

**R E S O L U T I O N****Requesting a Comprehensive Plan to Achieve a Reimagined University of Hawai‘i**

WHEREAS, Hawai‘i is a special place where diverse people and communities live, work, learn, and play with empathy for others and in a sustainable manner; and

WHEREAS, the University of Hawai‘i (“University”) System is the single most important contributor to the future of Hawai‘i and provides the intellectual capacity to address Hawai‘i’s challenges and opportunities, and stimulates the economy through its research and scholarship; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically and suddenly changed the course of the University’s operations spanning course delivery, health and safety measures, and severe financial impacts, thereby prompting the Board of Regents (“Board”) to adopt Resolution 20-03, *Proclaiming an Emergency and Directing Action by the University of Hawai‘i Administration*, including consideration of budgetary actions and programmatic and administrative restructuring; and

WHEREAS, while the economy is starting to recover, economic forecasts indicate that Hawai‘i’s general fund revenues are not likely to return to pre-pandemic levels within a three to six-year timeframe and federal assistance is only a temporary stop-gap measure and mostly restricted to specific uses; and

WHEREAS, the University and the State still face long-term fiscal challenges ahead, including the likelihood that even when the economy does recover, the University may not receive the levels of State general fund support it has received in the past, particularly after adjusting for inflation; and

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes that a forward-looking University System that is highly focused on the needs of Hawai‘i now and in the future, as identified in the Budget Policy Paper approved by the Board in October 2020, will play a critical role in the State’s overall recovery and that the Board’s engagement with the University Administration on strategic planning is critical to ensure the University’s ability to thrive in its multi-faceted mission; and

WHEREAS, as a result of anticipated permanent general fund base budget reductions (after adjusting for inflation), the major University units (four-year campuses, community college system, and system administration) have held extensive discussions and conducted post-pandemic planning since spring 2020 to identify specific actions that can help ensure the long-term sustainability and viability of the University while focusing on the most important needs of the State for recovery and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought forth the opportunity to redesign UH to be a university system driven by strategic priorities and initiatives that advance the entire State of Hawai‘i, a system that reduces its heavy reliance on general fund

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support by containing costs and creating new revenue streams, while keeping tuition affordable; and

WHEREAS, the approach to navigating the future of the University as an anchor in the Pacific linking Hawai‘i to the rest of the world must be driven not by its budget, but by a long-term vision of a reimagined institution of higher education that supports the State of Hawai‘i in providing a thriving economy for Hawai‘i’s people to live, work, learn, and play, a vision for “What should the University of Hawai‘i look like in 2030?”; and

WHEREAS, the vision for the University should support the needs of the State by educating more of Hawai‘i’s citizens to strengthen communities, preparing more Hawai‘i residents for jobs to meet current and emerging workforce needs, helping develop new economic sectors and refocusing those in need of a refresh, continuing to grow the University’s research enterprise, strengthening philanthropy and community partnerships, and developing alternative sources of revenue; and

WHEREAS, actions taken to meet those needs should reflect the distinctive missions of each unit while also creating greater synergies to form a more cohesive university system that is collectively stronger than the sum of its parts and is both more effective and efficient as a whole in serving communities across the islands; and

WHEREAS, the University’s budget should support its vision and prioritize maintaining tuition at affordable levels, ensuring equitable statewide access to high-quality programs, maximizing success for students regardless of backgrounds, serving new constituencies across the State, and providing quality environments for students, researchers, faculty, and staff to thrive in education and research; and

WHEREAS, the University Administration must continue to actively pursue significant reorganization, realignment, and rightsizing of programs and functions to support a positive vision for the future in a manner that respects bargaining unit contracts and enables students to complete their programs of study while creating spending efficiencies that can enable new investments in high-priority programs that position the university to better serve its students and the community in an environment that relies less on state general funds; and

WHEREAS, although the Board is mindful of the possibility that the Hawai‘i State Legislature may view this acknowledgment by the University that it may need to rely less on state funds as a trigger to reduce the University’s base budget, the Regents hope and believe that legislators will instead appreciate the willingness and good faith effort of the University to accept this possibility and will continue to allow the University the flexibility and management authority it needs, including full use of reserves in its special funds and removal of sunset dates on authorities that have already been granted so the university can continue to successfully navigate through the next four to six years until realignment and stability are achieved on the path to a reimagined future.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the University Administration is

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requested to perform the following actions:

1. Develop and articulate a vision for a modern rightsized, highly-integrated statewide system of public higher education that reimagines the effective and efficient delivery of education and supports statewide needs without diminution of quality of educational programs, or research level and impact. The vision should present a holistic view of the University System, rather than a view siloed by units and campuses.
2. Develop a plan to achieve that vision that is strategic and focused on the priorities for a reimagined University and not simply an elimination of programs and services or delineation of budget reductions.
3. Continue to engage with campus constituencies and stakeholders to the maximum extent possible over the next months to gather input and ideas on the vision and plan, using all available and relevant background documents and studies.
4. Present to the Board for review and approval at its July 2021 meeting a proposed long-term vision on the reimagined University.
5. Fully develop a plan that can accomplish the necessary reorganization and realignment of programs and functions to achieve the vision for a reimagined University in a manner that does not avoid hard choices but: respects collective bargaining contracts and our employees, enables current undergraduate and graduate students to complete their programs of study, creates spending efficiencies, invests in high-priority programs, creates new revenue streams and opportunities, and positions the University to better serve its students and all islands within its allocated general fund appropriation while holding tuition at current rates with any necessary increases at levels not to exceed inflation.
6. Present to the Board for review and approval at its November 2021 meeting a plan that includes specific measures that will be taken to achieve the long-term vision with annual milestones, and the associated budgetary implications and projections with underlying assumptions for fiscal years 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025. The presentation to the Board should include details on the consultation and collaboration with University students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders that occurred in developing the plan and the criteria used to reach decisions. This plan should also be consistent with the actions requested in Board Resolution 20-03.
7. Following the presentation to the Board in November 2021 and with full consideration of all comments and suggestions received, finalize the vision and plan by the end of calendar year 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Administration report to the Board at each of its regular meetings on its progress and recommendations for changes to either the content or the timing of the implementation of the plan.

# RESOLUTION

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Governor; President of the Hawai‘i State Senate; Speaker of the Hawai‘i State House of Representatives; Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means; Chair of the Senate Committee on Higher Education; Chair of the House Committee on Finance; Chair of the House Committee on Higher Education and Technology; Executive Director of the University of Hawai‘i Professional Assembly; Executive Director of the Hawai‘i Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO; and Administrator of the United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO.

Adopted by the Board of Regents  
University of Hawai‘i  
April 15, 2021