



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Economic Development & Business
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HB 1572 HD1 – RELATING TO LABOR

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 1572 House Draft 1. This measure includes the executive director of the University of Hawai'i Economic Research Organization (UHERO) as a member of an economic security working group within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism charged with making recommendations to the legislature for the best methods to:

- (1) Address the potential for significant economic change and
- (2) Ensure the economic sustainability of Hawai'i's people and economy into the future.

UHERO is housed within the Social Science Research Institute of the College of Social Sciences. The mission of UHERO is to inform public and private sector decision-making through rigorous, independent economic research on the people, environment, and economies of Hawai'i and the Asia-Pacific region. This mission aligns with the mission of the proposed working group to “ensure the economic sustainability of individuals and families and the overall health of the local economy in light of future automation technologies, globalization, and disruptive innovation.”

The College and UHERO support study and research into the future economic health and stability of Hawai'i are willing to participate in the working group, but not without faculty resources to do so. Current faculty have full research agendas, and undertaking this project would require that other, ongoing research of significance to the state be dropped. Further, the most appropriate contribution would be from a faculty position with a focus on regional economic development or industrial organization, which does not currently exist in the state. If such a position were to be funded by the legislature, UHERO could not only provide meaningful participation in the proposed working group, but also contribute to policy more broadly.