



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committees on Education and Human Services
Monday, March 28, 2011 at 1:45 p.m.

By
Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor
And
Colette Browne, Professor and
Interim Director, Center on Aging
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SCR 114 - REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM TO EXAMINE THE FEASIBILITY OF RE-ESTABLISHING THE ADVANCED CERTIFICATE IN GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM, TO CREATE A RESEARCH EDUCATION AND MENTORSHIP PROGRAM TO SUPPORT RESEARCH ON AGING, AND TO BUILD CAPACITY TO MEET THE AGING-RELATED WORK FORCE NEEDS OF THE STATE.

The Center on Aging supports the intent of this measure. It is good news that Hawai'i residents have the greatest longevity of all 50 states, but this nonetheless presents challenges and opportunities to our nation and our state. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa is firmly committed to meeting the needs of the state in research and education in gerontology. As an interdisciplinary unit, the Center works in close collaboration with other departments on the UHM campus to address issues related to knowledge development and dissemination in aging, the mentoring of new faculty, and the preparation of a professionally trained workforce in gerontology and geriatrics. This past year, the Center completed a Key Informant Study of UHM faculty whereby we identified faculty on our campus engaged in gerontological and geriatric research and education. From this report, we were able to identify new partners and research and education strategies. The Center has developed cross disciplinary structures with the formation and convening of two UHM interdisciplinary task forces in education and research to identify areas of potential collaboration, research and grant development, and education and workforce. More than twenty faculties from nursing, medicine, political science, urban planning, social work, family resources, sociology, law, and public health have committed themselves to

this effort. To share just a few examples, we currently collaborate with the Pacific Islands Geriatric Center, John A. Burns School of Medicine, on federally funded projects to train health care professionals. We have partnered with the Office of Public Health Studies on a National Institute on Health (NIH) faculty mentoring proposal with a special focus on health and social disparities with aging. More recently, we are partnering with the School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene, the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work, and the Office of Public Health Studies on a NIH research proposal to study the role of culture and health literacy in the long-term care transition care process. In April, we will again present, together with our Family Resources and Social Work partners, our annual Career Day in Aging events whereby we introduce students to the exciting field of gerontological practice.

We will be pleased to work in close partnership with the legislature as resources will continue to be needed to effectively respond to this demographic shift.

Thank you.