

HB-2484

Submitted on: 1/31/2018 9:15:06 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/2/2018 2:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kaulana Dameg		Support	No

Comments:



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

LATE

Date: 02/02/2018
Time: 02:10 PM
Location: 309
Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 2484 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the Department of Education (DOE) to establish and maintain a priority list of schools in need of classroom cooling; provided that at least fifty percent of all appropriated funds for classroom cooling projects be made available for grants to schools on the priority list. Allows schools on the priority list to apply for DOE grants for energy-efficient classroom cooling projects.

Department's Position:

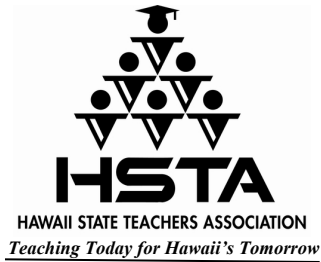
The Department of Education (DOE) supports the intent of HB 2484.

A DOE A/C priority list is being utilized for the programming of air conditioning projects, in particular for the recent program to cool 1,000 schools. The creation of a new prioritization list may unfairly impact the schools that have been patiently waiting their turn. Allowing schools to independently procure and install Air Conditioning (AC) systems would further complicate the programming of campus improvements. A campus may not be able to power a new AC system without an upgrade to the electrical system. Such improvements require significant planning, budgeting, and coordination. Supporting an unscheduled AC project will adversely impact the overall planning and implementation process. Finally, the administration of a grant program would require additional resources to manage the intake and tracking of school requests and financial accounting of funds.

Rather, the DOE encourages the support of HB 2510 which would provide funding expressly intended for air conditioning. This source of funding would allow the DOE to continue to move forward with cooling more classrooms using the existing project delivery systems which has, to date, installed over 6,000 classrooms with A/C's in Hawaii's public school statewide system.

The Hawaii State Department of Education seeks to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan which is focused on student success, staff success, and successful systems of support. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice,

and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at www.hawaiipublicschools.org.



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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION

RE: HB 2484 - RELATING TO EDUCATION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2018

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Woodson and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports HB 2484**, relating to education.

With the \$100 million appropriated by the State Legislature in 2016, Hawai'i State Department of Education officials cooled approximately 1,300 classrooms, exceeding Gov. David Ige's goal of providing air condition to 1,000 classrooms. Yet, we should be clear: 1,000 classrooms is a good start, but thousands more remain, with teachers and their students still sweating through the day in conditions that, according to National Weather Service heat safety guidelines, are unsafe and unsuitable for learning. We must not let them continue to suffer. We must maximize revenue to expand the DOE's heat abatement program to other sweltering schools.

As you know, initial contractor bids for the \$100 million appropriation were exorbitant, running into the hundreds of thousands of dollars per classroom. DOE officials rejected those bids and expanded their pool of pre-qualified applicants. Unfortunately, the DOE was only able to bring the average cost of classroom cooling down to \$80,000 to \$90,000. This is unacceptable. Last April, NextEra Energy Hawai'i donated 33 hybrid solar air-conditioning units to Kaunakakai Elementary and Kilohana Elementary schools on Moloka'i. Greenpath Technologies Inc., a Honolulu-based renewable energy company, performed the installations at a cost of \$20,000 per classroom, verifying that classroom cooling could be accomplished at significant cost savings. Moreover, 4,000 classrooms were cooled prior to the \$100

million appropriation when teacher and schools took it upon themselves to resolve overheating problems by purchasing and installing air conditioning units.

There is no reason, then, that the state should find \$100,000 per classroom to be an agreeable amount for classroom cooling. Accordingly, we are asking your committee to approve this measure requiring at least 50 percent of the department's heat abatement funding to be made available to schools for energy-efficient classroom cooling project, which would provide comfort to thousands of children at risk of heat exhaustion by allowing schools to enter into public-private partnerships to implement future cooling upgrades without jeopardizing DOE's goal of becoming net-zero with regard to energy use by 2035.

Heat abatement is needed now. To ensure that our students have safe and comfortable classrooms in which to learn, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.



46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Executive Director

TESTIMONY FOR HOUSE BILL 2484, RELATING TO EDUCATION

House Committee on Education
Hon. Justin H. Woodson, Chair
Hon. Sam Satoru Kong, Vice Chair

Friday, February 2, 2018, 2:10 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 309

Honorable Chair Woodson and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 400 members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in support of, with proposed amendments for House Bill 2484, relating to education.

If school is cool, then our classrooms should be, too. Yet, classroom temperatures regularly exceeded 90 degrees, reaching as high as 108 degrees in one Kalaheo High School classroom in 2016. Studies show that the achievement gap between cooled and non-cooled classroom environments can reach 17 percent on standardized tests. While local schools' outdated electrical infrastructure often cannot support traditional air conditioning technology, experiments in renewable energy cooling systems have lowered departmental projections for comprehensive cooling. We continue to believe that using available energy efficient technology—including on-grid, off-grid, microgrid, and photovoltaic technology—*should* reduce the cost of classroom cooling to \$20,000, or a total of \$140 million for the approximately 7,000 classrooms currently in need.

Therefore, we strongly support passage of this measure, which allows the public schools to obtain grants from the Hawai'i State Department of Education to provide heat abatement for classrooms in need, which could be used to fund public-private or community partnerships to install heat abatement upgrades at an affordable price. During the 2016 legislative session, lawmakers appropriated \$100 million for heat abatement, heeding Gov. David Ige's call to cool 1,000 classrooms by the end of the 2016-2017 school year. Available estimates of \$20,000 per classroom indicated, at the time, that \$100 million would cover heat abatement for thousands of classrooms beyond the governor's call. Unfortunately, contractor bids have been higher than expected. During the initial round of bidding, the "highest low bid," meaning the highest bid on a project that was also lower than all bids on the same project, was \$135,000. Other bids were even higher. Contech Engineering submitted a bid of \$360,770, for example, to install solar-powered

air conditioning in one portable at Ewa Beach Elementary, a project for which the lowest initial bid was \$102,000.

DOE officials subsequently rejected all exorbitant bids and expanded their pool of pre-qualified applicants. Since that time, the average cost of heat abatement projects has declined, with projects now running \$60,000 to \$70,000 per classroom. Contractors cite labor shortages and the cost of upgrading energy efficiency infrastructure as reasons for the extra expense, noting that policymakers also required the DOE, last year, to set a goal of becoming net-zero with regard to energy use by 2035. Today, the department officials plan to cool roughly 1,300 classrooms with the \$100 million appropriated in 2016 (actually, \$125 million, with carryover funds also used to fund heat abatement projects), an average cost of \$70,000-\$80,000+ per classroom. In April of 2016, however, after NextEra Energy Hawai'i donated 33 hybrid solar air-conditioning units to Kaunakakai Elementary and Kilohana Elementary schools on Moloka'i, Greenpath Technologies Inc., a Honolulu-based renewable energy company, performed air conditioner installations at a cost of \$20,000 per classroom, showing that classroom cooling can be accomplished sustainably and at a reasonable cost.

Thus, we believe the DOE's current heat abatement project costs are unnecessarily excessive and allowing schools to work with community partners to address lingering heat abatement problems is a solution worth trying. Moreover, the process of awarding contracts for heat abatement work during a booming construction market, along with the need to maximize renewable energy reliance throughout the state, clearly demonstrates the need for an additional, dedicated, and recurrent funding mechanism for the DOE's heat abatement program. That said, we suggest allowing any school to apply for grant funds from the DOE, rather than restricting grant applicants to schools on the department's heat abatement priority list. Schools in different communities may have access to varied industrial resources and cooling technologies, and schools on the DOE's heat abatement priority list may require comprehensive upgrades—including energy efficiency upgrades—that are unlikely to be subsidized through departmental microgrants.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Executive Director
IMUAlliance

HB-2484

Submitted on: 2/2/2018 2:02:09 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/2/2018 2:10:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments: