



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance

February 23, 2007

By Francisco Hernandez
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HB 1786 Making an appropriation to the University of Hawaii

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i endorses this bill to appropriate funds to the University of Hawai'i Bridge to Hope program at the UH Mānoa campus for the systemwide coordination and administration of the programs provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in our Board of Regents approved Biennium Budget request.

The University has actively supported access to post-secondary education for welfare recipients and actively partnered with DHS since legislation created the Bridge to Hope education program. In addition to the support of President McClain and the UH Commission on the Status of Women, faculty and staff at every campus have given their time and full support to its implementation on our campuses.

Since Fall 2000, the University and the Department of Human Service have successfully partnered to provide on-campus employment and student support services for the needs specific to student parents. This partnership has resulted in over 600 First-to-Work clients participating in on-campus Bridge to Hope employment and student services. With students in the educational pipeline moving from community colleges to baccalaureate campuses, over 150 students have earned Associate of Arts degrees at the community colleges and nearly 100 have earned Bachelor of Arts degrees. Popular and highly employable degrees include: Social Work, Nursing, Dental Hygiene, and Education.

The Bridge to Hope program has been recognized nationally as a model program for supporting low-income single parents gain higher education and self-sufficiency.

The University would like to thank the legislature for its leadership in establishing the program and its continuing support for our students and their families.