UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM
Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committees on Education and on Judiciary and Labor
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by
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SB 608 -- Relating to Funding for Interactive Searchable Web-Based Database

Chairs Hee and Sakamoto, Vice Chairs Kokubun and Takuda and Members of the Committees:

My name is Kathy Jaycox, and I am the Interim Executive Director of the Hawai`i P-20 Initiative. I am here to testify in regard to Senate Bill 608, which provides funding to the University of Hawai`i to design, research and develop an interactive searchable web-base database.

I support the intent of this bill -- it is consistent with one goal of the Hawai`i P-20 Initiative: providing access to data which can help move our state toward achievement of the P-20 vision, that "all of Hawai`i's people will be educated, caring, self-sufficient and able to contribute to their families, the economy and the common good, and will be encouraged to continue learning throughout their lives." This bill addresses both the needs of employers, who have some very specific training needs for incumbent employees, and the needs of education providers, who wish to clearly convey how the instruction they offer is cross-referenced to these workforce needs. I appreciate the fact that the bill allows for a design phase, during which input will be sought from a wide range of stakeholders. This wide range of input will promote the likelihood that the resulting database builds upon existing efforts and minimizes duplication of effort.

Realistically, however, I do have a concern about the expectation that the interactive searchable database shall be in service no later than the convening of the 2008

Legislature. I believe that it is very realistic to expect that the design phase be completed by that time. Once the design phase is completed, however, the process of building and testing a new interactive site may take as long or longer than the design phase. Because we will be seeking to connect several pre-existing databases, there is a high probability of glitches. None of this is said to suggest that the project is not do-able -- but only to suggest that an expectation of its being in service only six months after the funds are allocated is truly a "best case scenario." I appreciate the language in the bill which recognizes this possibility.

If I may, I would suggest some editing of the language of the bill, specifically in Section 1, subsection (2) regarding the purpose of this Act. Rather than "a searchable database to train workforce development providers," I would suggest "a searchable database that will serve employers, employees and training providers by providing comprehensive workforce training information."

I also express the caution that these funds should not replace any funding priorities already established by the Board of Regents within the University's institutional budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to express support for Senate Bill 608. Should you have any questions, I shall be happy to address them.