



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony presented before the
House Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, March 18, 2014 at 2:34PM
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HCR 147/HR 105 – REQUESTING THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF SEPARATING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM AMONG THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA, THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES, AND THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII-WEST OAHU AND THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT HILO.

Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama, and members of the House Committee on Higher Education:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) respectfully opposes HCR 147 and HR 105 which requests the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i to study the feasibility of separating the UH system among the UH Mānoa, the Community Colleges and the UH West O'ahu and the UH Hilo.

As a system of campuses with varying missions (research, regional comprehensive and community colleges), we provide unique opportunities to the students of Hawai'i. We provide multiple entrance and exit points for students to complete their degrees. Students may choose to start their education at a two-year or four-year campus. We have built pathways for students who start at a community college and moves to a four-year campus to complete a bachelor's degree. Students who earn an associate of arts degree from a community college are automatically admitted to a four-year campus. We have articulation agreements for students who complete an associate of science degree (generally focused on career and technical education) to move seamlessly into a bachelor's degree program at our four-year campuses. We have a common student information system that allows students at a four-year campus to register at any community college and all community college students may register for courses at any other community college. Many other data systems--from human resources to purchasing--are system-wide, allowing for economies of scale and improved reporting.

The vision of a self-sustaining University of Hawai'i at Mānoa would require a significant increase of tuition. Currently undergraduate resident tuition at UHM is about \$9,000 per year. In the years 2010-2012, tuition accounted for an average of 42% of the cost of education. Tuition would need to be increased by approximately 136% to cover the full cost of education. For undergraduates, this would mean an increase in tuition to more than \$19,000.

Separation into three higher education systems would lead to less efficiency. Providing support for three separate boards would require additional staff support. Each system would need to manage its own student information and IT systems, institutional research functions, capital improvements, etc. Transfer across campuses will be more complex as articulation will be campus by campus, rather than coordinated by the system administration.

The use of an independent educational expert to conduct this study will require funding during a time of scarce resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.