



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

**Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education**
April 3, 2008 at 2:00 p.m., Conference Room 309

by
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Presented by
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**HCR 205, HD1 / HR 173, HD1 – REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT
MANOA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK TO STUDY THE EFFECTS OF THE WORK
REQUIREMENTS OF THE TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES
PROGRAM.**

Chair Chang, Vice Chair Bertram, and Members of the Committee:

HCR 205, HD1 and HR 173, HD1 requests that the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa School of Social Work study the effects of the work requirements of the temporary assistance for needy families program, and the university offers this testimony in support of its intent.

The resolutions raise many good questions in regard to the possible negative effects of the policy changes that have occurred as a result of the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 by the U.S. Congress. Much research has been done across the nation in relation to the specified issues, resulting in varying conclusions – depending upon such variables as when the studies were done, the specific area of the country being surveyed, and who conducted the research. However, no comprehensive research on these issues appears to have been done in relation to the State of Hawai'i. The requested research is therefore both timely and relevant for this state. It would also be an enormous undertaking, involving numerous researchers and requiring tremendous expenditures of time and effort.

While the UHM School of Social Work has the required expertise and experience to do the requested research, we do not have the necessary manpower or resources to accomplish the proposed task at this point in time. In order to accomplish the task being requested in HCR 205, HD1 and HR 173, HD1, the UHM School of Social Work would need to employ or buy out the services of at least two full-time researchers over a period of a year just to gather and do the preliminary analysis of basic data. A more sophisticated analysis leading to recommendations for legislative action would require more time.

Therefore, while the UH-Mānoa strongly endorses the intent of HCR 205, HD1 and HR 173, HD1 and stands ready to engage in the research necessary to answer the questions being raised, we do not anticipate being able to conduct such a study without adequate funding.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this matter.