



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

## TESTIMONY

H.B. 140 HD 1 RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Human Services

March 15, 2005

By

Dr. Doris Ching  
Vice President for Student Affairs  
University of Hawaii

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Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Ihara, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawaii has a number of programs which receive TANF funds from the State Department of Human Services e.g. Leeward Community College adult basic skills program and Maui Community College dental services program. A stellar example of TANF funding which is spread throughout our ten campus system is the Bridge to Hope program.

TANF is primarily used for Bridge to Hope participants from all ten campuses for the student employment costs. It is through TANF funds that we hope to assist our participants to eventually transition off welfare. This past year Bridge to Hope, received a contract from DHS worth \$400,000 to provide on-campus student employment.

Bridge to Hope offers TANF/welfare recipients the opportunity to fulfill work requirements with a combination of post-secondary education and on-campus student employment. Typically over 150 students per academic year benefit from the opportunity to pursue the most effective means of earning a self-sufficient wage attending college. Prior to the current FY05, Bridge to Hope was funded with State general funds on an annual legislative appropriation.

As a collaborative program between the University and the Department of Human Services, Bridge To Hope allows eligible recipients to continue to receive public welfare benefits while they are enrolled at any of the ten campuses of the University. Funds are used to provide student employment on campus for Bridge To Hope participants. Bridge To Hope students meet academic requirements while working as peer counselors, clerical and office support staff, food service workers, web masters and faculty assistants. This program has already been identified by our colleagues in national associations as an exemplary and innovative program for welfare recipients to be educated and become economically self-sufficient.

While oversight of TANF spending is appropriate for WAM and House Finance, we would urge that the Legislature ensure that funding to these important and qualified programs continue during any oversight process.

Thank you for continuing support of our students.