



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
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by
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SB 683 -- Relating to the Running Start Program for College Preparation

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

My name is Kathy Jaycox, and I am the Interim Executive Director of the Hawai'i P-20 Initiative. In this role, I convene the meetings of the Running Start Task Force -- a joint DOE-UH group which meets at least quarterly to support implementation of the Running Start Program in Hawai'i. I am here to testify in regard to Senate Bill 683, which appropriates \$50,000 in each year of the fiscal biennium to provide scholarships to students in underrepresented populations in higher education, enabling them to participate in the Running Start program throughout the University of Hawai'i System. This bill also ensures that credit for both high school and college degrees is granted for courses taken while in the program.

I fully support the intent of this bill -- both regarding its provision of scholarship funds and regarding its assurance that credits earned will apply both to high school diplomas and to college degrees. Running Start has been available in Hawai'i for five years now, and hundreds of high school students have had the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high school. You will hear from and about some of them during the course of this hearing, I know. My only suggestion is that the language of the bill be amended to direct that the \$50,000 per year be channeled through the University of Hawai'i scholarship and assistance special fund rather than through the GEAR UP Office. This is simply a matter of sound bookkeeping. GEAR UP Hawai'i has been awarding scholarships to qualified Running Start students by setting aside a portion of its budget

annually, using federal GEAR UP funds. These new state scholarship funds would allow the GEAR UP Program to serve even more students -- but the state funds cannot be commingled with the federal funds. If the language were to be amended as I suggest, it is my understanding that the GEAR UP staff would continue to administer the Running Start Scholarship process, but these state monies would be in an identified account within the operational budget of the System Vice President for Planning and Policy, specified only for use as Running Start scholarships. This recommendation changes nothing about the intent of the bill, but only suggests a method of implementation that is "cleaner" for bookkeeping purposes.

I also express the caution that these funds should not replace any funding priorities already established by the Board of Regents within the University's institutional budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to express support for Senate Bill 683. Should you have any questions, I shall be happy to address them.