



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
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By
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University of Hawai'i

HB 1613 – RELATING TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 1613. This measure would grant tuition waivers to students at the community colleges who meet certain criteria; and initiates the waiver program as a pilot project in a county with a population of less than 100,000.

The community colleges firmly believe that cost should not be a barrier for any resident of the State of Hawai'i in attending a community college. To this end, we have adopted a goal of having 100% of the direct cost of a community college education, that is, tuition, fees, and books, be covered by scholarship or grant (not loan) funds for any student with financial need. We estimate that the current combination of Federal Pell grants, UHCC scholarships, private scholarships through the UHF and Kamehameha Schools provides all but about \$1.5M of this direct cost for our current need based students.

According to the latest census data, the only community college able to participate in this pilot project would be Kaua'i Community College. The University appreciates the concept of this pilot program. In particular, we would welcome conversations about how the funds in support of the students would be appropriated since the number of qualified students would not necessarily be known in advance. We would also welcome discussions of how the program might be taken to scale if it is successful on Kaua'i. Again, we thank you for your shared interest in making community college education available to all.