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TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Item: SB 2550 – Relating to School Modernization

Position: Support

Hearing: Wednesday, February 18, 2026, 1:02 pm, Room 229

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

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the committee,

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

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

Senate Committee on Education

February 18, 2026
1:00 PM

Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 229

Senate Bill 2550, Relating to School Modernization

Dear Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The School Facilities Authority (SFA) **supports** Senate Bill 2550, which requires the SFA to establish a school modernization initiative through a capital improvement project planning database for school facilities statewide. Appropriates funds.

The school capital improvement project (CIP) modernization initiative contemplated by this measure would provide the Legislature, Governor, Board of Education, Department of Education, SFA, and the public with data and information to help answer fundamental school CIP questions:

● **Why Build?**

- o What do we have? (Asset inventory)
- o What is the condition? (Facilities Condition Index)
- o What is the utilization? (Enrollment to Capacity Ratio)

● **What to Build?**

- o Key Infrastructure
- o Capacity
- o Functional Adequacy
- o Legal Compliance

- **How and Where to Repurpose?**

- o Should underutilized classrooms, buildings, facilities, and land be used for other purposes?

- Charter schools?
- Early learning or child care programs?
- Workforce housing projects?
- State agency offices?

In addition, this information should be presented using a geographic interface based upon legislative districts (25 Senate districts and 51 House districts). With sufficient funding and access to existing information and data sources, SFA estimates a prototype version of a database application that meets the intent of this measure could be ready by the 2027 legislative session.

We offer one recommended change. On Page 3, Line 2, we recommend updating the condition rating of a school facility to no less than every five years instead of three. We believe an update every five years for any school facility still provides relatively accurate information for a facilities condition index while using fewer resources.

The Legislature established the SFA to “be responsible for the development, planning, and construction of public school capital improvement projects and help improve the efficiency of school construction while more directly addressing the education needs of students” (Conference Committee Rep. No. 148, 2021). The school CIP modernization initiative could be game changing in how SFA fulfills its role.

Sincerely,

Riki Fujitani
Executive Director



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 Senate
Committee on Education

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 18, 2026

S.B. 2550 – RELATING TO SCHOOL MODERNIZATION

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO wishes to provide comments on S.B. 2550, 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 School Facilities Authority (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 of Education, 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.

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

LATE

To: Senate Committee on Education
Re: SB 2550 HD1-Relating School Modernization
Hawai'i State Capitol Room 229 & Via Videoconference February
18, 2026, 1:02 PM

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Respected Committee Members,

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

SB-2550

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 12:42:16 AM

Testimony for EDU on 2/18/2026 1:02:00 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