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STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT
Ka 'Oihana Ho'okō Kānāwai
715 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 627, HD 1
RELATING TO SCHOOL SAFETY
Before the House Committee on
FINANCE

Thursday, February 20, 2025, 10:00 a.m.

State Capitol Conference Room 308, & Videoconference

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) strongly supports House Bill 627, HD1. This bill appropriates funds to the Department of Education for positions to implement and maintain school safety measures.

The Hawai'i State Fusion Center, under the Department of Law Enforcement, seeks to prevent acts of targeted violence via a public health-inspired approach to violence prevention. This bill will support targeted violence prevention and threat assessment efforts that align with best practices. For nearly six years, the Department of Education (DOE) has sought out experts within Hawai'i and at the national level to help build DOE's prevention program. They have researched nationally accepted best practices, considered alternative ways to implement prevention efforts, and tailored that work to fit Hawai'i-specific needs. DOE has previously made financial investments; but even more impressively, they have leveraged significant outside resources and organized substantial volunteer efforts to achieve success. The sustainability of this program requires additional support.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.



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

Date: 02/20/2025

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Bill Title: HB 0627, HD1 RELATING TO SCHOOL SAFETY.

Purpose of Bill: Appropriates funds to the Department of Education for positions to implement and maintain school safety measures. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports HB 627, HD 1.

The safety and security of our students is paramount to our Department. However, Department schools as well as complex area and state offices have to grapple with a myriad of both man-made and natural disasters, e.g., active shooter, homelessness, trespassing, vandalism, social media threats, workplace violence, hurricanes, tsunamis, etc. Department personnel training, manpower, technology devices, equipment, and contracts are needed to boost the safety, security, and emergency readiness capabilities of Department schools as well as complex area and state offices.

The Targeted Violence Prevention and Threat Assessment Program Manager will lead the creation and execution of a comprehensive statewide Behavior Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) framework that aligns with the State of Hawaii Targeted Violence Prevention Strategy and Implementation Plans. The individual will also establish clear guidelines, protocols, and procedures for BTAM implementation across all schools, addressing both student and adult populations. Additionally, the position will oversee the development and implementation of training programs for Level 1 and 2 threat assessment teams across the state, ensuring the training is consistent, high-quality, and accessible to all relevant personnel.

Given that the Department already has a fire safety consultant, the Department would like the Fire Safety and Security Technology Program Manager position to serve strictly as the Security Technology Program Manager. This position will oversee existing technological programs such as mass messaging systems, video surveillance cameras, alarms, and door blocking devices.

Additionally, the position will be responsible for proactively researching the latest technological systems that would enhance the safety and security of our schools.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



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Osa Tui, Jr.
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Ann Mahi
Executive Director

TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Item: HB 627, HD1 – Relating to School Safety

Position: Support

Hearing: Thursday, February 20, 2025, 10:00 am, Room 308

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

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) supports HB 627, HD1 which appropriates funds to the Department of Education for positions to implement and maintain school safety measures.

The devastating wildfires in Lāhainā and the number of school shootings nationwide underscores the importance for comprehensive safety protocols and emergency preparedness in our schools. HB 627, HD1 would provide funding for a Targeted Violence Prevention and Threat Assessment Program Manager and a Fire Safety and Security Technology Program Manager. These two positions would help ensure our schools have the necessary expertise and resources to prevent and respond to emergencies, including fires, natural disasters, and threats of violence.

We recommend the passage of HB 627, HD1 to help ensure the safety and well-being of our students, teachers, and staff.

Mahalo.



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 Finance

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 20, 2025

H.B. 627, H.D. 1 — RELATING TO SCHOOL SAFETY

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the intent of H.B. 627, H.D. 1, which appropriates funds to the Department of Education for positions to implement and maintain school safety measures.

Currently, the Department has only four Safety and Security Specialists and one Risk Management Specialist in its Safety, Security, and Emergency Preparedness Branch. They are responsible for the safety and well-being of all students, teachers, and staff in Hawaii's 258 public schools, including but not limited to, emergency preparedness, traffic safety, training, insurance, surveillance, hazmat management, HIOSH, ID badges, fire inspections, and coordination with local law enforcement.

This measure seeks to add two positions -- a targeted violence prevention and threat assessment program manager and a fire safety and security technology program manager. We strongly support any effort to increase the capacity of the Department to maintain a safe, secure, and healthy environment at all public-school campuses.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of H.B. 627, H.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

HB-627-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 2:01:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Michael I Rice | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I stand in SUPPORT of this bill. I would say that the security at our public schools is a joke, but jokes are funny. I have so many horror stories I can tell about Waianae High School itself that would spin heads and should mandate an investigation.

One story in particular highlights failures on several levels in Security at Waianae High School. One student went into the office to report that they were robbed on campus at **gunpoint** of illicit **drugs and money** they had on their person. HPD was not called but security was dispatched to confront the student in question, this student fled from security off campus and disappeared into Ulu Wehi, when the student returned to campus he was noted to be missing his backpack he was spotted with when he fled and was searched by security. Neither gun nor drugs were found and the student was released. This student later went on to brag about the incident and began threatening security on campus. This student later went on to kill another student off campus at Makaha Park.

I was told that DOE has a ZERO tolerance policy when it comes to guns, where students even caught with non-realistic toy guns are suspended. Yet no action was taken in this course and HPD wasn't even called DESPITE a student admitting to selling drugs on campus. I even have it on good authority that security no longer confronts such students out of fear for their lives, and I can't exactly blame them since they're only armed with a cellphone.

I have also heard about security breaches at other schools, such as Kamaile Elementary. There an adult got on campus and snuck into one of the girl's bathrooms and began to masterbate, and a member of staff was only made aware after a young female student came back from the bathroom and said 'miss, get one naked man touching his peepee in the bathroom.'

HB-627-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 5:30:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Kaili Swan | Individual | Support | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

I am in strong support of the measure beacuse school safety is a always a top priority in the doe department please pass this bill thank you