



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
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By

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HB 2082 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PROGRAM

Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Hashem, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 2082 that establishes the University of Hawai'i Promise Program to provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of qualified students pursuing an undergraduate degree in registered nursing, elementary or secondary education, and civil engineering enrolled at any campus of the University of Hawai'i system, and appropriates funds to establish and implement the program.

The University of Hawai'i fully appreciates the commitment of the Legislature to the Hawai'i Promise Program and the funding that was provided this past year for community college students. Approximately 1500 students have benefitted from the Hawai'i Promise Program since Fall 2017, at a cost of approximately \$2.2M, of which \$1.8M were appropriated by the legislature, with the remaining funds provided from community college operating reserves.

UH supports HB 2082. The program proposed by HB 2082 is a different type of Hawai'i Promise than the program initiated in Fall 2017 in that it provides scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of students in particular majors: registered nursing, elementary or secondary education, or civil engineering undergraduates.

The University appreciates the Legislature's support in focusing on these areas of state workforce needs and the requirement to train professionals in these fields. We respectfully request an opportunity to work with the Legislature to clarify the intent of the Legislature, for example, if the program is intended to be limited to need-based students like other Hawai'i Promise Programs, and how we might draft language around requirements, like eligibility, as well as progress over time toward completion of the major.

The University is grateful for the Legislature's creation of the Hawai'i Promise Program, and appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments on HB 2082.