



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Thursday, February 7, 2013  
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By  
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SB 967 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Taniguchi and Vice Chair Kahele and Members of Senate Committee on Higher Education:

I am submitting written testimony on behalf of the University of Hawai'i regarding Senate Bill 967 – Relating to the University of Hawai'i which proposes to amend Chapter 304A, HRS, by adding a new section to part III, by requiring the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents to submit to the Legislature for approval salary proposals equal to or in excess of two times the governor's salary.

The University of Hawai'i respectfully opposes the passage of the proposed legislation.

Currently there are a total of thirty three (33) university employees who would fall under this category:

- Three (3) are athletic coaches [two (2) football and one (1) basketball];
- Thirteen (13) are Unit 7 faculty members (Researchers and Professors) who work in the John A. Burns School of Medicine, Cancer Research Center, Institute for Astronomy, and the School of Ocean and Earth Science Technology; and
- Seventeen (17) are Executives, including, the President, some Vice Presidents, the Chancellors of Mānoa and UH-Hilo, the Deans of the Medical School, Cancer Center, Law School, Engineering, Business, Nursing, Astronomy, some Vice Chancellors at UH Mānoa, and the Athletic Director.

The university's faculty and administrators are our primary assets and the principal source and means by which the university carries out its mission. These key individuals provide leadership to enable the University to achieve its mission, vision, and goals in academics, research, sciences, and athletics. Senior academic positions such as President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Chancellors and Deans are typically

recruited through national searches in which the University competes to attract and acquire personnel with demonstrated competence and experience.

For a majority of these positions, the search process includes assessment and evaluation by a search advisory committee representing various constituents, an initial interview, and follow up campus visits. The campus visits include meetings with the faculty senate, department members, faculty and staff, and administrators in addition to a public presentation on a relevant topic. This process provides the opportunity for all stakeholders to evaluate the candidates and provide feedback to the search committee who then make the recommendation to the respective hiring authority.

In order to be competitive, the University must conduct these searches efficiently and provide timely feedback to candidates. Vacancies must be addressed promptly to ensure stability and continuity of the university's operations, programs, and functions. Given the length of the candidate review process, it is critical to determine employment terms and conditions and negotiate salaries in a timely manner or risk losing qualified and experienced candidates to other institutions. The University's approach to compensation is based on a review of the position responsibilities, the demonstrated competence and experience of the individual under consideration, and a review of the competitive markets and institutions. Having such authority transferred to the Legislature with an open window of only four months of the year and the requirement that such offers would need two-thirds majority approval will severely impact the University's ability to attract and retain candidates as it may require up to eight months before the Legislature would be able to review and approve.

This bill would negatively impact the University's ability to recruit and acquire highly qualified faculty and administrators in the competitive market of higher education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.