



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

HB 281, HD 1 Relating to Nursing

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance

February 24, 2005

by

David McClain
Interim President
University of Hawai'i

Testimony Presented Before the
House Higher Education Committee

February 24, 2005

by

David McClain

Interim President

HB 281, HD 1 RELATING TO NURSING

Chair Dwight Takamine and Members of the Committee:

The purpose of HB 281, HD 1 is to authorize the establishment of a program to support baccalaureate-prepared resident nurses to pursue master's and doctoral degree programs. According to the bill, financial assistance would be provided students to pursue advance nursing degrees and thereby increase the potential pool of nursing faculty.

Increasing the pool of nursing faculty is important to addressing the current statewide nursing shortage as well as recognizing that Hawai'i's registered nurse workforce is aging. Currently, the nursing shortage will exceed the capabilities of state nursing preparation programs. Two-hundred-ninety-three (293) applicants were denied admission to UH nursing programs in 2003 due primarily to the lack of instructional faculty.

In recognition of the statewide nursing shortage, the Board of Regents included in its Biennium Budget request funds for undergraduate and graduate nursing education programs. While the University supports the intent of HB 281, HD 1, it is requested that priority be given to fund Board of Regents approved biennium budget requests relating to nursing.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.