



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
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by

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HB 1025 RELATING TO THE CENTER FOR OKINAWAN STUDIES

Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 1025 which appropriates funds for the hiring of one full-time equivalent librarian position for the Okinawan collection at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa library provided it does not adversely affect our UH priorities as set in our budget request.

We offer this committee with the following background information on the position being requested:

1. Description of Duties: The librarian in this position would lead in collection development and management of all materials in all formats related to Okinawan studies; provide research assistance, and library instruction for the library. In addition, the librarian in this position would liaison with the Center for Okinawan Studies (COS) to initiate national and international resource sharing collaborations, international symposiums, rare materials preservation, restoration and digitization, web site development, and fund raising and outreach to the Okinawan community.
2. How does this position support the Strategic Goals and Objectives?
 - a) This position will further strengthen UH's top 15 status among all Japanese studies libraries in North America. UH is well known for its "distinctive and unique collections with Hawaiian, Pacific and Asian orientations that benefit the University, the people of Hawai'i, the region and the world." (UH Strategic Goals)
 - b) It will contribute to the UH's strategic goals of being "essential to the University, its diverse communities, and its inspiring accomplishments."
 - c) It will promote significantly the University and Library as a "premier research institution" which builds on its strengths with a "tradition of outstanding Asia-Pacific scholarship."

- d) It will strengthen the University's international profile as "a distinguished resource in Hawaiian and Asian-Pacific affairs, positioning it as one of the world's foremost multicultural centers for global and indigenous studies."
 - e) It will further enhance the UH Japan studies contribution to the economic well-being of Hawai'i. As an example, an Okinawan Symposium & Exhibit of rare materials from the Library will be held on Feb. 11 & Feb. 7-22, and attract members of academic community from all over the world.
3. Provide the source of funding: The funding for a Librarian at rank III would come from General Funds secured from the State Legislature.
 4. Impact if request is not approved: The COS was established in 2008 with the help of the State Legislature and is one of only three or four such centers world-wide. The UH Library has collaborated with the COS and the collection of Okinawan materials has grown become the largest and best outside of Japan. Without the position of a Librarian for Okinawan Studies to manage this valuable resource the success of the COS would be in jeopardy.

Thank you for opportunity to provide written testimony on this measure.