



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI`I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

HB 3171 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI`I AT HILO

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education

February 4, 2006

by

Rose Y. Tseng
Chancellor
University of Hawai`i at Hilo

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Chair Waters and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to testify in front of the Committee on House Bill No. 3171, "Appropriates funds for the increases in the cost of utilities at the University of Hawai`i at Hilo."

The utility costs, which include electricity, gas, water and sewer, have increased dramatically in the last two fiscal years. In FY 2004, our utility expenditure was \$2,159,339. A year later, in FY 2005, it jumped to \$2,603,926 or over 20% increase. This fiscal year we expect another 20-25% jump due to the price of the oil. We have been using our tuition reserves to pay the increases. However, we will no longer be able to do so next year with out some G-funded increases.

UH Hilo has implemented energy saving strategies by contracting with Johnson Control almost 10 years ago to install energy efficient lighting system and to control the air conditioning usage. With the expansion of our campus programs and its research activities, the usage has also increased because we operate longer hours during the day and also during the year. Our request is very modest. Your willingness to appropriate additional funds to us is greatly appreciated.

The growth of the University in student population and building square footage has resulted in a need for increased resources to support the growth. Both student and instructional faculty and staff have increased by over 20% in the last 10 years. We have also added over 270,000 square feet of building space, expanded operations to include small business incubator building in downtown Hilo and an aquaculture research and training facility in Keaukaha. In the last few years, we have directed resources towards providing adequate instructions to the students but, as with any growth, resources must also be increased to the support functions.

In 1993, Administrative Affairs support function has 57.00 general funded position counts. Since then, we have increased the count by 1.00 in the Environmental Health & Safety office. With the lack of permanent positions, we have to outsource some of our maintenance such as plumbing repairs and electrical installation, accumulate a backlog of minor repair and modifications, and provide less frequent cleaning and routine maintenance to our buildings. Furthermore, we have to outsource construction management for all the repair and maintenance projects involving CIP funds.

In conclusion, we really appreciate your willingness to increase funding in the Administrative Affairs so we can provide a clean, well maintained, and safe environment for our students and faculty. Thank you again for allowing us to testify in front of your committee. We support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Executive Supplemental Budget.