UNIVERSITY OF HAWAIʻI SYSTEM
Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs
and
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
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SB 2162 – RELATING TO HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE

Chairs Shimabukuro, Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair English and members of the committees:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on SB 2162. The Hawaiʻinuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa and Ka Haka Ula O Keʻelikōlani College of Hawaiian Language at UH Hilo support the appropriation of funds to establish long-term Hawaiian language resources and capacity building to train experts in the Hawaiian language field proposed in SB 2162. We urge our State legislators to support this measure as it promotes the use of the Native Hawaiian language (ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi) in the business of governance, economy, business and communications in ways that perpetuate Hawaiʻi's cultural legacy of language and knowledge into the present and future. Additionally, the bill supports the carrying out of Hawaiʻi State Constitution Article XV, Section IV:

> OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
> **Section 4.** English and Hawaiian shall be the official languages of Hawaii, except that Hawaiian shall be required for public acts and transactions only as provided by law. [Add Const Con 1978 and election Nov 7, 1978]

Under the auspices of this constitutional article, the State of Hawaiʻi has committed to ensure the vitality of the Hawaiian Language. Currently the Hawaiʻi State Senate presents some of its materials with English and Hawaiian headings, such as the Senate Order of the Day. Some senators also have letterhead, business cards, and other materials in both languages. The forward-looking SB 2162 has the promise to:

- Support schools that utilize ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi as the primary means of instruction or as an integral part of a Hawaiian culture-based curriculum to improve the academic achievement of Native Hawaiian children and youth by, for example, strengthening the training of teachers in post-secondary education programs.

- Strengthen and sustain the teaching and use of ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi in educational programs by supporting, for example, the curriculum development and best practices work provided by UH Hilo's Hale Kuamoʻo and the new system-wide Institute of Hawaiian Language Research and Translation.
- Increase the use and the study of the Hawaiian language by preparing students for careers in which ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi is used, professionalizing and recognizing the economic value of the language, and urging and enabling more local and state agencies to use/include ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi in their documents, materials, and daily practices. Integrating the efforts of the Institute of Hawaiian Language Research and Translation, the Hale Kuamoʻo and the Lexicon Committee would support this effort.
- Strengthen the vitality of Hawaiian language use throughout the state as evidenced in the growing number of Hawaiian speaking homes and intergenerational use of the language.
- Embody many of the goals of the Hawaiʻi Language Roadmap Initiative, which was established to produce and foster sufficient bilingual resources for language needs of the near future in government, medicine, law, judiciary and community.

Given these reasons, we hope you will agree that SB 2162 is necessary and a positive move forward in support of revitalizing the Native Hawaiian language.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.