



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

SB 2175 SD 1 HD 1 Relating to Education

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance

March 30, 2004

By

Dr. Doris Ching
Vice President for Student Affairs
University of Hawaii

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Chair Takamine, Vice Chair Kawakami and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai`i supports the intent of SB 2175 SD 1 HD 1 providing for tuition waivers and fee waivers for qualified individuals enlisted in the National Guard, and children of certain law enforcement and military personnel disabled, killed in the line of duty, or declared Prisoners of War or Missing in Action. The University appreciates their bravery, sacrifice and contribution to families in our state and nation.

The University respectfully request this bill not be approved without general fund appropriation. Act 161 (1995) requires the legislature to appropriate general funds for legislatively mandated tuition waivers. Act 161 (1995) provided the Board of Regents authority over tuition waivers. At this time, there are no estimates of the number of students who are eligible for these tuition waivers and no upper limit of the dollars of forgone revenue for these various categories of tuition waivers. Although the University does not have any accurate dollar estimates, it is likely that this bill represents more than a million dollars of forgone revenue. For example, a previous version of the bill would have appropriated \$1 million to the Department of Defense to fund tuition waivers for the National Guard and military reservists.

The University requests that tuition waivers in this bill apply only for undergraduate degree programs. The bill as currently written provides tuition waivers for the National Guard and military reservists in undergraduate programs but allows others to have tuition waivers for any program. The bill should be amended so that tuition waivers are only for undergraduate programs for all categories eligible for tuition waivers in SB 2175 SD1 HD1.

The University currently provides refunds and other accommodations for students who are called to active duty and supports the section of the bill pertaining to refunds and reporting refunds for this purpose.

The University respectfully requests the legislature appropriate funds for the tuition waivers mandated in this bill.