



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Culture, Arts, and International Affairs
Wednesday, February 2, 2022 at 10:30 a.m.
Conference Room 329

By
Bonnie Irwin
Chancellor
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

HB 2491 – RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2491. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) supports HB 2491 that proposes to establish a standard for the spelling and punctuation of Hawaiian names and words as they appear in official State and County documents, letterheads, and signage.

UH Hilo is home to Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani, College of Hawaiian Language, that has been leading efforts to revitalize the Hawaiian language while also serving as a model to national and international indigenous communities who also seek to revive their endangered languages. We see this bill as further recognition of the Native Hawaiian people by emphasizing the importance of language and the proper spelling of language that is reflective of the pronunciation.

Mahalo for allowing UH Hilo to testify on this issue.