



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

BOARD OF REGENTS

Testimony presented before the
House Committee on Higher Education
February 4, 2014 at 2:01 p.m.

By
John Holzman
Chair, Board of Regents

HB 2028 – RELATING TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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

The University of Hawaii Board of Regents comments that while it agrees with the intent of HB 2028, to ensure openness and accountability in selecting the next president of the University of Hawai'i, it may have the unintended consequence of limiting the pool of applicants. Such an outcome would work against the selection of the best possible candidate to lead the University.

HB 2028 effectively requires that the names of finalists to be the next president of the University be made public. This could have the perverse effect of discouraging individuals who currently occupy high level positions outside the University, and especially individuals in the private sector, from applying to be president of the University. To publicize the fact that they are competing to lead the University would certainly give their current employers good reason to doubt their commitment to the jobs they currently hold. Thus they may well be discouraged from applying. This matter is all the more salient because the Regents Committee on the Presidential Selection is committed to focusing its efforts on recruiting candidates from within, or very familiar with, our island community.

Hawaii law already requires all board actions to be made in a public meeting. The Board assures the Committee that the public will have ample opportunity to comment on any finalist before the Board, in open session, thoroughly discusses and votes on his or her candidacy.

We respectfully ask that this measure be deferred.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.