



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Economic Development & Business  
Wednesday, February 1, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

by

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HB 909 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Keohokalole and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of this measure.

As you are well aware of, the economy of Hawai'i is highly dependent on the tourism sector and military spending. To help diversify the state's economic portfolio, the business community identified research and innovation as a third economic sector to be developed.

In response, the University of Hawai'i and local business community have partnered on the Hawai'i Innovation Initiative, a bold and proactive effort to help diversify the state's economy by building a thriving innovation, research, education and training enterprise -- to be driven by the growth of new industries in Hawai'i and fueled by UH's plans to aggressively commercialize its research over the next decade.

A key to the success of this initiative is the establishment of the Center of Commercialization, which will serve as a virtual umbrella that will encompass grant development/commercialization/innovation related programs to increase efficiencies, effectiveness and success necessary for the establishment of a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem at UH. The center will encompass the Strategic Grants Development Office, Office of Technology Transfer and Economic Development and the XLR8UH proof of concept center/venture accelerator – to help “quarterback” the three interwoven entities in assisting new strategic hires and current faculty with extramural funding, entrepreneurship and commercialization.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of this bill, but feels that it is also important for the Legislature to concurrently allow passage of measures like HB 166 and HB 1156 that will enable UH to start the programs initiatives necessary for successful research commercialization. These two efforts can complement each other -- with the operational program serving as a working pilot toward the permanent establishment of the Center for Commercialization at UH.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.