



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

## TESTIMONY

S.B 2222 SD 1 RELATING TO BRIDGE TO HOPE

Testimony Presented Before the Senate Committee on  
Ways and Means

March 1, 2004

By

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

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Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Kokubun and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports SB 2222 SD 1 appropriating \$300,000 to the University of Hawai'i for the Bridge To Hope Program. These funds are primarily for the cost of the employment of welfare recipients who are Bridge to Hope participants on ten campuses of the University. The University supports SB 2222 SD 1 provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in the Executive Budget.

Bridge to Hope is a collaborative program between the University and the Department of Human Services. Bridge To Hope allows eligible recipients to continue to receive public welfare benefits while they are enrolled at any of the ten campuses of the University. Funds are used to provide student employment on campus for Bridge To Hope participants. Bridge To Hope students meet academic requirements while working as peer counselors, clerical and office support staff, food service workers, web masters and faculty assistants. This program has already been identified by our colleagues in national associations as an exemplary and innovative program for welfare recipients to be educated and become economically self-sufficient.

The University supports SB 2222 SD 1 language to include 2-parent and immigrant families funded by the State Temporary Assistance to Other Needy Families (TAONF) program in this exemplary program.

We are very grateful to the Legislature for including Bridge To Hope funds for 2003-2004 as part of the "Rainy Day" bill. The Bridge To Hope program needs additional funds to continue after June 30, 2004.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 2222 SD 1 and your continuing support of our students.