



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the

Senate Committee on Tourism
and
Senate Committee on Water, Land and Agriculture

March 23, 2006

by

Gene Awakuni, Chancellor, University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu

HB 1928 HD2 (Proposed SD 1) - RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS

Chairs Kim, and Kokubun; Vice Chairs Nishihara and Hooser; and Members of the Committees:

The purpose of the bill is to require UH (among other agencies) to obtain legislative approval before disposing of state lands under its jurisdiction.

The University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu (UHWO) is opposed to this bill. Section 304-1.5 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes was passed into law by the legislature specifically to enable UHWO to establish a special fund into which would be deposited "all net proceeds from the sale of public lands...." thus exempting UHWO from the intentions of HB 1928 HD2 (Proposed SD1).

We are currently in the midst of finalizing the terms of the partnership which will develop the new UHWO campus in Kapolei. The passage of HB 1928 HD2 (Proposed SD1) would jeopardize our ability to get the full value out of the land designated for developing the campus. This would in turn reduce the funds available for building the campus and probably kill the project entirely, once again suggesting that the higher education aspirations of the residents of leeward and central O'ahu are not a priority for the state.

I do not think that is what you intend, so I hope you will not pass HB 1928 HD2 (Proposed SD1) as it is currently written. Thank you for the opportunity to testify against this bill.