



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

H.B. 1690 RELATING TO TEMPORARY FACILITIES FOR
THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I-WEST O'AHU

Testimony Presented Before the House Committee on Higher Education

February 8, 2005

By

Linda Johnsrud
Acting Chancellor, University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu

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Chair Tommy Waters and Members of the Committee:

The intent of HB 1690 is to authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds for \$941,000 for temporary facilities at the University of Hawai'i-West O`ahu.

In March 2003, a re-accreditation team representing the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) visited the UH West O`ahu campus and subsequently issued a report on the capacity of the campus to undergo an Educational Effectiveness visit. As a result of the accreditation visit and report, the Accrediting Commission issued a Formal Notice of Concern to UH West O`ahu, scheduled a special visit for Fall 2003, and rescheduled the Educational Effectiveness visit for Fall 2004. In response to the WASC finding that the academic infrastructure was insufficient, the UH system re-allocated \$325,000 to support the hiring of key personnel including a Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, a Registrar, an Institutional Researcher, and three faculty positions.

At roughly the same time, the UHWO campus received a \$1.9m Title III grant to increase the enrollment of under-represented minorities, with a focus on Hawaiians and Filipinos. This grant provided support to hire five personnel. Although the increase in staff is a boon to the tiny campus, space is now at a premium. Storage areas have been converted to office space, and staff members have doubled up. We simply do not have sufficient space to accommodate the needs of the campus.

Two new portable buildings have been slated for construction, and we thank the Legislature for their support in funding the additional space. Unfortunately, the monies allocated will not cover the additional facilities given the estimates for construction. The unanticipated increase is due to the significant increase in cost of materials as well as issues related to health and safety (including access to fire hydrants and restroom facilities).

Given that construction of the new campus is unlikely to be completed prior to 2008, we respectfully request the Committee's support of the funding for these additional facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.