



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**Executive Office on Early Learning**  
2759 South King Street  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

February 24, 2023

**TO:** Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

**FROM:** Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Director  
Executive Office on Early Learning

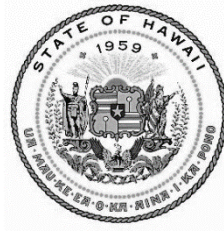
**SUBJECT: Measure:** S.B. No. 941 S.D. 1 – RELATING TO THE SCHOOL FACILITIES  
AUTHORITY  
**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 28, 2023  
**Time:** 10:00 am  
**Location:** Conference Room 211

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support**

EOEL supports S.B. No. 941 S.D. 1 and defers to the School Facilities Authority.

Hawaii continues to be plagued by a shortage of licensed teachers, particularly in rural and remote and hard-to-fill areas. Affordable teacher housing is a well-established solution to address barriers to teacher recruitment and retention efforts. Pre-kindergarten teachers that serve some of Hawai'i's youngest children may benefit from this bill.

We thank the Legislature for their commitment to support initiatives that address workforce barriers. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**SCHOOL FACILITIES AUTHORITY**  
75 AUPUNI STREET, STE. BASEMENT  
HILO, HAWAII 96720

February 28, 2023

**Testimony providing SUPPORT of SB941 SD1  
RELATING TO THE SCHOOL FACILITIES AUTHORITY**

SENATOR DONOVAN DELA CRUZ, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date: 02/28/2023

Room Number 211

The School Facilities Authority (SFA) is in **support** of S.B. 941 SD1, RELATING TO THE SCHOOL FACILITIES AUTHORITY.

The SFA appreciates the Legislature's continued support and commitment to creating new teacher housing for our educator workforce. We also appreciate that the Legislature has acknowledged that housing our educators has the dual opportunity of addressing our lack of affordable housing and our chronic teacher shortage in one project. We look forward to working with the Legislature, the DOE, and our State development partners to deliver teacher housing in the coming years.

The SFA appreciates the consideration by the Senate that there are critical issues that must be addressed when it comes to redevelopment and repurposing of existing school campuses. Depending on the expectations on the delivery date of these projects, the SFA may require additional considerations beyond funding to expedite these critical housing projects. The SFA does not currently have the staff capacity to appropriately oversee additional projects at this time.

The SFA looks forward to continuing to work with the Legislature to deliver affordable housing for our educator workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



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Osa Tui, Jr.  
President  
Logan Okita  
Vice President  
Lisa Morrison  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Ann Mahi  
Executive Director

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

RE: SB 941 SD1- RELATING TO THE SCHOOL FACILITIES AUTHORITY

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2023

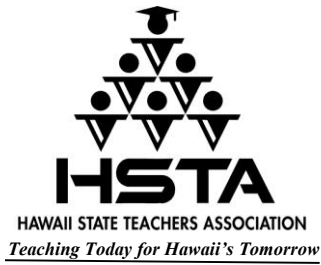
OSA TUI, JR., PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports SB 941 SD1**, relating to the school facilities authority. The bill authorizes the School Facilities Authority (SFA) to partner with public and private agencies to develop teacher and educator housing. It also authorizes the SFA to transfer appropriated funds to partner state agencies for the development of teacher and educator housing and appropriates funds to the SFA for the construction of teacher and educator housing. Finally, the bill specifies Nanakuli High and Intermediate School, Waipahu High School, and Mililani High School as initial locations for the teacher and educator housing pilot.

Hawai'i continues to suffer from a shortage of licensed teachers with over 1000 vacancies each year. Affordable options for teacher housing is one key strategy for the recruiting and retaining of teachers, particularly given that Hawai'i's teacher salaries continue to trail the nation, when adjusted for cost of living. Housing is a big portion of each teacher's paycheck.

IF we concentrate on retaining our teachers, the Department of Education would not have to focus so much on the recruitment of teachers. **To recruit and retain effective educators, policymakers must find ways to lessen the financial burden of being a public school teacher.** In the islands, where new housing rarely becomes available, the percentage of renters who face cost burdens – financial handicaps incurred by people spending over 30 percent of their income on housing – is roughly 57 percent, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition. Many of those cash-strapped renters are state educators, who are chronically underpaid. To make ends meet, many teachers are forced to pick up second and third jobs, live in



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cramped studio apartments, and cut back on necessities like medical and dental care. Thus they cannot devote their full attention to their students and the preparation of lessons and grading that they usually complete after school once their students have left for the day. Instead, they are rushing off to their second or even third jobs when they would much rather concentrate on their teaching duties and their students.

Authorizing the SFA to partner with public and private agencies to develop teacher and educator housing could help alleviate the financial burden of housing felt by so many of our public teachers.

To take care of our hardworking teachers in Hawai'i, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.