



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Water and Land,
Senate Committee on Tourism and Hawaiian Affairs,
Senate Committee on Higher Education

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SB 755 – RELATING TO LANDS CONTROLLED BY THE STATE

Aloha Chairs Solomon, Galuteria and Taniguchi and members of the committees:

The University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu **strongly opposes** this measure because it seeks to reverse the amendments this body worked so hard to put in place during the 25th state legislative session. In 2010, the Senate committees on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs, Judiciary and Government Operations and Ways and Means fully supported a measure that narrowed the application of the legislative approval process to those transactions involving *ceded* lands. It was under HB 2561 (2010) that these Senate committees reported out that they acknowledged that the Campbell Estate gifted **non-ceded** lands to the University of Hawai'i for the specific purpose of building the West O'ahu campus. They understood that portions of the gifted lands surrounding the campus were to be sold to expedite the financing of construction. The committee report reflected all of this as well as the Senate committee's recognition of the fact that the legislative approval process may cause delays in sales and adversely impact the campus.

HB 2561 was supported by seven (7) different state agencies including: the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the State Department of Land and Natural Resources, the State Department of Agriculture, and the State Attorney General's office. The Attorney General went on record stating that Act 176, SLH 2009, extended the time required to complete capital improvement projects that require land dedications to satisfy federal funding requirements, or participate in joint ventures with private developers. The joint committees sent HB 2561 to the full senate for third reading and all 25 senators at the time voted in favor of passing this bill, which eventually became Act 56, SLH 2010, to restore the law regarding non-ceded lands back to what it was prior to the passage of Act 176. The intent of Act 176 was to impose legislative oversight on sales and gifts of certain state-owned lands that were crown lands prior to August 15, 1895.

UH West O'ahu strongly opposes SB 755. The flexibility to proceed in a timely and efficient manner to take advantage of market conditions and generate revenues from land sales without the lengthy legislative review and approval process is especially critical for our new and growing campus out in Kapolei. ***We respectfully urge you to hold this measure.***

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.