



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
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By
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SB 1040 SD2 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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

The University of Hawai'i ("University") appreciates the intent of SB 1040 SD2, 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 University staff and with current financial resources. This has allowed the University to make progress on this very complex endeavor, however, the University does have to acknowledge that the University does not have dedicated or professionals trained in producing this type of work product. This effort is being done internally because no additional funding can be afforded to this effort.

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.

If this measure is to proceed, in order to satisfy the time deadline dictated in the bill, the University requests an appropriation of \$1,000,000 in order to fulfill the reporting requirement set forth in SB 1040 SD2. Although much progress has been made so far in developing an integrated academic and facilities strategic plan, as noted, much of this work has been done internally by UH staff and finances that are not solely dedicated to developing this plan. The requested appropriation would allow the University to expedite this legislative mandate.

While the University agrees with the intent of SB 1040 SD2, 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.