



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Higher Education Committee  
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By  
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SB 967 SD2 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i continues to have grave concerns regarding SB 967 SD2 and therefore opposes it.

This bill would require the Board of Regents to submit to the legislature for approval salary range proposals equal to or in excess of two times the governor's salary prior to recruiting for such positions. Currently there are a total of 33 university employees whose positions would be affected by this bill:

- Three are athletic coaches (two football and one basketball);
- Thirteen 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 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 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. Such positions are typically recruited through national searches in which the University competes to attract and acquire personnel with demonstrated competence and experience.

The university appreciates the Committee on Higher Education's effort to address our concerns with the prior version of this bill. However, the current version would also have severe unintended consequences that would seriously affect our ability to recruit for these positions. Vacancies are often not predictable in advance. If one of the affected positions became vacant soon after the end of the legislative session, the university would be unable to commence recruitment until after the end of the following session, which could lead to extended vacancies or interim appointments to these critical

positions. Inability to timely fill vacancies in academic leadership would seriously affect the University's operations and would also raise significant accreditation concerns.

We respectfully submit that the Board continues to be the appropriate body to determine the salaries of the University's employees, including its most senior executives, faculty, and coaches.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this.