



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Economic Development and Technology
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by
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WRITTEN ONLY

GM 614 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the High Technology Development Corporation, Gubernatorial Nominee, John Morton, for a term to expire 6-30-2019.

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Slom, and members of the committee:

It is with great pleasure that I submit this testimony for Dr. John F. Morton in strong support of his recent nomination to the High Technology Development Corporation Board.

I have had the privilege of working with Dr. Morton for a number of years, both in my previous capacity as associate vice chancellor for research and graduate education at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and currently as vice president for research and innovation for the University of Hawai'i System. Dr. Morton is a strong advocate of research and technology, whether in his role as UH vice president for Community Colleges or as the UH representative on the HTDC Board.

Dr. Morton has displayed excellent stewardship of the seven campuses and has positioned them as enriching places for student's to earn a two-year associate's degree/certificate or to build a strong academic foundation in pursuit of a baccalaureate education at a four-year campus like UH Mānoa, UH Hilo, UH West O'ahu or on the mainland. He has a deep understanding of academics and its far-reaching benefits on both our students and the community.

My office is currently engaged with the local business community on the Hawai'i Innovation Initiative, a bold economic stimulus movement, to help create a diversified economy for the state through the successful commercialization of UH research. Under Dr. Morton charge, our seven community colleges have received numerous workforce development grants from U.S. Department of Labor of more than \$37 million and he has overseen the ramp up of their STEM programs to provide a qualified, highly trained workforce for the state.

Dr. Morton started his UH career at Leeward Community College as a member as the chemistry and political science faculty, became dean of students and later went on to

serve as chancellor of Kapi'olani Community College. His enduring success indicates to me that he is quite astute in his understanding of the culture of the islands, UH culture and the subtleties of local politics. In my dealings with him, I have found Dr. Morton to be an intelligent thinker and a quick-study with an engaging and open management style. He is a consummate and knowledgeable professional.

Beyond UH, Dr. Morton is quite accomplished as well, serving as a board chair of ASSETS School, chair of the Hawai'i Health Information Corporation, a governor of the Pacific & Asian Affairs Council, and as a member of the P-20 Advisory Council

It is with strong support that I recommend that Dr. John F. Morton be appointed to the HTDC Board.