



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Committee on Education  
Thursday, March 23, 2023, 2:00 pm  
By  
Bonnie Irwin, Chancellor  
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

HCR 143/HR 145 – E HOOKIKINA AKU ANA I KA OIHANA HOONAAUO I KA  
APONO ANA I KOMIKE E HOOPUKA ANA I KA HOOLALA E HIKI AI KE KA ANA IA  
MA KA HOULU ANA I KE AO OLELO HAWAII I NA HAUMANA A PAU LOA

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Marten, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on HCR 143/HR 145 which requests the Hawai'i Department of Education (DOE) to appoint a committee of key stakeholders to develop a measurable plan to increase Hawaiian language education in every complex.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of this measure but defers to the DOE on provisions applicable to their department.

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. The College also has a laboratory school program that includes the majority of preschools and charter schools where students are taught through Hawaiian. In addition, in 1995 the legislature established the Hale Kuamo'o Hawaiian language center at UH Hilo to serve the use of Hawaiian in schools. Hale Kuamo'o provides curriculum support and resource services to Hawaiian medium programs, and Hawaiian language coursework.

Our faculty at Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani have worked for decades to expand Hawaiian language and increase accessibility of the Hawaiian language across the state. We are willing to participate as one of the key stakeholders on this committee and look forward to working with the others involved.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.