



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
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by
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HB 1413– RELATING TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i does not support House Bill 1413, relating to planning for an international flight training center and associated aeronautical training programs at Honolulu Community College. Honolulu Community College terminated the Commercial Aviation Program in Fall 2014 and will sunset all activities of the program in Spring 2016, allowing all current students to complete their flight training.

Previous legislation mandated a study for a 4-year Bachelor degree program in aviation at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo campus. Until a decision is made on the viability of that program in Hilo, it is not appropriate for the community colleges to plan for a new program on O'ahu.

Any new program must also take into account and address the issues related to the failure of Honolulu Community College's Commercial Aviation Program. The program was simply not financially viable for either the college or for the students. Honolulu was expending approximately \$400,000 per year on a program that continued to not have any significant number of graduates or completers. Since the program's inception in 2001, there have been only 20 associate degrees awarded, averaging less than 2 graduates per year.

The failure to complete the flight training remains the most significant barrier to student completion. The flight costs, which are borne by the student, amount to a minimum of \$55,000 and may be even higher depending on the class and what planes students fly to meet FAA requirements. Even with the college providing a subsidy to the flight provider of \$100,000 per year in order to lower the cost to the student, the program yielded very few graduates.