



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts
And
Senate Committee on Water and Land
February 10, 2015, 2:30 p.m.
by
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SB 518 – RELATING TO LAND TRANSFER

Chairs Taniguchi and Thielen, Vice Chairs Inouye and Galuteria, and Members of the Committees:

The University of Hawai'i appreciates the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 518, which proposes to transfer the University of Hawai'i West O'ahu campus's mauka parcel to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). The University opposes this bill.

At its August meeting, the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i approved a Conceptual Land Use Plan (Plan) for all land parcels associated with the University of Hawai'i West O'ahu. In particular, the Plan anticipates the development of a 250 acre utility-scale photovoltaic (PV) farm on the lower slopes of Pu'u Kapuai with the goal of producing approximately 40-50 megawatts to power, potentially, all O'ahu campuses thereby reducing total energy consumption by 40%. To this end, the University has secured a consultant to identify best siting and feasibility.

Additionally, the University has recently entered into a Right of Entry with the National Park Service as part of its effort to have the Honouliuli site designated as a national park. Any long-term easement, however, must be compatible with our utility-scale PV plan. Any precipitous land transfer at this time has the risk of endangering expected federal designation of Honouliuli as a national historic park.

In conclusion, transferring the mauka parcel to the DLNR seriously disrupts the University's active and ongoing efforts to manage our land and energy costs on O'ahu. As such, the University strongly opposes Senate Bill 518.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.