



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Veterans, Military, & International Affairs,
& Culture and the Arts
March 13, 2013 at 8:30 a.m.
By Gene I. Awakuni
Chancellor, University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu

SB1317 SD2 – RELATING TO THE JAPANESE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN HAWAII

Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito and Members of the Committee:

UH West O'ahu supports the intent of SB 1317 SD2 provided its passage does not adversely impact other priorities of the University's budget. Locating a Nisei Veterans Legacy Center in West O'ahu near the University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu would complement academic and research programs offered at the university including, but not limited to the Center for Labor Education and Research's Labor Archives and the Henry Giugni film collection.

This bill appropriates an unspecified sum for the planning, design, and construction of the Nisei Veterans Legacy Center and a Honouliuli Park Site Project Advisory Group with release of the appropriation subject to matching funds. Although the bill calls for the University to be the expending agency for appropriations made to support the Honouliuli Park Site Advisory Group, we believe ***funding should be appropriated directly to the Advisory Group via grant funds.***

The establishment of a Nisei Veterans Legacy Center would create a facility dedicated to researching, preserving, and interpreting the history of 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, Military Intelligence Service, and the 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion to develop deeper understandings of their unique place in history. Additionally, the Honouliuli Internment Camp is a major historical site located on property currently owned by Monsanto in West O'ahu. The United States National Park Service, Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i, University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu, the State of Hawai'i, Monsanto, and other stakeholders are working to preserve the history and share the legacy of Americans of Japanese ancestry who were detained in these internment camps during World War II.

UH West O'ahu supports SB 1317 SD2 provided its passage does not replace other priorities in the University's budget.