



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
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By
Donald O. Straney, Vice President for Academic Planning and Policy
University of Hawai'i System

HB 813 HD1 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PROGRAM PLUS

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 813 HD1, which establishes the University of Hawai'i Promise Program Plus.

This program would provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost of qualified students at any four-year University of Hawai'i campus who had previously received a Hawai'i Promise scholarship while enrolled at one of the University of Hawai'i community colleges. The Hawai'i Promise program provides financial assistance to students with financial need (as determined based on their Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to meet the cost of tuition, fees, books and transportation. It would be awarded only to students to meet need remaining after federal and other need-based aid is awarded.

Expanding the Hawai'i Promise program to qualified students in 4-year degree programs at the University of Hawai'i is the highest priority in the Board of Regent's budget request for the university this year. Expanding this program will significantly enhance the ability of community college students to transfer to a 4-year program and it will increase the number of economically disadvantaged students who can earn a bachelor's degree from the university. It will be a significant step forward in expanding access to economic opportunity for Hawai'i's students and preparing the educated workforce the state will need to grow in the coming decades.

The program is effective for students in the community colleges, where participation in Hawai'i Promise has led to increase student success in their programs. Many of these successful students soon will be ready to transfer to a 4-year UH degree program. A 4-year version of Hawai'i Promise will help these students afford the continuation of their education.

The university is concerned, however, that students who did not qualify for Hawai'i Promise at the community college might nevertheless have unmet need when they attend a 4-year program. It would be unfortunate to exclude these students with unmet need from the benefits of this program. We estimate that approximately 858 community college graduates would benefit from the version of the Hawai'i Promise program described in this bill: 540 who would attend UH Mānoa, 114 who would attend UH Hilo and 201 who would attend UH West O'ahu.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.