



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
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By
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SB 1040 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Kahele, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i ("University") appreciates the intent of SB 1040, which requires the University to develop an academic and facilities master plan for all campuses in accordance with criteria prescribed in the bill. As further set forth below, however, the Board of Regents for the University of Hawai'i ("Board") has already identified this as a strategic priority. Efforts are well underway to develop a comprehensive strategy that identifies overarching principles to guide the administration in developing a framework and, ultimately, a master plan that sets forth an integrated academic and facilities blueprint. Accordingly, we believe the objectives of this bill are already being satisfied without legislative mandate.

In September 2015, the Board passed a Resolution for the administration to develop an integrated high-level systemwide academic and facilities master plan that creates a strategic vision to align and leverage each campus' unique mission and resources while reducing unnecessary duplication. Additionally, it seeks to increase collaboration and sharing of academic offerings to make more effective and efficient use of fiscal, human, and physical plant resources, modern distance learning technologies, and land assets while advancing the higher education goals of the state.

In response to the resolution, there have been many visioning and strategic planning sessions with leadership from the Board, the System and the campuses. These efforts require a matrixed approach that addresses governance, programmatic, fiscal, and facility-related issues. Working principles to guide a master plan are expected to be finalized by the end of the year. However, this marks just the initial step towards a longer-term blueprint.

Once the working principles for an integrated academic and facilities master plan are identified, then representation from all campuses must be solicited to build upon this framework. Typically, such a comprehensive and detailed exercise takes time and resources to gather basic data and information from which decision-points are made.

At this time, the administration has been doing this work primarily with internal human and financial resources.

Additionally, it is difficult to manage space without accurate and complete data and metrics. To that end, the UH Mānoa campus has embarked on an initiative to develop a strategic space utilization plan that establishes a baseline analysis of current facility use and generates metrics for assessing space needs in accordance with current priorities and future program growth. Synchronized with ongoing efforts to update its facility condition indices, deferred maintenance and patterns of energy use, this initiative will advance campus planning in alignment with the academic mission and other campus-wide initiatives. If proven successful, this model will be deployed to other campuses and off-site facilities.

As set forth above, the University has already launched several initiatives toward developing an integrated academic and facilities strategic plan. These efforts are expected to be complete in a year; after which time, a plan is expected to be developed with input and feedback from various stakeholders ranging from students, faculty and staff to business leaders and government officials. While the University agrees with the intent of SB 1040, its vast charge has great impact on campus operations and resources. As such, we believe the objectives of this bill are better satisfied through an organic process internal to the University and not mandated externally through legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.