



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

**Date:** 01/28/2025

**Time:** 02:00 PM

**Location:** 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Bill Title:** HB 0245 RELATING TO STUDENT HEAT EXPOSURE SAFETY.

**Purpose of Bill:** Requires and appropriates funds for the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Health, to develop statewide guidelines related to managing heat exposure to protect students' health during outdoor activities. Appropriates funds for wet-bulb globe temperature thermometers for all public and charter schools statewide.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) respectfully provides comments on HB 245.

The Department supports the intent of HB 245, which seeks to safeguard student well-being by addressing heat exposure through statewide guidelines and providing wet-bulb globe temperature thermometers. Protecting students from the risks associated with extreme heat during outdoor activities is a priority, and we appreciate the Legislature's recognition of this critical issue. The Department acknowledges the importance of establishing consistent, evidence-based protocols to protect student health and supports the development of guidelines in collaboration with the Department of Health. Implementing standardized practices for activities such as sports, recess, and other outdoor programs will help reduce the risks of heat-related illnesses.

The Department seeks clarification on the timeline for developing and implementing the proposed guidelines, recognizing the critical need for strategic planning and a systematic rollout. Therefore, the Department recommends conducting an in-depth study to assess the ongoing cost of guideline implementation and maintenance. This needs assessment will serve as a crucial mechanism for identifying additional funding sources and support mechanisms to guarantee equitable and sustainable program deployment. Furthermore, the study will help establish a realistic timeline that supports the program's long-term success and operational effectiveness.

The Department remains committed to working collaboratively with the Department of Health and other stakeholders to protect student health while ensuring the program's long-term success and sustainability.

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



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO  
P. O. BOX 3378  
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

WRITTEN  
TESTIMONY

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB0245  
RELATING TO STUDENT HEAT EXPOSURE SAFETY**

Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Rep. Trish La Chica, Vice Chair  
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Hearing Date: 1/28/2025

Room Number: 309

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure will impact the priorities identified in the Governor's  
2 Executive Budget Request for the Department of Health's (Department) appropriations and  
3 personnel priorities.
- 4 **Department Testimony:** The Department supports HB245 and recognizes that rising air  
5 temperatures as a result of climate change directly impacts the health and safety of Hawaii's  
6 people, communities, and natural environment. Individuals exerting themselves in environments  
7 with elevated temperature and humidity are at increased risk of heat-related illness. Children and  
8 young adults are more susceptible to heat-related illness due a reduced ability to ability to  
9 thermoregulate and acclimate to high heat. This susceptibility is further increased by school  
10 activities outdoors that further exert an individual, such as recess, sports and training.  
11 At this point in time there are no guidelines that take into consideration wet bulb globe  
12 temperatures when conducting outside activities in a school environment. Wet-bulb temperature  
13 is the most appropriate measure for assessing heat stress, as it considers ambient temperature,  
14 humidity, wind speed, sun angle, direct sunlight and cloud cover. It is considered the gold  
15 standard and is utilized by the United States military, Occupational Safety and Health  
16 Administration, National Collegiate Athletic Association and professional sports leagues.  
17 Implementing measures that directly address this environmental exposure will further protect the  
18 children of Hawai'i.
- 19 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





**STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII  
STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
'A'UNIKE MOKU'ĀPUNI NO KA NĀ KĀWAI KULA**

PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING  
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543

January 28, 2025

The Honorable Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
House Committee on Education  
The Thirty-Third Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawai'i  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Representative Woodson, and Committee members:

**SUBJECT: HB245 Relating to Student Heat Exposure Safety**

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities **SUPPORTS HB245**, which requires and appropriates funds for the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Health, to develop statewide guidelines related to managing heat exposure to protect students' health during outdoor activities. Appropriates funds for wet-bulb globe temperature thermometers for all public and charter schools statewide.

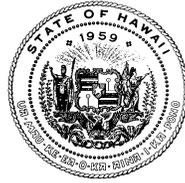
The Council serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) across Hawai'i, who are particularly vulnerable to the effects of extreme heat. Many individuals with IDD have difficulty regulating body temperature and may have medical conditions or take medications that increase their susceptibility to heat-related illnesses. These risks are similar to those faced by children, who also have reduced thermoregulation capabilities and are highly vulnerable to heat exposure.

HB245 is a critical step in addressing the growing risks of heat exposure for vulnerable populations. By creating statewide guidelines for managing heat during outdoor activities and implementing tools like the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) index, the bill promotes science-based practices to reduce the risk of heat-related illnesses. Expanding shaded areas and training school staff equips schools to create safer environments for students, while also preparing them to respond effectively in emergencies. This bill is particularly beneficial for children with medical or developmental needs, such as those with IDD, ensuring their unique vulnerabilities are considered in school policies and programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support of HB245**.

Sincerely,

Daintry Bartoldus  
Executive Administrator



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
P.O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony COMMENTING on H.B. 245  
RELATING TO STUDENT HEAT EXPOSURE SAFETY**

REPRESENTATIVE JUSTIN WOODSON, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Hearing Date: January 28, 2025

Room Number: Conference Room 309  
and Videoconference

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (DOH) defers to the Department of Education  
2 (DOE) regarding any fiscal implications.

3 **Department Testimony:** The DOH respectfully provides comments on House Bill 245 (H.B. 245)  
4 which would require and appropriates funds for the DOE, in collaboration with the DOH, to  
5 develop statewide guidelines related to managing heat exposure to protect students' health during  
6 outdoor activities. Appropriates funds for wet-bulb globe temperature thermometers for all  
7 public and charter schools statewide.

8 The DOH supports the intent of H.B. 245 and defers to the DOE on implementation and  
9 fiscal implications. Physical activity (PA) is vital for children's physical and mental health,  
10 improving fitness, focus, and academic performance.<sup>1</sup> Schools provide essential opportunities  
11 for safe and structured PA, especially outdoors.

12 Providing shade, ensuring hydration, and monitoring conditions with tools like wet-bulb  
13 globe thermometers can help protect students during outdoor activities.<sup>2</sup> By addressing heat  
14 risks, schools can safely promote the many benefits of PA while prioritizing student health and  
15 safety.

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<sup>1</sup> CDC. Physical Activity Facts. Physical Education and Physical Activity. December 11, 2024. Accessed January 27, 2025.

<https://www.cdc.gov/physical-activity-education/data-research/facts-stats/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> Extreme Heat: Tips to Keep Kids Safe When Temperatures Soar. HealthyChildren.org. June 27, 2017. Accessed January 27, 2025.

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Protecting-Children-from-Extreme-Heat-Information-for-Parents.aspx>

1           The DOH is committed to working in collaboration with the DOE to protect student  
2 health, promote PA, and support the development of heat exposure guidelines to manage heat  
3 exposure.

4           Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



MAKALAPUA ALENCASTRE, ED. D.  
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII  
**STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**  
**(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)**

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>  
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1100, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

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FOR: HB 245 Relating to Student Heat Exposure Safety  
DATE: January 28, 2025  
TIME: 2:00 P.M.  
COMMITTEE: Committee on Education  
ROOM: Conference Room 309 & Videoconference  
FROM: Ed H. Noh, Ed. D., Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 245** which: 1) requires and appropriates funds for the Department of Education (DOE), in collaboration with the Department of Health, to develop statewide guidelines relating to heat exposure to protect students’ health during outdoor activities; and 2) appropriates funds for wet-bulb globe temperature thermometers for all public and charter schools.

The Commission appreciates the inclusion of public charter schools in this measure as charter schools are a part of the public education system. Any initiatives that protect the health of public school students should include charter schools and their students.

The Commission is available to work with this committee, the DOE, and our public charter schools in moving this legislation forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



**House Committee on Education**

**Testimony on HB 245**

**Relating to Student Heat Exposure Safety**

**January 28th, 2025**

**2:00 PM**

**Room 309**

The Climate Change and Health Working Group (CCHWG) is a cross-sector collaborative interested in strengthening climate and health resiliency in Hawai'i. CCHWG supports this measure that seeks to protect Hawai'i's children from heat-related illness through clear, data-driven guidelines and resources.

**Testimony of the Hawai'i Climate Change and Health Working Group**

**In Support of HB 245**

**Relating to Student Heat Exposure Safety**

**Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Education Committee:**

The Climate Change and Health Working Group **supports HB 245** and its goal of protecting children from the dangers of heat-related illness.

United by the values of equity, justice, and Aloha, the Hawai'i Climate Change and Health Working Group collaborates across disciplines and communities to strengthen Hawai'i's public health resiliency in response to our changing climate. Using a data-driven approach, our mission is to research and communicate the human health impacts of climate change and to advocate for policy solutions that prioritize our most at-risk community members.

Temperatures are increasing in Hawai'i. Exercising in hot, humid weather places added stress on the human body, and **children are especially vulnerable**. Children are more likely to exercise beyond their limits because they may not recognize the symptoms of heat stress, or

may feel pressure from coaches or peers to continue practicing in high heat. Additionally, children do not have control over the timing of recess, sports, or outdoor band practice, and may not have regular access to hydration during these outdoor activities, many of which occur at the hottest times of the day or year.

We spend taxpayer dollars to rescue heat-exhausted tourists – let's prioritize the safety and well-being of our local children by proactively reducing heat-related illness at school.

HB 245 appropriates funds to the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Health, to (1) develop statewide safety guidelines based on Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT), ensuring coaches and teachers clearly know when it is safe to exercise outside; and (2) provide all public and charter schools with WBGT thermometers to measure environmental heat stress.

WBGT is the recognized standard for evaluating heat stress, adopted by the American College of Sports Medicine, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the U.S. Department of Defense. Unlike air temperature or heat index alone, WBGT incorporates air temperature, humidity, wind speed, and direct sunlight to provide a more precise measure of how heat affects the human body.

Currently, the DOE's School Health Section provides guidance and training to School Health Assistants (SHA) about heat-related illness and how to recognize safe conditions for exercise. However, these resources do not use WBGT and put the onus on individual coaches and teachers to make safety decisions, without standardized evidence-based data.

We have learned from other states with hot humid weather that vague, unstandardized heat recommendations lead to harm. Georgia, for example, once led the nation in heat-related deaths in high school athletes despite schools having written heat practice policies. Only after several tragic heat-related deaths did Georgia adopt a data-driven WBGT approach, successfully reducing heat-related illnesses.

For these reasons, the Climate Change and Health Working Group urges you to pass HB 245 to create standardized heat-illness guidelines and ensure our schools have the proper tools to keep our children safe.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

The Climate Change & Health Working Group

To: Representative Justin Woodson, Chair  
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Education

From: Chevelle Davis, Director of Early Childhood & Health Policy  
Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!

Subject: Measure H.B. No. 245 – Relating to Student Heat Exposure Safety

Hearing: Tuesday, January 28, 2025, at 2:00 PM, Conference Room 309

**POSITION: Support**

Aloha e Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony **supporting H.B. No. 245** to protect our keiki from heat-related illness. While we spend taxpayer dollars rescuing heat-exhausted tourists, we must prioritize the safety and well-being of our keiki across the state.

This bill funds the Department of Education and Department of Health to:

1. Develop statewide safety guidelines based on wet bulb globe temperature (WBGT), providing clear, evidence-based standards for outdoor activities.
2. Equip public and charter schools with WBGT thermometers to measure heat stress accurately.

School Health Assistants receive guidance on heat illness, but it doesn't include WBGT – a critical metric used by leading health and sports organizations to assess heat stress. Standardizing safety protocols ensures coaches and teachers make informed decisions rather than relying on inconsistent or outdated tools like air temperature alone.

With rising temperatures in Hawai'i, children are particularly vulnerable to heat stress, often pushing themselves too far during recess or school-related physical activities. Other states, like Georgia, reduced heat-related deaths by implementing WBGT-based policies after facing tragic losses. We can and must do the same to protect our keiki.

I urge you to pass **H.B. No. 245** to establish clear, data-driven heat safety guidelines and provide schools with the tools to keep children safe.

Me ka ha'aha'a,  
Chevelle Davis, MPH  
Director of Early Childhood & Health Policy



# SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

January 28, 2025

2:00 PM

Conference Room 309

### In **SUPPORT** of **HB245**: RELATING TO STUDENT HEAT EXPOSURE SAFETY

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Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Education Committee,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS HB245**, which would prompt the development of statewide safety guidelines to prevent heat-related illness at schools.

With rising temperatures all but guaranteed in the years and decades to come, we must begin to explore proactive measures to prevent and minimize heat-related illnesses, injuries, and even deaths – especially for our keiki, who have played no part in creating the climate crisis they will inherit. This measure will ensure that the process for protective planning for our keiki begins now, and not after students have suffered the otherwise avoidable impacts of heat stress during school activities.

Notably, the shade access provisions recommended by this measure can have additional benefits beyond providing additional areas for cooling, including beautification, adding sustainable plants to aid with removing carbon dioxide, and helping to regulate water resources.

Therefore, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



January 27, 2025

To: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Rep. Trish La Chica, Vice Chair

Re: SUPPORT of HB245 RELATING TO STUDENT HEAT EXPOSURE SAFETY

Hrg: Tuesday, January 28th at 2:00PM

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Education Committee:

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 450 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. Our mission is to promote public health in Hawai'i through leadership, collaboration, education and advocacy.

The Hawaii Public Health Association supports HB245 and its goal of protecting children from the dangers of heat-related illness. Every year we spend taxpayer dollars to rescue heat-exhausted tourists, let's prioritize the safety and well-being of our local children.

Currently, the School Health Section provides guidance and training to School Health Assistants relating to heat-related illness and how to recognize safe conditions for exercise. However, these do not use wet-bulb globe temperature and puts the onus on individual coaches and teachers to make safety decisions, without standardized evidence-based data.

Measuring air temperature or heat index is not enough. Wet bulb globe temperature is a measure of heat stress on the body and measures air temperature, humidity, wind speed, and radiant heat. It is widely used in athletics as an accepted safety standard by the American College of Sports Medicine, The American Academy of Pediatrics and the US Department of Defense to mitigate heat illness.

Temperatures are increasing in Hawaii. Exercising in hot and humid weather is challenging for the human body and our children are especially vulnerable – they are more likely to exercise beyond their limits, as they may not recognize the symptoms of heat stress or feel pressure to continue practice. Children may not have control over the timing of recess or sports or band practice. They may not have regular access to hydration during these outdoor activities, which may occur at the hottest times of the day or year.

The Hawaii Public Health Association urges you to support HB245 to create standardized guidelines on heat-illness and equip schools with the tools to keep our children safe.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important public health issue.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Holly Kessler". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Holly Kessler  
Executive Director

**HB-245**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 11:58:24 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Elizabeth Kiefer	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Education Committee:

My name is Elizabeth Kiefer and I **support HB 245** and its goal of protecting children from the dangers of heat-related illness. Every year we spend taxpayer dollars to rescue heat-exhausted tourists, let’s prioritize the safety and well-being of our local children.

This bill would require and appropriate funds to the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Health to (1) develop statewide safety guidelines based on wet bulb globe temperature so that coaches and teachers know clearly when it is safe for outdoor recreation and (2) appropriate funds for all public and charter schools to purchase wet bulb globe temperature thermometers to measure environmental heat stress.

Currently, the School Health Section provides guidance and training to School Health Assistants (SHA) relating to heat-related illness and how to recognize safe conditions for exercise. However, these do not use wet-bulb globe temperature and puts the onus on individual coaches and teachers to make safety decisions, without standardized evidence-based data.

Measuring air temperature or heat index is not enough. Wet bulb globe temperature is a measure of heat stress on the body and measures air temperature, humidity, wind speed, and radiant heat. It is widely used in athletics as an accepted safety standard by the American College of Sports Medicine, The American Academy of Pediatrics and the US Department of Defense to mitigate heat illness.

Temperatures are increasing in Hawaii. Exercising in hot and humid weather is challenging for the human body and our children are especially vulnerable – they are more likely to exercise beyond their limits, as they may not recognize the symptoms of heat stress or feel pressure to continue practice. Children may not have control over the timing of recess or sports or band practice. They may not have regular access to hydration during these outdoor activities, which may occur at the hottest times of the day or year.

We know from other states with hot humid weather that vague and unstandardized recommendations cause harm. Georgia once led the nation in heat related **deaths** in high school

athletes, despite schools having written heat practice policies. After several high-profile deaths, this state implemented a data-driven heat policy to mitigate the risk of heat-related illness.

I urge you to **support HB 245** to create standardized guidelines on heat-illness and equip schools with the tools to keep our children safe.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Dr. Elizabeth Kiefer

**HB-245**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 7:17:50 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tenaya Jackman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Education Committee:

My name is Tenaya Jackman, and I **support HB 245** and its goal of protecting children from the dangers of heat-related illness. Every year we spend taxpayer dollars to rescue heat-exhausted tourists, let’s prioritize the safety and well-being of our local children. As a public health professional I support this effort to prevent injury and illness while supporting safe physical activity.

This bill would require and appropriate funds to the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Health to (1) develop statewide safety guidelines based on wet bulb globe temperature so that coaches and teachers know clearly when it is safe for outdoor recreation and (2) appropriate funds for all public and charter schools to purchase wet bulb globe temperature thermometers to measure environmental heat stress.

Currently, the School Health Section provides guidance and training to School Health Assistants (SHA) relating to heat-related illness and how to recognize safe conditions for exercise. However, these do not use wet-bulb globe temperature and put the onus on individual coaches and teachers to make safety decisions, without standardized evidence-based data.

Measuring air temperature or heat index is not enough. Wet bulb globe temperature is a measure of heat stress on the body and measures air temperature, humidity, wind speed, and radiant heat. It is widely used in athletics as an accepted safety standard by the American College of Sports Medicine, The American Academy of Pediatrics and the US Department of Defense to mitigate heat illness.

Temperatures are increasing in Hawaii. Exercising in hot and humid weather is challenging for the human body and our children are especially vulnerable – they are more likely to exercise beyond their limits, as they may not recognize the symptoms of heat stress or feel pressure to continue practice. Children may not have control over the timing of recess or sports or band practice. They may not have regular access to hydration during these outdoor activities, which may occur at the hottest times of the day or year.

We know from other states with hot humid weather that vague and unstandardized recommendations cause harm. Georgia once led the nation in heat related **deaths** in high school

athletes, despite schools having written heat practice policies. After several high-profile deaths, this state implemented a data-driven heat policy to mitigate the risk of heat-related illness.

I urge you to **support HB 245** to create standardized guidelines on heat-illness and equip schools with the tools to keep our children safe.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Tenaya Jackman, MPH

Hawaii Public Health Association Board Member

Hawaii Climate Change and Health Working Group Member

**HB-245**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 11:19:29 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily Werner	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I support HB245.

**Across the islands, air temperatures and humidity levels have increased and continue to do so. This poses serious health risks to students participating in athletics at school, including heat stroke and heat exhaustion. These heat related illnesses cause dehydration, dizziness, fatigue, and in severe cases, even death. During heat waves, air quality can worsen, causing cardiovascular and respiratory problems. Poor air quality especially affects people with existing diseases such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Children are at an increased risk of experiencing heat-related illness because their bodies are less effective at regulating temperatures. Passing HB245 would ensure that schools are safeguarding students from the risks associated with heat. Proactive measures such as the use of wet bulb globe temperature thermometers enable schools to assess the condition of the temperature and make informed decisions about limiting outdoor activities during high temperatures. Passing this bill would be a vital step for the state in protecting children from the growing threat of heat related illnesses. I urge you to pass HB245.**

**HB-245**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:53:56 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nanea Lo, and I am testifying in strong support of HB245, which requires the Department of Education and the Department of Health to develop guidelines to mitigate the risk of heat exposure to students during outdoor activities.

As someone deeply invested in the well-being of our keiki and the sustainability of our islands, I believe this measure is not only timely but essential. Climate change has brought rising temperatures and increased heat-related risks that directly affect the health and safety of our students, particularly during outdoor activities. It is our responsibility to ensure that our schools are equipped with the resources and protocols needed to protect them.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to address public health impacts of climate change. The work being done at the Public Health and Climate Change Working Group is critical to advocate for systemic changes that prioritize health and safety while preparing our communities to adapt to climate challenges. Supporting HB245 reaffirms our commitment to this important collaboration and demonstrates that we value and uplift the efforts of this budding group of advocates.

Furthermore, this measure reflects a key component of our collective strategy: to encourage non-environmental groups to take meaningful climate action. By addressing heat exposure in schools, we are integrating climate awareness into public health policies in ways that directly benefit our communities and foster broader participation in climate advocacy.

I urge you to support HB245 and take an active step toward safeguarding the health of our keiki while addressing the real impacts of climate change.

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo, Mō‘ili‘ili, HI 96826

**HB-245**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 1:36:35 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Lee, MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**In Support of HB 245  
Relating to Student Heat Exposure Safety**

I'm a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist working in Chinatown, O'ahu, and I urge you to pass HB-245. Although I'm writing only on behalf of myself, I'm a committee member on the American Psychiatric Association's 8-person Committee on Climate Change and Mental Health, as well as a member of the Climate Psychiatry Alliance, and a board member for the Hawai'i Climate Change and Health Working Group.

Young people are uniquely vulnerable to the effects of extreme heat due to their incompletely-developed thermoregulatory systems (ie less efficient sweating) and their reliance on adult caretakers. As you may know, the number of high heat and extreme heat days is on the rise. According to Hawaii's own [Hawaii.climate.gov](http://Hawaii.climate.gov) estimates, "In Hawai'i, average temperatures could increase by as much as 5 – 7.5° F by the end of the century." Hawai'ian temperatures are now increasing by 0.3°F every decade, at four times the rate of half a century ago, yet as heat injuries rise, the nearest federally-funded emergency heat structure is still an ocean away in Los Angeles.

On April 25th 2024, the US Environmental Protection Agency released a report on Climate Change and Children's Health and Well-Being in the United States. Their report shows how heat disrupts learning in children, including through mechanisms like distraction, irritability, and disrupted sleep. Researchers found slowed reaction times during hot days and other signs of mild cognitive impairment. Some students were already found to avoid school on hot days, especially in schools without AC.

This report estimated that a 3.6 degree rise in average temperature correlates to a 4% reduction in academic achievement per child, the equivalent to almost \$7,000,000,000 future income lost from EACH graduating class, and that we may reach this threshold by the 2050s. If we don't take steps to protect our keiki, each graduating class faces billions of lost prosperity.

If we wish to protect our state's most vulnerable people from the harmful effects of rising heat, Hawaii will need to take action locally. I urge you to pass HB 245 to create standardized heat-illness guidelines and ensure our schools have the proper tools to keep our children safe.

**LATE**

**HB-245**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 7:38:33 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristina Pikunas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Education Committee:

My name is Kristina Pikunas and I support HB 245 and its goal of protecting children from the dangers of heat-related illness.

Seared into my memory from when I was a school psychologist on Maui is the experience of meeting with a child who was crying due to the heat, stating that he felt like he was in hell. It was in fact a terribly hot and humid day, and that was over a decade ago! Our climate is continuing to get warmer and I fear the suffering of our children is increasing without adequate actions being taken to protect them.

Every year we spend taxpayer dollars to rescue heat-exhausted tourists, and I wonder why we don't prioritize the safety and well-being of local keiki.

The child to whom I am referring(above) was crying because it was unbearably humid and hot in the classroom. And it is my understanding that this was not an isolated incident.

I urge you to *please* support HB 245 to create standardized guidelines on heat-illness and equip schools with the tools to keep our children safe wherever it is that they are located on campus.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Kristina Pikunas PhD LLC

-Hawaii Licensed Psychologist #878

-National Board Certified Health and Wellness Coach