



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

---

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Education  
February 7, 2007

By  
Francisco Hernandez  
Vice Chancellor for Students, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### **SB681 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII FOR PROGRAMS**

Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of SB 681 making an appropriation to the University of Hawai'i for the Graduate Professional Access (GPA) Program and the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. The University supports SB681 provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in our Board of Regents approved Biennium Budget request.

As the only public institution of higher education in the state, the University of Hawai'i has a special obligation to provide the widest access to all its programs for residents of the state. The University's strategic plan and priorities are consistent with the goals of providing access to academic disciplines at the baccalaureate and graduate level in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math; as well as in health careers for students who come from low income backgrounds and are from ethnic communities underrepresented in higher education. Outreach and student support efforts are necessary to improve the recruitment and retention of these students. Both these programs are consistent and support the institutional priorities of UH:

- 1) increasing the college going rate, transfers from 2 year to 4 year campuses, degree completion for undergraduate, bachelors and graduate programs
- 2) expanding workforce development initiatives (particularly in STEM and Health Careers)
- 3) addressing underserved regions and populations of the state (low income communities, Native Hawaiians, Filipinos, Samoans, Southeast Asians, African Americans, Hispanic students).

I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the legislature for your continuing support of access and inclusion for residents of the state.