

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I SYSTEM

LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



SB 2906 Relating to Applied Archaeology

Written Testimony for the
Senate Committee on Education and
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs

February 8, 2008 at 1:15 p.m.

by
Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor
Richard Dubanoski, Dean
College of Social Sciences
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

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Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Tokuda, Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. Unfortunately, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa can only support the intent of the bill at this time because of our pressing priorities, such as our tremendous need for repairs and maintenance and health and safety issues, which are critical to our ability to perform our core mission for the State of Hawai'i. We are grateful for the Legislature's attention to these needs.

We recognize that you have many priorities and issues to weigh for the state, so the following substantive information on this program is provided to assist you in your decision-making process.

The proposed bill will expand the UH-Mānoa graduate program in Applied Archaeology to help resolve the current historic preservation crisis that has developed in our islands. Although UH-Mānoa regularly offers archaeological training, we are committed to training more archaeologists with expertise in Hawaiian archaeology. As the first generation of professional archaeologists who manage the state's resources is beginning to retire, we urgently need trained professionals to identify and preserve archaeological sites, human burials, and other sacred sites, so that economic development proceeds without coming into conflict with highly valued cultural and historic sites.

We note the timeliness of the new program in Applied Archaeology at UHM. In August 2007, just as the program was admitting its first students, we learned that state legislators had recently informed the UHM Chancellor about the severe shortage of archeologists at the State Department of Land and Natural Resource's Historic Preservation unit that was holding up a large amount of business for the state and private industry. We responded by initiating a planning process that could expand the program to meet this growing need.

It is with this background that in 2007 the UH-Mānoa faculty launched the Applied Archaeology program to train students specifically in the historic preservation of Hawai'i. The program is designed to help students and working professionals across the state, and now, in the second year is receiving a sharply increased number of applications from local students.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, we appreciate all interest in the University, and want to emphasize that we will be able to perform better in all arenas and best serve the state with support of the current campus priorities approved by the Board of Regents.