



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems
Tuesday, April 15, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

By
Debora Halbert, Vice President for Academic Strategy
University of Hawai'i System

SCR 192 HD1 – REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM TO ESTABLISH A VETERINARY MEDICINE EXPANSION WORKING GROUP TO EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY OF DEVELOPING A DOCTOR OF VETERINARY MEDICINE PROGRAM

Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments regarding SCR 192 HD1 which requests that a working group be developed to explore the feasibility of developing a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) program.

The UH agrees that Hawai'i faces a critical shortage of veterinarians, particularly in rural areas and for large animal agricultural services. As there is currently no DVM program within the state, students who wish to pursue veterinary medicine must leave Hawai'i to complete their education on the mainland. UH participates in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) [Professional Student Exchange Program](#), which offers Hawai'i residents the opportunity to study veterinary medicine at participating institutions, but this program may not fully address the long-term needs of the state.

The Veterinary Technology program at Windward Community College provides valuable entry-level training for students pursuing careers in veterinary medicine. Additionally, UH Mānoa's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience (CTAHR) offers a pre-veterinary curriculum and has a strong track record of Bachelor of Science alumni receiving DVM degrees. UH has also been exploring the possibility of expanding Windward Community College's program to a bachelor degree, which would require comprehensive discussions with key stakeholders to assess feasibility.

The UH supports addressing the critical need for animal science-related education in Hawai'i and appreciates the revisions to this resolution that have been made to reflect the need for a system-wide assessment of the issues. This expanded scope will ensure that the working group develops a clear, sustainable strategy that addresses the full spectrum of veterinary education in the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding SCR 192 HD1.