

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



SB 2672 – RELATING TO GRADUATE LOAN PROGRAMS

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
January 30, 2008 at 1:15 pm

by

Karen C. Lee
Interim Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
University of Hawaii System

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

The purpose of SB 2672 Relating to Graduate Loan Programs, is to establish a five-year pilot loan program and special fund for qualified students in the areas of physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech language pathology, and school psychology. Qualified individuals must also agree to work in those fields in the State of Hawai'i for at least three years after completion of the graduate program.

The University of Hawai'i appreciates the intent of the Legislature to provide financial support to students who wish to become rehabilitation therapists and incentives to work in the State of Hawai'i. However, the University cannot support this bill because of the extensive administrative hardship this will place on our various offices to track non-UH students in their programs and beyond graduation over three years, and to administer such a loan. With our current capacity of staffing and resources, we would not be able to develop and maintain such a program at the appropriate level.

The private banking and loan industry sector may be a more appropriate place in which to initiate such a program. With limited resources, the University would not be able to adequately administer the program as would a private corporation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.