



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher education  
Thursday, March 21, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.

By  
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And  
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SCR 60/SR 40 – URGING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA TO EXTEND ITS RAINBOW SHUTTLE SERVICE INTO THE KAPAHULU AND WAIKIKI COMMUNITIES.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on these resolutions. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) Commuter Services Office (CSO) recognizes the importance of the existing Rainbow Shuttle routes and the impact on the University and surrounding community. CSO is a self-sustaining operation that receives no General, tuition, student fee, or external funding. The Rainbow Shuttle is funded solely through revenues generated by parking fees for the UHM campus.

A recent Rainbow Shuttle analysis by Kimley Horn, and the subsequent technical report dated June 18, 2018 (<http://manoa.hawaii.edu/commuter/resources/PDFs/ShuttleAnalysisTechnicalReportJune2018.pdf>) researched the Rainbow Shuttle program and made several key recommendations, which included:

- Developing a shuttle purpose recommendation
- Reorganizing by way of merger or elimination of existing shuttle routes

As a result of this analysis, CSO developed the following statement of purpose:

*The UHM Commuter Services Shuttle's primary function is to provide a convenient and comfortable transportation option to student, faculty, staff, and visitors traveling between campus facilities, such as housing and classroom building, that are not otherwise easily connected by walking, biking, or by local transit options.*

It was noted in the Kimley Horn report that the Rainbow Shuttle external routes replicated many of the Honolulu city bus (TheBus) routes

(<http://thebus.org/SystemMap/TheBusSystemMap.pdf>). This runs counter to the program's main objectives. The reorganization of routes which occurred in Fall 2018 resulted in the consolidation of the Makiki and Mō'ili'ili routes, both of which had low ridership.

Students, as part of their mandatory fees, are eligible to secure a "UPass" valid on TheBus. Both the Waikīkī and Kapahulu areas are already significantly and adequately serviced by TheBus routes.

The addition of Rainbow Shuttle routes in these areas would add to traffic congestion without providing significant time savings to potential riders. In addition, UHM CSO estimates the cost of providing routes into Waikīkī and Kapahulu would be approximately \$350,000 annually. The six-year rate increase schedule for parking fees which was approved by UH Board of Regents in November 2018 was based on financial projections using shuttle route consolidation recommendations from Kimley Horn. The additional cost of the proposed expanded routes into Waikīkī and Kapahulu would be a financial burden to the UHM with no perceivable benefits not already available through existing transportation options.

Therefore, while UHM understands and agrees with the spirit of these resolutions in providing more access to our campus, UHM respectfully requests that these resolutions be deferred.

UHM supports alternative transportation options which may include expanding TheBus routes into these areas if deemed necessary, as the City & County of Honolulu could take advantage of economies of scale not available to small shuttle operations such as which are run at UHM. UHM also encourages alternative transportation efforts that are not reliant on fossil fuels, examples of which include bicycling support and programs; carpooling; car, ride, and bike sharing; and pedestrian-friendly programs.