UNIVERSITY OF HAWAIʻI SYSTEM
Legislative Testimony

Testimony presented before the
Senate Committees on Education and Higher Education and the Arts
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SB 374 – RELATING TO DUAL CREDIT PROGRAMS

Chairs Kidani and Taniguchi, Vice Chairs Harimoto and Inouye, and Members of the Committees:

SB 374 expands the current running start legislation to include all dual credit programs, broadens the definition of an eligible student to include all high school students, and replaces the standardized test to determine college readiness with assessments for college placement. It also appropriates moneys to these programs.

The University strongly supports this bill. Hawaiʻi has had a history of promoting dual credit opportunities, mainly through the Running Start program, which allows high school students to take college level courses for college and high school credit at a UH campus, for over 10 years. The outcomes of these students show that they have higher college-going rates, higher likelihood to enroll in college, higher likelihood to remain in college, and higher likelihood to graduate with a degree or certificate. The University, in partnership with the Hawaiʻi Department of Education, is expanding the dual credit program to include the early college high school program, which allows high school students to take college level courses at their high school campus and which targets students who would not traditionally go to college. Early indications from Hawaiʻi high schools show better college-going rates and success rates of these students than regular incoming college students. Some of these students, particularly at high schools such as Waipahu, Waiakea, and Kaimuki, are on track to graduate with a college associate's degree upon high school graduation. Nationally, a recent report from the American Institutes for Research shows early college students have higher rates of high school graduation, college enrollment and college completion.

Currently, high schools are able to run these dual credit programs in partnership with UH campuses through private foundation grants, federal grant dollars, and payment of tuition by families who can afford to pay. However, because the early college high school program is expanding rapidly and because it targets underrepresented, low-income, first-generation college students, the ability to sustain this popular program is in jeopardy. We ask that the state fund these programs to both the Hawaiʻi Department of Education and the University of Hawaiʻi.

In the 2014-15 school year, Hawaiʻi has over 1,400 students enrolled in dual credit courses. The $1.84 million request to the Hawaiʻi DOE would fund 30 students at every

DOE high school to earn 6 college credits in one year, because research shows that earning at least 6 credits aids college-going and success. It would also fund 2 full time positions – one to act as the fiscal and operations administrator of the funds and distribute the funds equitably to schools; the other to provide programmatic and technical support to the schools and colleges in setting up the programs, determining courses, and acting as liaison between K-12 and higher education. These two positions do not exist currently; the functions are performed by temporary personnel at Hawai‘i P-20 Partnerships for Education which is funded by private and federal grants.

The $800,000 request to UH would award scholarships to approximately 1200 students to take Running Start courses (those taken at the college campus) and to be in the Jump Start program (program for 12th graders to spend their senior year at the college, taking a full year of a career and technical education program). Some of these students take more than 1 course each year. The funding request would also fund one position to coordinate the scholarship application process, distribute funds to students equitably, and coordinate the early college taskforce. The position currently exists as a temporary position at Hawai‘i P-20 Partnerships for Education, funded by private and federal funds.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.