



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs
And
Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts
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by
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SB 661 – RELATING TO UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS TEST SITES

Chairs Espero and Taniguchi, Vice Chairs Baker and Inouye, and members of the committees:

The University of Hawai'i supports SB661 relating to unmanned aerial systems (UAS) test sites -- which proposes to establish the chief operating officer position, establish an advisory board to oversee and manage the test site operations, and appropriates the funds to staff and operate Hawai'i's unmanned aerial systems test site activities.

As a research institution that specializes in technologies and activities related to UAS, the University of Hawai'i supports this bill and perceives it as an opportunity for advancements in innovation, commercialization, and economic development. Hawai'i offers unique qualities to support the operations of a UAS such as its location within the Pacific and its proximity to the U.S. Pacific Command and other military test sites; and is considered to be an attractive location to the UAS industry for real development.

With the current organization and implementation of the Hawai'i/Alaska/Oregon Pan-Pacific Unmanned Aerial Systems Test Range Complex, it is essential that the UAS in Hawai'i be provided the resources to remain an active participant. The University of Hawai'i sees great value and potential in assisting with the establishment of UAS test sites due to its positive impacts for our state which range from emergency search and rescue operations, fisheries management, agricultural monitoring, reef health surveys, lava flow monitoring, disaster management and damage assessment, land use surveys, watershed management, mapping of coastal topography, and many other applications.

The University of Hawai'i appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony and urges the committee to pass this measure.