



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**  
H.B. NO. 1210, RELATING TO EDUCATION.

**BEFORE THE:**  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**DATE:** Thursday, February 13, 2025      **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 309

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Anne T. Horiuchi or Randall M. Wat, Deputy Attorneys General

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Chair Woodson and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments.

The bill: (1) requires the Department of Education (DOE) to provide and disseminate its procedures for dealing with bullying; (2) requires principals, teachers, and staff to disseminate the DOE's bullying procedures to students; and (3) defines bullying procedures.

The bill does not define "bullying." It is also not clear if "victim of bullying" (page 2, lines 4-5), is meant to refer only to students, or if others (e.g., DOE staff or volunteers, persons visiting the campus, etc.) could also be a "victim of bullying." The Department notes that "bullying" is defined in section 8-19-2, Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR), as "any written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that hurts, harms, humiliates or intimidates a student, including those with protected class statuses, that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment." Thus, if the bill is intended to apply to the bullying of students, then the new section proposed to be added to chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), could refer to the definition of "bullying" as provided for by the DOE's rules. If, however, the bill is intended to include non-student victims of bullying, then a definition of "bullying" should be included in the bill.

The Department further notes that subchapter 8 of chapter 19, HAR, entitled: "Complaints Procedure and Investigation of Discrimination, Harassment (Including Sexual Harassment), Bullying and/or Retaliation," sets forth the DOE's complaint procedure in section 8-19-30. To the extent the new section to be added to chapter 302A, HRS, overlaps with these administrative rules, the bill should include a provision authorizing the DOE to adopt administrative rules to effectuate the purpose of the new section.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill.



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

**Date:** 02/13/2025

**Time:** 02:00 PM

**Location:** 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

**Bill Title:** HB 1210 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Requires the Department of Education to provide and disseminate its procedures for dealing with bullying. Requires principals, teachers, and staff to disseminate the Department's bullying procedures to students. Defines bullying procedures.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawai'i State Department of Education (Department) respectfully provides comments on HB 1210, which requires the Department to provide and disseminate its bullying procedures and mandates that principals, teachers, and staff share this information with students.

Student safety, well-being, and social-emotional health remain a top priority for the Department. In line with this commitment, the Department is dedicated to fostering culturally responsive, supportive, and inclusive learning environments. These efforts include ongoing initiatives aimed at bullying prevention.

Key regulations, such as Hawai'i Administrative Rules (HAR), Title 8, Chapter 19, *Student Misconduct, Discipline, School Searches and Seizures, Reporting Offenses, Police Interviews and Arrests, Restitution for Vandalism, and Complaint Procedure and Investigation of Discrimination, Harassment (Including Sexual Harassment), Bullying, and/or Retaliation*, and HAR, Title 8, Chapter 89, *Civil Rights Policy and Complaint Procedure for Student(s) Complaints Against Adult(s)*, are readily available on the Department's public website.

These regulations align with the procedures outlined in Section (c) of HB 1210, offering clear guidance to school staff, students, and parents on how to identify, report, and respond to bullying incidents. The Department also maintains and regularly updates its bullying prevention public website to ensure accessible, up-to-date resources on bullying prevention, reporting procedures, and related policies for students, parents, and educators.

Moreover, Department employees participate in mandatory annual opening of the school-year training on bullying policies. This training includes instruction on reporting bullying offenses, as well as the duties and responsibilities of administrators and teachers in managing behavior and providing student support.

In addition to employee training, students receive information to enhance their understanding of bullying prevention. Each student receives an opening school packet, which contains a parent letter outlining clear definitions of bullying and retaliation. Teachers review and discuss this information with students, taking the time to ensure their understanding and full comprehension of key concepts related to bullying and its prevention. Also, the Department provides access to the "Speak Now" application, enabling students and parents to report bullying incidents directly to school officials.

To further empower students in addressing bullying, the Department will be distributing infographic flyers containing bullying prevention strategies, guidance on responding to bullying, and instructions for reporting bullying incidents, including how to utilize the "Speak Now" application to schools to be prominently displayed throughout school campuses.

Given the Department's current processes and procedures, we believe the proposed requirements in HB 1210 are unnecessary. The Department continues to prioritize creating a culturally responsive, supportive, and inclusive learning environment, which includes ongoing efforts to prevent bullying.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 1210.



**Where LGBTQIA+ Rights Meet the Labor Movement  
A constituency group of the Hawai'i State AFL-CIO**

February 11, 2025

House Committee on Education  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Thursday, February 13, 2025 at 2:00 PM

**RE: STRONG SUPPORT for House Bill 1210**

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and fellow committee members,

Pride at Work – Hawai'i is an official chapter of [Pride at Work](#) which is a national nonprofit organization that represents LGBTQIA+ union members and their allies. We are an officially recognized constituency group of the AFL-CIO that organizes mutual support between the organized Labor Movement and the LGBTQIA+ Community to further social and economic justice.

Pride at Work - Hawai'i strongly supports House Bill 1210, which requires the Department of Education to provide and disseminate its procedures for addressing bullying. This bill also mandates that school principals, teachers, and staff share these procedures with students and further defines bullying procedures to ensure clarity and accountability.

As an organization dedicated to advocating for LGBTQIA+ workers and their families, we recognize that bullying in schools remains a serious issue, particularly for LGBTQIA+ youth. According to the 2021 National School Climate Survey by GLSEN, nearly 82% of LGBTQIA+ students experienced harassment or assault based on personal characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender identity. In Hawai'i, our keiki deserve safe and inclusive learning environments where they can thrive without fear of bullying and discrimination.

HB 1210 is a crucial step in ensuring that all students, regardless of background, have access to clear and enforceable anti-bullying protections. By requiring the Department of Education to formally define, publish, and communicate its bullying procedures, this bill enhances transparency and ensures that students, parents, and educators are aware of their rights and responsibilities. Furthermore, by mandating the dissemination of these procedures, the bill ensures that students understand the protections available to them and the proper channels to report bullying incidents.

Education should be a safe and welcoming space for all students. Without strong enforcement and clear communication of anti-bullying policies, students remain vulnerable to harassment that affects their academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being. HB 1210 reinforces the State of Hawai'i's commitment to fostering respectful and inclusive school environments, helping to prevent harm before it escalates.

For these reasons, Pride at Work - Hawai'i urges the committee to pass HB 1210 and continue working toward policies that protect all students from bullying and discrimination. We thank you for your time and consideration and look forward to seeing this bill advance for the benefit of Hawai'i's keiki.

In solidarity,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)  
President  
[Pride at Work – Hawai'i](#)

**LATE**

**HB-1210**

Submitted on: 2/12/2025 4:00:21 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/13/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Hawaii Self Advocacy Advisory Council	hawaii self advocacy advisory council	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Self-Advocacy Advisory council supports HB1210 as we believe that people with disabilities in DOE schools have a higher incidence of bullying and would be grateful for the support of this preventive measure.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96819  
Tel: (808) 833-2711 • Fax: (808) 839-7106 • Web: www.hsta.org

**LATE**

**LATE**

**Osa Tui, Jr.**  
President

**Logan Okita**  
Vice President

**Cheney Kaku**  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Ann Mahi**  
Executive Director

### TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Item: HB 1210 – Relating to Bullying**

**Position: Support**

**Hearing: Thursday, February 13, 2025, 2:00 pm, Room 309**

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

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports** HB 1210, which would require the Department of Education to provide and disseminate its procedures for dealing with bullying, requires principals, teachers, and staff to disseminate the Department's bullying procedures to students, and defines bullying procedures.

Our members continue to share that the term 'bullying' can be treated differently from campus to campus, and even from administrator to administrator on the same campus. Students and families have shared the same frustration, and often take this to social media in a way that often doesn't help the situation for anyone involved.

The HSTA believes that transparency helps our learning communities better understand the process that bullying gets addressed, and that this bill supports consistent information for all stakeholders involved. We urge the committee to pass HB 1210.

Mahalo.

**HB-1210**

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 4:38:46 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/13/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nancy D Moser	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In STRONG SUPPORT of HB 1210.

Aloha Chair and members of the Committee,

Please vote YES on this measure. Notifying members of the school community of the bullying procedures is a crucial step in both preventing and reducing harm from bullying.

Nancy Moser in Waikoloa on Hawai'i Island



**HB-1210**

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 7:01:38 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/13/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tanya Dean	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB1210 because clarity around bullying by all stakeholders at all schools is so important to students' well-being and success, and it protects and empowers teachers and school staff to act in the best interest of victims of bullying as well as the bullies who need constructive guidance. Consistency is key. I have seen the effects of parents and teachers who fall back on "Boys will be boys" and such nonsense. The culture of Hawai'i's schools is well-known to be one of bullying in general. I hear it from my community college students who relate stories of bullying and violence in high schools as if it's just business as usual. They tell me they can finally learn and focus on classroom dialogue in college because of the bullying-free environment. This is not because they are suddenly that much more mature after a summer following graduation from h.s. It's because the culture of the college doesn't allow it.

It's time to shift the whole culture of Hawai'i's public schools with consistency and compassionate guidelines.