



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI`I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

HB 3172 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI`I AT HILO

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education

February 4, 2006

by

Rose Y. Tseng
Chancellor
University of Hawai`i at Hilo

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Chair Waters and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai`i at Hilo (UH Hilo) strongly supports this bill, which would create additional positions in Student Services. These positions are needed to accommodate the substantial growth in enrollment that the University has experienced since 1997.

During this period of unprecedented growth, staffing levels in Student Services have remained constant. Services currently available to students are no longer adequate or sufficient and need to be expanded so that the University can provide a learning environment that facilitates student development and success.

UH Hilo has an unusually high percentage of students from low-income backgrounds who are the first in the family to attend college. We also have a large percentage of students from under-represented minority backgrounds. Students from such backgrounds often need specialized support services (counseling, advising, tutoring, etc.) to be successful. UH Hilo has also seen an increase in the number of transfer and international students. These students require additional time and expertise in terms of processing their applications and advising them appropriately. With a larger student body, there is a great need for increased services in Student Health Services, increased student activities on campus, and personnel to coordinate and administer the testing program. The positions being proposed address these needs and would provide an adequate level of services for students.

The impact that these new positions would have would be on retention and graduation. More students would remain at and graduate from UH Hilo with the additional support available on campus. With more students earning bachelor's degrees, the State's workforce would be strengthened.

We support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Executive Supplemental Budget.