



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Lower and Higher Education
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By

Donald O. Straney, Vice President for Academic Planning and Policy
University of Hawai'i System

HB 406 HD1 – RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Chair Woodson, Vice Chairs Hashem and Perruso, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 406 HD1. The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of this bill and would like to provide comments. This bill would require the department of business, economic development and tourism to develop and publish an annual economic development plan for each county. Based on these plans, the workforce development council would work with the department of education and the University of Hawai'i to develop and provide K-12 pathways and programs in each school that would prepare students for employment in the high-priority industries identified in the county plans. Additionally, internship programs would be identified that would give these students hands-on experience in these industries.

The University of Hawai'i has developed a website that is used by its students and by DOE schools to identify career opportunities and jobs in the economic sectors of Hawai'i's economy (<https://uhcc.hawaii.edu/workforce/index.php>). The site can be searched by industry, or by county and identifies degrees and credentials that are sought by employers. In addition, users can identify specific job advertisements, required skills, and the trend over time in number of job openings. This website could be linked to priority industries identified by the department of business, economic development and tourism in each county, permitting easy mapping by the DOE schools to K-12 curricular pathways.

Another critical project in the final stages of completion is the Pathway Alignment to High Demand Jobs initiative. These templates show pathways from K12, to UH to jobs in Hawai'i. They are endorsed by the DOE, the Chamber, Castle Foundation, UH, and P-20. These templates are ready now but are still drafts. These can be found towards the bottom of the sector site linked above. The direct link is [http://uhcc.hawaii.edu/workforce/downloads/CareerInterestTemplates_All_2019-02-04%20\(DRAFT\).pdf](http://uhcc.hawaii.edu/workforce/downloads/CareerInterestTemplates_All_2019-02-04%20(DRAFT).pdf)

The University of Hawai'i will continue to work with any and all agencies to increase a coherent focus on education/workforce alignment. The University currently works towards this end also with the workforce development council.

Resources would be required in both departments to implement the economic plans and to establish, monitor and supervise the internship programs called for in this bill. However, the University will continue to place a high value on developing pathways that would assist students to prepare for employment or entry into post-baccalaureate programs that led to careers.

Thank you for the opportunity.