



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
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by

Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor
and
Yvonne Yamashita, Conference Center Director
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 241 RELATING TO UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Senate Committee on Education, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill. SB 241 is requesting a change in the authority of expending funds for the UH Conference Center program. More specifically, and of concern to the program, is an amendment to HRS 304A-2264 wherein the improved language will allow maximum flexibility for the fiscal operation of the program in conference planning by coordinating and providing efficient compliance in procurement procedures.

The Conference Center was established in 1987 as part of President Albert's Simone's "A Strategy for Academic Quality 1985-95." Outreach College (formerly the College of Continuing Education and Community Service) developed a proposal to set the policies and procedures for the program. Under this plan, the Conference Center was made a priority in order to support the work of faculty and staff through group interchange with colleagues and other organizations. The eventual goal of the program was to obtain revolving fund capabilities in order to manage conferences more efficiently. Legislative authorization for the Conference Center revolving fund was passed in 1990 (Hawaii Revised Statute 304-8.94) and for the ensuing 14 years, the Center enjoyed the flexibility made possible by an exemption to specific revolving fund restrictions. However, in 2004, that flexibility was curtailed (HB2136, now Act 216) and thus, its ability to be truly entrepreneurial.

In 2010, Outreach College went through extensive program review as part of the UH Mānoa Budget Workgroup with the intent to create a better fiscally balanced unit. At the committee's recommendation, the UH Conference Center was transferred to Auxiliary and Commercial Enterprises, thus providing the program with flexibility and support to expand its services and revenue-generating capability.

The modifications for SB 241 will enable the program to continue its mission to offer conference needs to our University units, local government agencies, and non-profit organizations.

Based on the foregoing, we request support of SB241, which addresses the concerns of the University of Hawai'i Conference Center.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.