



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
House Committee on Culture and the Arts
Thursday, March 31, 2011 at 3:30 a.m.

By

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And

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HCR 120/HR 104 REQUESTING THE BOARD OF REGENTS TO ESTABLISH A MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM IN ETHNIC STUDIES IN THE ETHNIC STUDIES DEPARTMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA.

Chairs Nishimoto and Wooley, Vice Chairs Nakashima and Belatti and Members of the Committees, my name is Richard Dubanoski and I am the Dean of the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony opposing HCR 120 and HR 104.

In July 2009, the Ethnic Studies Department submitted a proposal for a Master's of Arts in Ethnic Studies to the UH Mānoa administration. This proposal was given a thorough review by both college and university administration. While there are a number of positive aspects to the proposal, it was determined that the Ethnic Studies Department needs to more fully develop its B.A. degree program before proposing an M.A. degree. At present, the number of undergraduate majors in Ethnic Studies is small, so faculty attention and effort are needed, at this time, to strengthen the undergraduate program. Also, in the face of limited resources, expansion of high demand areas have to be the focus for the campus. Once the Ethnic Studies undergraduate program reaches its full potential, it will be appropriate to consider a graduate program. Therefore, we cannot currently support the establishment of a master's degree program in Ethnic Studies.