



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education

March 27, 2007

by

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HR 109/HCR 135 — REQUESTING A COMPARISON STUDY OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AND THE BOARDS OF REGENTS OF SIMILAR STATE UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THE NATION

Chair Chang, Vice Chair Bertram, and Members of the Committee:

The purpose of HR 109 and HCR 135 is to request a study of the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents in comparison to the Boards of similar state universities. In matters relating to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents, the UH administration has in the past two legislative sessions provided comparative data and information on what is considered to be best practice. We will continue to do so.

On several of the points of interest in this resolution, there is information available. Based on the most recent data available on public boards (Kaplan in *Governing Academia* by Ronald G. Erhenberg, 2004):

The frequency of board meetings is 7.4 annually, and the number of members averages 13.2. As to the appointment process of members, 90.2% of the public boards have their members selected and confirmed by the governor or state bodies. Typically public boards do not have out of state members, and boards are typically voluntary with compensation for expenses only. The powers and responsibilities of boards differ with the degree of autonomy granted to the university as a function of its legal standing relative to the state's constitution and statutes. It is important to note that the UH Board of Regents is a governing board while many system boards are coordinating only. Much of the information on public boards relates to campus boards rather than system boards.

Although there is certainly merit in evaluating any organization in comparison to like organizations, the Legislature might want to postpone this study until the multiple changes called for by the Legislature have been implemented, and there is an opportunity to evaluate their impact. Also since the Association of Governing Boards collects data regularly on a number of such issues and makes it broadly available, the resolution is not necessary.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.