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## March Testimony

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**Christine Sorensen** <sorens@hawaii.edu>  
To: Board of Regents <bor@hawaii.edu>

Wed, Mar 21, 2018 at 1:11 PM

Attached is the Manoa Faculty Senate Executive Committee testimony for the March Board meeting.

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**Board of Regents Testimony  
March 2018  
Christine Sorensen Irvine  
Mānoa Faculty Senate Executive Committee**

We see on your agenda today a resolution to authorize the president to prepare a reorganization plan that may reconsolidate the positions of UH Mānoa Chancellor and UH President. As we have noted in testimony in the past two months, the Mānoa Faculty Senate (MFS) has indicated an openness to considering that option as part of a broader administrative reorganization on our campus. An MFS vote in February indicated 76% had an interest in seeing a reorganization proposal with this recombination. We also believe stable leadership is essential for Mānoa to thrive. Therefore, we encourage you to approve this resolution. We look forward to seeing a fully developed proposal for administrative reorganization in the near future so that we can begin a full review through our faculty governance structure. We also want to acknowledge that Interim Chancellor Lassner has expanded the group of individuals looking at the possibilities for Mānoa's administrative reorganization to include additional faculty and staff, an action we view positively.

We wanted to apprise you of our progress in reviewing of our General Education curriculum. A steering committee of the General Education Committee (GEC) has prepared a report following their internal review that was shared with the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and members of the external review team that visited our campus in March. The external team provided a public exit report. They identified some strengths and some challenges in our current program and provided recommendations for improvement. So far, feedback from the faculty has been very positive regarding the recommendations and we are hopeful that some changes will be embraced by the GEC in the coming year. You can find a copy of the external team exit report on the MFS website. A final external report is expected later this spring. In addition, we wanted you to know that the GEC is considering the WICHE Passport program as a way to assist transferring students in making a smooth transition to Mānoa.

The SEC also has been involved in discussions regarding classroom renovations for our campus, something sorely needed. We urge the Board to consider ways to provide additional funds to help bring our classrooms and laboratories up to the standard our students expect in a university. The data provided through the work of MKThink has been invaluable in determining needs for classroom upgrades. Now we need resources to address the issues identified. We also appreciate being included in discussions related to the campus master planning process and look forward to more opportunities for broader faculty engagement in discussions and opportunities to provide input as we move forward.

Finally, we wanted to recognize the loss of a Mānoa faculty member who contributed much to the university and perhaps more importantly to the community. In January we lost Astronomy Professor Paul Coleman, the first Hawaiian to earn a doctorate in astrophysics, and a leader in connecting the astronomy community with the Native Hawaiian community. He was passionate about carrying on the Hawaiian tradition of studying the stars and helping our students to excel. And in March we lost former faculty member George Simson, founding editor of *Biography - An Interdisciplinary Quarterly*, and the founder of the Center for Biographical Research (CBR) and its corresponding foundation, the Biographical Research Center dedicated to the interdisciplinary and multicultural study of life writing. He was a pioneer in his field. Both of these men contributed much to UH.