



WRITTEN TESTIMONY

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

H.B.1941

Relating to University of Hawaii

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Education

February 5, 2004

By

Randy Hitz, Dean
College of Education
University of Hawai'i

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HB1941: Relating to the University of Hawai'i

Chair Takai, Vice Chair Tamayo, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports H.B. 1941.

There is compelling evidence to indicate that high school students in smaller schools achieve better than their peers in larger high schools. Smaller high schools under 400 students are able to develop learning communities that keep more students engaged in academics as well as music, athletics, and other extracurricular activities. Students so engaged are more likely to graduate and to lead successful lives as adults.

Creating small schools is a priority of the State Department of Education (DOE). The DOE and the College of Education are currently allocating resources to this effort in partnership and are seeking funds from private sources. The funds provided through this bill will enable the office for school redesign to begin operations and leverage support from outside the state system and from outside the state.

We have two minor suggestions for improving the bill. First, the director of the office would be more appropriately appointed by the Dean of the College of Education. Second, we recommend that the director's salary not be included in statute.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. Though the funding suggested in this bill is above that requested by the University, it is important, and we appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of this bill.