



Hawai'i School Facilities Authority

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

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

February 25, 2026

10:57 PM

Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 211

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

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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-example-s-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



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TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Item: SB 2550, SD1 – Relating to School Modernization

Position: Support

Hearing: Wednesday, February 25, 2026, 10:57 am, Room 211

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

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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.

SB-2550-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 10:53:59 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

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



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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The Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawaii
The Senate
Committee on Ways and Means

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 25, 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, flowing style.

Randy Perreira
Executive Director