UNIVERSITY OF HAWAIʻI SYSTEM
ʻŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAIʻI

Legislative Testimony
Hōʻike Manaʻo I Mua O Ka ʻAhaʻōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
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SB 3286 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 3286 with comments. In summary, SB 3286 requires the University of Hawaiʻi ("University") to develop and maintain a systemwide facilities and student housing master plan that supports the academic, research, and workforce development missions of the University and reflects changing demographic, enrollment, and labor market trends.

The University acknowledges the importance of a coordinated, systemwide approach that aligns facilities and student housing planning with enrollment projections, workforce priorities, and capital planning processes, particularly during a period of demographic and economic transition. More importantly, it is imperative that the University treats its physical plant as a unified system resource across all campuses, with a utilization and maintenance strategy of integration and maximization. The University applauds this measure for highlighting the significance and value of this approach.

Generally speaking, however, a facilities strategy builds on an institutions core business strategy – or in this case the University's academic strategy. To that end, efforts are underway to develop and deliver a comprehensive academic vision that recognizes and incorporates the role and mission of all campuses as part of a singular system. This data-driven effort will take the following into consideration: high-priority workforce needs of the state and county jurisdictions (i.e., health care, education, and technology); a systemwide enrollment strategy that ensures campus-level programs and offerings are complementary amongst campuses – and not competitive; anticipate evolving student compositions that are non-traditional in nature – working students, adult/returning students seeking additional degrees, online degrees, and industry certifications; and understanding how housing availability and affordability serve as a barrier to delivering programs that address the workforce needs of the state and counties.

Given that the University is currently in the process of developing its broader academic strategy, we believe SB 3286 may be premature given the detail and prescriptiveness of the requirements for a facilities and housing master plan. Any facilities plan that is

developed outside or independent of the University's academic plan or strategy will likely produce a deliverable that may be of little to no value at the end of the day.

Additionally, the University will need consultants and/or information systems to produce much of the detailed requirements of SB 3286, including enrollment projections, housing-demand, and the inventory of space types across all campuses.

In light of the University's ongoing efforts to incorporate a workforce strategy while redefining its student-market, we request that the measure be amended to require broader principles and strategies for its facilities – rather than a detailed master plan at this time. In the alternative, the University requests it be provided a minimum of two (2) years to develop a facilities master plan after an academic strategy is completed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.