONG SUPPORT for SB 2550 SD1**, 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 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 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**.



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 Education

Testimony by the
Hawaii Government Employees Association

March 24, 2026

S.B. 2550, S.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, 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.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Perreira". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a distinct "P".

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

SB-2550-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 2:36:47 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 2550 because so many of our public schools need improved facilities and modernization to enhance IT resources as well as increased resources for the arts. Many schools need air conditioning and solar installation to transition to green energy cooling to provide an optimum learning environment. Athletic facilities are also lacking at many schools. There is great need for supporting SB 2550. Please support this bill.

SB-2550-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 11:26:34 AM

Testimony for EDN on 3/24/2026 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 w/COMMENT

IRAN WAR IS COSTING TAXPAYERS 1BILLION \$ A DAY. HOW WILL FEDERAL FUNDING IMPACT THE SOH BUDGET?

2550 SB RELATING TO SCHOOL MODERNIZATION