



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Finance  
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By

Virginia Hinshaw, Chancellor  
and

Charles H. Fletcher, Associate Dean, School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### SB 2745 SD1 HD1 - RELATING TO ENVIRONMENT

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the House Committee on Finance; the University of Hawai'i is in favor of SB 2745 SD1 HD1, which proposes to amend the Hawai'i State Planning Act, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 226, by adding a climate change adaptation priority guideline to part III of the Act.

Research clearly indicates that sea level rise is a present and growing threat to Hawai'i that can be effectively planned for by implementing an adaptation target of 1 ft by 2050. However, we recognize that opposition to the language that adopts a 1 ft planning target will likely kill the entire bill. Thus, in order to rescue the primary purpose of the bill, we agree with the Office of Planning and support stripping out the language establishing a 1 ft sea level rise by 2050 as a planning target. We take this position reluctantly, but as a practical step.

As stated by the National Academy of Sciences in 2011 – It is accepted fact that global warming is real, and that it is caused by human greenhouse gas emissions. Global warming is changing the climate of the Hawaiian Islands: air temperature, sea level, ocean acidification and ocean temperature are all rising; rainfall has decreased; extreme weather is more common. By requiring that climate adaptation be considered in planning activities, you will be taking a strong step in protecting the public from the most dangerous aspects of climate change.

This bill will also result in improved collaboration between county, state, and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, the business community and other decision-makers for the purpose of defining steps that would achieve maximum protection of public health and safety as well as protection of natural resources for future generations.