



February 6, 2006

David McClain
Interim President
University of Hawaii System
2444 Dole Street
Honolulu, HI 96822

Dear David:

At its meeting on January 31, 2006, a Panel of the Interim Report Committee met to consider the Progress Report submitted by the University of Hawaii System Office. The Panel appreciated the opportunity to discuss the report with you and Linda Johnsrud. Both of your comments, and your updates on current events, were very helpful.

The Panel found the Progress Report clear, comprehensive and informative. It is evident from the report that progress has been continuing in the several areas of previous concern of the Commission. Relations with the Board of Regents appear to be well established and effective; the University has successfully concluded its biennial budgeting process resulting in a small increase in state funding, and an increase in tuition support. Strategic planning is continuing, with the next round of the stocktaking exercise. Consultations with the several system-wide groups of Chancellors, faculty and students are continuing. The Panel was pleased with this progress and encouraged continuing efforts to sustain it.

In preparing for the forthcoming Special Visit in spring 2007, the Panel made several recommendations:

1. With the Presidency and Chancellorship of the Manoa campus both held by interim leaders, and with a number of other positions being held on an interim basis, the Panel recommended that the Board do all that it can to provide stable leadership and direction through this period of transition. The Panel also was concerned about the sequencing of searches and hires, and recommended that the Manoa Chancellor search await the selection of a new President, to allow the new President opportunity to participate in that selection.

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2. The Committee was pleased that the reorganization plan reviewed by the Senior College Commission was working well. Modifications to that plan were made to address concerns of the ACCJC. The Panel urged that continuing monitoring be made of the impact of the changes, to assure that the desired outcomes of the reorganization are achieved. The Panel was encouraged by the efforts underway to assure that all campuses are supported in the new model and that the senior colleges each have the opportunity to participate in planning and policy setting. The Panel also urged that attention be given to assuring that job descriptions and roles of each of the Vice Presidents be established and documented, and a system of evaluation of both individuals and of the organization of the Vice Presidents be conducted at appropriate intervals.
3. The Panel discussed the report of the State auditor, and while it did not review the full audit or the University's response, noted there were plans for another audit of the other campuses of the system. The Panel urged that the University move to document its procedures, especially as a number of new procedures are being instituted, and that it continue to improve its financial budgeting, accounting and reporting systems.
4. The Panel also discussed the recent interactions of the University with the legislature over action to move a specific faculty line from one campus to another. The Panel expressed concern that, while relations with the legislature and the governor appear to be improving, that detailed actions of this type would appear to represent micromanagement and violate the integrity of the University.
5. The Panel discussed with you the impact of increased tuition fees. While the Panel recognizes the value of increased financial support to the University, they also recommended that the impact of these increases on enrollment, financial aid, and admissions of Hawaiian and other underrepresented groups be carefully monitored.

The Panel acted to receive the progress report and proceed with the scheduled special visit in spring 2007. It urged that these issues be addressed in the special visit report prepared by the University.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this action.

Sincerely,



Ralph A. Wolff
Executive Director

Cc: Members of the IRC Panel