



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Health

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by

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SB 972, Relating to Rural Health Care

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Fukunaga, and members of the Committee:

My name is Gary Ostrander and I currently serve as the Interim Dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I wish to express my support for the intent of SB 972, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as expressed in our Board of Regents-approved Executive Biennium Budget.

SB 972 proposes to establish the Hawaii health corps program to provide health care to underserved areas of the State and provide financial assistance to students planning to enter the health professions.

We appreciate the fact that this measure would provide much-needed resources for this critical public health program. However, we must emphasize that there are other needs contained in our UH budget request that deserve consideration as well – and have been affirmed through the review process of our University administrators, Board of Regents, and Governor.

The funds requested in the Biennium Budget are crucial to JABSOM's fulfillment of its mission to train physicians to serve Hawai'i and conduct research to improve the lives of our people. We cannot responsibly advocate proposals that would diminish the amount of resources needed to operate our School and execute its mission.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.