



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Technology and the Arts
Senate Committee on Water and Land
on
February 14, 2013 at 1:20 p.m.
By Gene I. Awakuni
Chancellor, University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu

SB1317 – RELATING TO THE JAPANESE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN HAWAII

Aloha Chairs Wakai and Solomon and Members of the Committees:

UH West O'ahu supports SB 1317 as locating a Nisei Veterans Legacy Center in West O'ahu near the University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu would complement academic and research programs offered at the university such as the Center for Labor Education and Research's Labor Archives and the Henry Guigni film collection.

SB1317 appropriates \$500,000 for the planning, design, and construction of the Nisei Veterans Legacy Center and a Honouliuli Internment Camp Educational Center with release of this appropriation subject to matching funds.

The establishment of a Nisei Veterans Legacy Center would create a facility dedicated to researching, preserving, and interpreting the history of 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, Military Intelligence Service, and the 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion to develop deeper understandings of their unique place in history. Additionally, the Honouliuli Internment Camp is a major historical site located on property currently owned by Monsanto in West O'ahu. The United States National Park Service, Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i, University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu, the State of Hawai'i, Monsanto, and other stakeholders are working to preserve the history and share the legacy of Americans of Japanese ancestry who were detained in these internment camps during World War II.

UH West O'ahu supports the SB 1317 provided its passage does not compete with other priorities in the University's budget.