



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

H.B 1906 HD1 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
Testimony Presented Before the
Committee on Finance

February 26, 2004

By

Dr. Doris Ching
Vice President for Student Affairs
University of Hawaii

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HB 1906 H.D.1 Relating to the University of Hawaii

Chair Takamine, Vice Chair Kawakami and Members of the committee:

While the University appreciates the intent of HB 1906 HD 1, current University policies and practices make such legislation unnecessary. The University already works closely with National Guard, Military or Military Reserve students who are called to active duty to best meet their individual needs. These needs can vary depending on the length of active duty, type of course enrolled in, and time of semester when the call-up occurs. Depending on these and other variables, the University will refund tuition and cancel enrollment, offer an "I" (Incomplete) grade for work to be completed at a later date, provide coursework that could be appropriately fulfilled during their active service, or other accommodation that best meets the needs of the student. These accommodations have been provided in response to 9/11, Bosnia, Hurricane Iniki, Operation Desert Storm and more recent activations.

Having legislation which will require refunds and disenrollment for students called to active duty for more than sixty days will limit the range of accommodations the University can offer that are responsive to the varying needs of the students.

The University recommends deleting "and refunds" in Section 1 (b) (2) because this would require the University to report on all types of refunds as part of its annual report to the legislature on tuition waivers. The University is willing to provide information on refunds for members of the Hawaii national guard, United States military reserves, and the United States Military and requests that other types of refunds not be included in the report.

The University does not support passage of HB 1906 HD 1. We are already in the process of developing a general policy that will provide a range of accommodations for students. We recommend that the committee consider approving a resolution rather than a bill to address this matter.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns on HB 1906 HD 1. We share the Legislature's interest and support for our students.