



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 1972 – RELATING TO LABOR

Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama, and Members of the House Committee on Higher Education:

The University of Hawai'i recognizes the importance of language and cultural skills in our communities and economy, particularly given Hawai'i's strategic location in the Asia-Pacific region. We appreciate the intent of HB 1972 to increase language proficiency of identified state employees, however have serious concerns about the implementation proposed, and must respectfully oppose the measure.

§321C-B of HB 1972 states that the, "University of Hawai'i, with assistance from the Office of Language Access, shall develop and administer courses in languages other than English to enable state employees to attain language proficiency as required for certification" and free of charge to state employees. The issues raised require extensive discussion, regarding a number of matters including academic course development, examinations, scheduling, and the costs of developing and administering such a program. UH cannot support the bill at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.