

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I SYSTEM LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



SB 2482 Relating to the Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education

February 1, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.

by

Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor
Presented by

Dr. Brian Taylor, Dean
School of Ocean & Earth Science & Technology
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. The University supports SB 2482, requesting an extension of the lapse date of the \$31 million in revenue bonds to 2010. Coconut Island is an invaluable resource for the State of Hawai'i and we are requesting this extension to pursue opportunities for enhancement of this unique research facility. The activities on Coconut Island support the goal of understanding and enhancing Hawai'i's ability to maintain our unique ecosystem, as well as sharing that knowledge at a global level.

The Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology represents a world-renowned research institute situated on Coconut Island in Kāne'ōhe Bay. Coconut Island itself provides excellent opportunities for research. It is surrounded by 64 acres of coral reef, designated by the state of Hawai'i as the Hawai'i Marine Laboratory Refuge. Only researchers associated with HIMB are allowed to collect specimens from the refuge. The island itself covers approximately 29 acres, with 6 acres enclosed in lagoons that are used for keeping organisms in captivity for study.

HIMB provides research facilities for its faculty and students, who come from all over the world. Ongoing research at HIMB covers many disciplines of tropical marine science. Graduate and undergraduate students conducting research on Coconut Island are most often enrolled in the departments of Zoology and Oceanography at the University of Hawai'i, but also include students from a variety of departments and programs across campus such as the departments of Microbiology, Molecular Biosciences and Bioengineering (MBBE), Human Nutrition, Food and Animal Sciences (HNFAS), and the Global Environmental Sciences program at the department of Oceanography.

Enhancement of the facilities to support these activities is surely needed and supporting SB 2482 will enable the University to pursue that goal.