



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

HB 2845

RELATING TO LEEWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PHILIPPINE STUDIES PROGRAM

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education

February 7, 2006

By

Peter Quigley
Interim Chancellor for Leeward Community College
University of Hawai'i

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H.B. 2845 LEEWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE
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Chair Waters and Members of the Committee:

This testimony is written in support of HB 2845, which is an appropriation for a Philippine Studies Program that includes the addition of one faculty position. LCC has the highest concentration of Filipino's of any community college in the system. Filipino students also represent the highest ethnic concentration of students at LCC, registering at 24% of the student body. Certainly the mission of a community college is primarily to provide access to basic skills and job preparation for transfer or job placement opportunities. Nevertheless, the community college also has an obligation to enrich its community and its curricular offerings with cultural offerings that promote diversity, understanding, and pride in one's ethnic and cultural heritage.

As Hawaiian Studies is promoted in the spirit of honoring and strengthening the host culture, it is equally important to honor this initiative. This is especially the case at LCC where, as mentioned, there is such a prominent concentration of Filipinos residing in the Leeward service area. These cultural offerings enrich our academic programs by providing the opportunity to continue to understand and appreciate the rich multicultural heritage in Hawaii. In addition, by having a concentration in this area, we send a strong signal to the Filipino residents in the area that we acknowledge their culture and welcome their attendance.

We support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents' approved executive supplemental budget. On behalf of our students, faculty, and staff we thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.