



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Public Safety  
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by

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### **HB 1629 – RELATING TO EMERGENCY SHELTERS**

Chair Hanohano, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the House Committee on Public Safety

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on HB 1629 – Relating to Emergency Shelters. The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of the HB 1629; however, we offer the following comments and concerns:

1. We are unclear on whether HB 1629 references the Counties' Director of Civil Defense and/or the State's Director of Civil Defense.
2. HB 1629 requires that State and County agencies consult with the Director of Civil Defense on the potential use of a new building for use as an emergency shelter. We believe the consultation process with Civil Defense should occur earlier in the development of facilities. Specifically, we recommend that such consultation take place during the preparation of campuses' long range physical development plan for University of Hawai'i campuses. During the campus planning process, campus officials, with the Director of Civil Defense, shall evaluate the need for emergency shelters in light of existing buildings and future planned development. For your information, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa is retrofitting and hardening the Pacific Ocean Science and Technology Center building to serve as an emergency shelter to accommodate the 3,000 students in the surrounding student dormitories.
3. We do not believe all new University buildings in excess of 10,000 square feet or \$10 million should be considered as an emergency shelter; rather, only select, strategically located University buildings on each campus.
4. We are concerned with potential delays in a building's development due to the length of time the consultation process may take with the Director of Civil Defense.
5. We are also concerned with the financial impact to the development of University facilities if all buildings that are in excess of 10,000 square feet or \$10 million must be retrofitted to serve as an emergency shelter.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on HB 1629.