



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

**Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education**
March 27, 2008 at 2:15 p.m., Conference Room 309

by
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Presented by
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HCR 276 / HR 234 – REQUESTING THAT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK DEDICATE ITS SCHOOL IN HONOR OF MYRON “PINKY” THOMPSON, BY CHANGING ITS NAME TO “THE MYRON THOMPSON SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK”.

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

Myron Thompson was a leader of tremendous importance in our island community. He helped create the Hawaiian Health Care System, refocused the efforts of the Polynesian Voyaging Society, served as a Bishop Estate trustee, and helped create Alu Like and Papa Ola Lokahi. He received a master's degree from UH Mānoa's School of Social Work in 1952.

The University has recognized his legacy, particularly to health care, through the establishment of the Myron B. Thompson endowed chair for research in Native Hawaiian health which was established through a grant from the National Institutes of Health. The endowed position enables Dr. Marjorie Mau, the chair of the Native Hawaiian Health Department, to further her research into health disparities that disproportionately affect Native Hawaiians, particularly in areas such as diabetes and obesity.

By Board of Regents Policy, all naming nominations are considered by the campus, and with campus support moves to the chancellor, with her support to the president, and with his support, to the Board of Regents. The policy also states "...academic programs normally shall be named for distinguished faculty members, administrators, Regents, or other public servants and others who have been directly involved with the University for a substantial period of time or who have made a significant contribution to its academic and cultural life."

We appreciate the tremendous respect for the legacy of "Pinky" Thompson. However, our School has not yet had the opportunity to discuss with our constituents – students, faculty, staff and alumni – the possibility of renaming the School and whether this is the most appropriate way in which to honor him.

Therefore, we respectfully ask that adoption of this resolution be held in abeyance pending these discussions.