



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Human Services
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By
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HCR 34 – REQUESTING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING AND THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII CENTER ON AGING TO ESTABLISH A WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ADULT EDUCATION SERVICES, THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII FREE SENIOR ENROLLMENT OPPORTUNITIES, AND THE POTENTIAL TO PROVIDE NEW LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TO SENIOR CITIZENS.

Chair Morikawa and Vice Chair Todd and Members of the Committee:

As Dean of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work, I appreciate the opportunity to provide an update on efforts by the UH Center on Aging (COA) in examining adult education offerings in Hawai'i.

In response to SR118 SD1 from 2015, the Hawai'i Department of Health, Executive Office on Aging (EOA), contracted with the UH COA to carry out the tasks outlined in the resolution. SR118 SD1 listed recommended potential participants to be involved in the workgroup, and the UHM COA approached these participants. The resolution also tasked the workgroup with examining program offerings statewide, identifying potential areas of duplication and assessing the need for consolidation, and producing policy recommendations. The 2017 resolution, HCR34, has similar language and goals.

The workgroup convened three times between September and December 2016. Then, the UH COA produced a draft report, incorporated comments and feedback from the adult education workgroup members, and produced a final report to EOA at the end of February 2017. EOA will submit the report to the Legislature, as appropriate.

To summarize, the report identified a diverse range of programs offered for free or low-cost through the UH system and Department of Education. The group did not recommend consolidation of programs. Although programs may seem duplicative of each other, they are often necessary due to geographic constraints and transportation challenges of our kūpuna. The group's findings include the need to better assess the interests and preferences of kūpuna for adult education topics and programs, to strengthen outreach and marketing activities, and to pilot new ideas.

If the House Committee on Human Services requests additional information regarding learning opportunities for adult education, the COA would be pleased to support such efforts in collaboration with workgroup participants.