



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Economic Development & Business
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by
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SB 2776 SD2 – RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development & Business:

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support and concerns on this measure.

The University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu supports the intent of SB 2776 SD2. We would very much like to be a part of such an innovative opportunity to further the film production and creative media industries in Hawai'i. The creation of a Film and Media Park near the University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu campus, in conjunction with our new Academy for Creative Media academic programming, will establish a strong connection between education and high-technology industry in Hawai'i.

A Film and Media Park near our campus would encourage highly talented high school students in programs like Searider productions to continue their education and pursue a bachelor's degree in creative media at the University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu. This hub of activity and creativity would be a showcase of university student talent. Hands-on opportunities in a dedicated Film and Media Park at the University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu will better prepare baccalaureate students for professional work in the industry. The collaborative nature of the park will also draw attention to the innovative academic programs in our State's high schools and University system – a win-win situation for our State.

While we are supportive of the initiative, we are concerned about the governance of the park and decisions regarding location of the park. Providing employment opportunities for high school graduates is beneficial to Hawai'i, but we also believe workforce needs could be addressed even more broadly and robustly through a strong partnership between the park and University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu. Other state initiatives, such as improving degree completion, could be supported with a joint governance approach. We respectfully request that the governance of the park include representation by University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu officials to ensure a connection to the University through academic programming, internship opportunities, and other collaborative ways in which we can serve workforce needs in the broadest way possible.

We are also seriously concerned about the designation of specific lands to be included in the park. The list of parcels in the bill appears to be intended to cover significantly more land than needed, including significant University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu lands. If the list is intended only to designate the general area in which a site is to be located, we

would respectfully suggest clarification of that intent. We also note that the Board of Regents has formed a task group to plan for University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu lands, which they expect to have in August. The University of Hawai'i has long planned to include a science and technology park in the future development of lands adjacent to the campus and to include creative media in mission of the park. We welcome discussion of that vision with other interested parties to achieve the greatest possible economic and educational impact. However, until the task group's planning process is complete, the University cannot support any transfer of University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu lands or designation of specific University land for the Film and Media Park.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to express our support in concept and our concerns on this measure.