



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

HCR65 and HCR69
APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING RELATING TO ESTABLISHMENT OF STATE-
PROVINCE RELATIONS BETWEEN STATE OF HAWAII AND THUA THIEN-HUE
OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on International Affairs

March 11, 2005

By

Jenny Samaan
System Director, Office of International Education
University of Hawai'i System

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on International Affairs

March 11, 2005

by

Jenny Samaan

System Director, Office of International Education

HCR65/HCR69

APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STATE-
PROVINCE RELATIONS OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE OF HAWAII
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE PROVINCE OF THUA
THIEN-HUE OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

Chair Rep. Helene H. Hale and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i system-wide Office of International Education (OIE) strongly supports the establishment of a state-province relationship with the province of Thua Thien-Hue, Vietnam. The University of Hawai'i has devoted significant time and effort to developing a strong affiliation with the University of Hue. We are particularly interested in the potential for educational development in the province of Thua Thien-Hue due to its cultural heritage and long history as an educational center within Vietnam. The University currently has educational programs in Hanoi and in Ho Chi Minh City, as well as nursing and tourism training programs in Hue. Most recently, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's College of Business Administration is serving as a business consultant to the University of Hue's Inter-university Center, which aspires to serve the region, hosting conferences and offering a wide variety of training sessions. These connections in Hue are the direct result of UH's participation in the June, 2000 State of Hawai'i trade mission to Vietnam where doors were opened for the University.

As a declared World Heritage Site, the City of Hue, Capital of the Province of Thua Thien-Hue, is known as the cultural and educational center of Vietnam. In March of 2001, the Director of UH Mānoa's Center for Historic and Cultural Preservation went to Hue to become better acquainted with the impressive old imperial capital and the valuable world heritage monuments. Exploration continues with the UNESCO Bangkok office and others about the possibility of establishing a graduate field school in which students would work on some of the beautiful monuments badly in need of restoration.

It is certain that the City of Hue, more than any other in Vietnam, will depend upon the development of a tourism industry for its economic future. We see significant opportunity for Hawai'i business to provide expertise to the Hue public and private sector in areas such as: disaster planning and preparedness, eco-tourism, resort development, training and education, and the associated support industries. Because Hawai'i possesses a rich source of expertise, cultural

awareness and sensitivity, it is ideally suited to assist Thua Thien-Hue Province in developing a stable and culturally sensitive educational-tourism industry.

Once established, a state-province relationship between the State of Hawai'i and Thua Thien-Hue Province will serve as a conduit for professional, cultural, and humanitarian exchange. We envision this basic relationship to be the cornerstone for future relationships that will serve as a new source of business opportunity for Hawai'i and, with it, a new source of revenue for our state government and local businesses.

We strongly believe that expanded cultural and educational ties with the people of the province of Thua Thien-Hue would simultaneously enrich the citizens of Hawai'i and Vietnam by providing a solid foundation for intercultural exchange, understanding and collaboration.

In conclusion, the University of Hawai'i believes that our state has the unique opportunity in this new millennium to build upon the recent political and economic rapprochement that is gaining momentum on the part of the United States by including Thua Thien-Hue as a sister state-province. We strongly encourage you to formalize this relationship for our state, our local businesses, and our students and faculty.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HCR65 and HCR69.