



Public Testimony Form - University of Hawaii Board of Regents

Please provide your testimony on this form for the next University of Hawaii Board of Regents meeting. Make sure you include all the requested information so that the Board of Regents is able to clearly understand the testimony provided.

Your Name (required) *

Helen Nishimoto

Your Organization (optional)

ASUH Hawaii Community College

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) *

hschoneb@hawaii.edu

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) *

OTHER

OTHER (Please describe) *

Call to request an audit at Hawaii Community College

Your Position (required) *

Comments Only

Your Testimony/Comments

May 6, 2021

Honorable Regents of the University of Hawaii,

Over the past couple of months, as the ASUH Student Government President, I stood before you and presented oral testimony on behalf of our ASUH Student Government and we also submitted written testimony as a team.

Though there has been no improvement to the concerns that we shared last month, I am here again this month, not to repeat the same concerns that we had last month, but, rather, to inform you of additional problems that just seem to be growing. The situation hasn't changed, and as the Student Government President, I have continued to be bullied by the administrators, their staff, and by students that work for them, or that they gave favors to. After the last BOR meeting,

Vice Chancellor Cortez sent out an email specifically using my name. The email, which was sent to her staff, all of Human Resources, and several select others, can only be perceived as retaliatory, bullying, harassing, creating a hostile work environment, and as inciting the recipients to act against me.

As if that wasn't enough, there have been serious problems just trying to have a student government election at Hawaii Community College. These problems can best be described as election tampering and election and voter suppression. When the Student Life Coordinator did nothing to launch an election for 2021-2022, Student Government reached out to her asking if she needed assistance to coordinate the election. After several delays and assistance from VPCC Lacro, the election notification was finally posted with very little notification to the campus. There were many irregular changes to the election that seemed as though they were being used to try to filter people out. During the application process, one of our team was told she did not meet the criteria, based on a unique interpretation of the criterion. Over the weekend before the ballot went out, further tampering took place. Despite the issues that have come up with the staff, our student government representative on the committee has worked diligently to ensure a fair election.

In addition, ASUH Student Government was accused of violating FERPA and we were required to attend a FERPA training, all of which further proved that we did not violate FERPA. We had no access to any student records, nor are we aware of any. Our discussions and investigation within ASUH focused on the lack of integrity of Vice Chancellor Cortez and were based on reports that came in from several campus constituents. Yet, when word got out, this was turned around, and all of a sudden, anyone involved in the discussion was then being investigated and/or having charges trumped up against them. And, several individuals were forced to attend the FERPA training. When will the rightful investigation take place? I ask you, is it right to treat students like that?

The campus enrollments keep plummeting because of lack of applications and enrollment in the college. Part of the answer is because students do not feel welcomed and don't follow through on all the requirements to begin school, and we do not do a good job of trying to retain the students that we have. In addition, much of our declining enrollment is because of the reputation that we have earned in the community. Our community is a close-knit community and word of mouth has spread some pretty negative publicity about us. People do not forget, and we have really done nothing to improve our reputation.

ASUH Student Governments' Vote of No Confidence, submitted to you in March was followed by an online petition calling for the resignation of administrators in April. A few brave souls signed the petition and made comments- 162 as of May 4th. Many more wanted to sign it, but were afraid to do so. Please take a look at some of the comments as they reflect the sentiment of the campus.

There are so many stories, but suffice to say that we have lost confidence in our administrators and their ability to lead us. None has any training in college administration or supervision, and they have massive complaints from all unions sitting on their desks. Through all of this mess, our students have suffered; they know and can see when things are not pono.

Therefore, we are asking you all to move forward with authorizing an audit- fiscal, EEO, and campus climate- of the University of Hawaii at Hawaii Community College and to investigate our concerns about Chancellor Rachel Solemsaas and Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Dorinna Cortez. Thanks so very much for taking this time to read my statement and to consider the needs of students, faculty, staff, and the community.

Please Let's Dare to Reimagine a Hawai'i Community College of the Future!

[Your Testimony \(pdf or word\)](#)

[BOR Testimony 5-6-21.docx](#) (16.7 kB)

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Please Let's Dare to Reimagine a Hawai'i Community College of the Future!



BOR Testimony <bortest2@hawaii.edu>

Jeff Yamauchi's Written Testimonial for Upcoming BOR Meeting

Jeffrey Yamauchi <jy25@hawaii.edu>
To: bor.testimony@hawaii.edu

Tue, May 4, 2021 at 12:53 PM

Aloha,

Here is my written testimonial.

Mahalo,

JY

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Jeff Yamauchi

LinkedIn profile: www.linkedin.com/in/yamauchi/

 **Jeff Yamauchi BOR Testimony 7 May 2021.docx**
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I am a senator at ASUH Hawai'i Community College Student Government at the Manono Campus. I testified in the last UH Board of Regent's meeting on April 15, 2021. This is my third consecutive BOR testimony. Since the last meeting, a couple of disconcerting events highlight the continuing validation for new leadership at Hawai'i Community College. and the resignation of Hawai'i Community College Chancellor, Rachel Solemsaas and Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Dorinna Cortez.

For the entire school year, Ms. Cortez has hamstrung Student Government to properly function as advocates for HawCC students, teachers, and staff. Punitive retaliation, petty grievances, and covert censorship appear to be the primary factors on approving Student Government's requests for funding. For instance, Ms. Cortez stall tactics of unnecessary red tape, eventually resulted in Student Government paying for themselves official apparel to be worn at HawCC events to be paid out-of-pocket, rather than to deal with her continuing throttling of funding. Ten months ago the initial requests were made to acquire official apparel, but were continually denied due to unnecessary corrections and red tape. HawCC Student Government has received **no** funding regarding training, excursions, and anything related to student leader development. Ms. Cortez's opaque determination on funding also forced Student Government to pay for voter registration and election awareness campaign due to proceeding in a timely fashion. In summary, everything seems to come to a stumbling Ms. Cortez halt when it comes to Student Government funding request.

Another troubling incident highlights the dysfunction of leadership at Hawai'i Community College occurred in the Student Government Election process which was fraught with suppression and abuse. Student Government Co-Vice President (Manono) Kim Stevens-Suguitan was initially disqualified to be on the ballot, but was later reinstated after much Student Government criticism. The lack of public announcement to the Student Government election initially occurred until Student Government continued outcry of voter suppression. The full determination and investigation to the tampering nature of Student Government elections are currently ongoing.

As I said so many times before, Hawai'i Community College not only needs better leadership in these critical times, but also people that earn and deserve trust and commitment. Ms. Solemsaas and Ms. Cortez are still poor examples of leadership by commanding primarily through mismanagement, fear, and intimidation. I urgently request a full audit at Hawaii Community College from a respectable third party agency that can give an objective and overall review on the state of HawCC that includes finances and a safe and objective survey leadership evaluations by students, teachers and staff members at the Institution. Signatures from Student Government's online petition continues to increase in numbers that signifies a serious, objective, and substantial (SOS) audit.

Jeff Yamauchi

HawCC Senator at Manono Campus