



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## TESTIMONY

HB 281, Relating to Nursing

Testimony Presented Before the  
House Higher Education Committee

February 8, 2005

by

David McClain  
Interim President  
University of Hawai'i

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Chair Tommy Waters and Members of the Committee:

The purpose of HB 281 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 to students to pursue advanced 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 Hawaii's registered nurse workforce is aging. Currently, the nursing shortage exceeds the capabilities of state nursing preparation programs. Two-hundred-ninety three (293) applicants were denied admission to all UH nursing programs in the 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 requests funds for undergraduate and graduate nursing education programs. While the University supports the intent of HB 281, it is requested that priority be given to fund the Board of Regents approved biennium budget requests relating to nursing education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.