



Testimony: Ching Complex Stadium Expansion

Neil Abercrombie <governor.neil@gmail.com>

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To: bor.testimony@hawaii.edu, kendra65@hawaii.edu

Aloha,

Please see attached Testimony: Ching Complex Stadium Expansion from Neil Abercrombie.

Thank you,

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Dear Members of the U.H. BOR,

You are, no doubt, aware of the proposal Governors Waihee, Cayetano and I made regarding Aloha Stadium and affordable housing at the Halawa location. I am not asking you to agree with any or all aspects of our recommendations with respect to the disposition of the existing Aloha Stadium or subsequent plans for the Halawa area. This is said in a context of which you are well aware. Namely the University of Hawaii, particularly it's Division I football team, has never been anything other than a paying customer from the Aloha Stadium Authority point of view and that the Warriors team, let alone the BOR, has never been consulted or invited to be a participant in deciding the fate of Aloha Stadium or the Halawa site.

Where Division I football is concerned you are on your own. As such, I believe you have a direct interest in and responsibility for making a decision as to what is the best path forward for the University of Hawaii and its prospects for continued participation in Division I sports, most particularly football. This means you must address the present and future status of Ching Stadium and the Ching Complex area.

The facts with regard to continuing Division I football status are crystal clear and require immediate attention and action as precisely outlined in the presentation to you from the Systems CFO and V.P for Budget/Finance Mr. Kalbert Young. The Warriors football team is or will be out of compliance with NCAA basic requirements for participation at the Division I level. You have been granted breathing room to correct the situation but an inexorable time frame and limit has been placed on bringing Ching Stadium up to the minimum standards demanded.

Failure to demonstrate progress as this timeline unfolds will result in a series of NCAA sanctions ultimately leading to loss of Division I status. Such sanctions would include loss of scholarships slots which would severely limit if not cripple recruitment ability for Coach Chang and his staff – an inexcusable undermining of his determination to bring the Warriors team to peak performance level.

The bottom-line - leadership and action by the University Hawaii must be demonstrated NOW. You must commit to substantially complete construction of the necessary additional seats no matter what happens or doesn't happen at Halawa with respect to Aloha Stadium and the so-called Entertainment District.

Make a decision. Charge the Systems Administration and Athletic Department under Kalbert Young to develop and implement the necessary capital improvement project. They proved they can do the job quickly and efficiently when they build the existing Ching Stadium Structure utilizing the U.H. procurement capacity. The Systems Administration testimony before you makes clear how the funding process can be accomplished.

I realize you're being asked to deploy funds that otherwise might be expended for other priorities. But because of the time constraints we face at this point and the severe consequences which could be imposed there is no other choice immediately available to you.

The failure to resolve let alone solve the Aloha Stadium/Halawa issue is not the fault or responsibility of the University, it's leader ship or the BOR itself. If anything, the U.H. has been shoved to the sidelines with no seat at the decision-making table where the future of Aloha Stadium is concerned. Aloha Stadium/Halawa will have to fend for its own answers. The University cannot continue to simply be an

observer of the endless merry-go-round of Aloha Stadium “plans” without suffering the negative outcome that’s inevitable.

I am alumnus of 63 years standing. As a teacher at U.H. Manoa whose first student in the fall of 1959 was Samson Poomahialani, the Rainbow Warrior starting center, now my lifetime friend. And as a supporter of the University of Hawaii who bleeds green today and always, I urge you act today to implement the recommendations before you put forward by the Systems Administration Office. Go BOWS!

Aloha,
Neil Abercrombie
Governor 2010 - 2014