



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 7, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.

By

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SB 1413 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII RESIDENT TUITION FEE

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill (SB) 1413 relating to the University of Hawai'i resident tuition fee.

An educated citizenry is a foundation for a strong state, and as the sole provider of public education in the State of Hawai'i, the University of Hawai'i (UH) supports this bill which will assist with reducing barriers to enrollment at UH by streamlining the application process for residents, especially recent high school graduates.

SB 1413 would allow graduates of a Hawai'i high school to be classified as residents for the purpose of in-state tuition at UH. Using graduation from a high school in the State of Hawai'i as a determining factor simplifies the residency process and would reduce barriers to local students enrolling at UH to pursue additional education and training. In addition, the bill simplifies residency determination for high school students and recent graduates who are homeless and/or have complex family circumstances.

Hawai'i's "college going rate" of high school graduates declined during the pandemic, dropping from 55% enrolling immediately after high school graduation to 51%. The decline in college going rates to UH disproportionately affected low income, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander graduates. While some of this may be attributed to the uncertainties that the current health pandemic created in the lives of our students, as UH moves forward, we must do so in ways that streamline the transition from high school to college as much as possible. Recognizing recent Hawai'i high school graduates as residents for the purpose of in-state tuition assists with streamlining of the application process and overall transition of students from high school to college.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.