

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

3133

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 24 2006

RE: H.C.R. No. 137

Honorable Robert Bunda
President of the Senate
Twenty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2006
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Higher Education, to which was referred H.C.R. No. 137 entitled:

"HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION URGING THE PRESIDENT AND THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO REAFFIRM THEIR COMMITMENT TO MAINTAINING A SYSTEMWIDE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS AND TO FILL THE VACANT POSITION OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to urge the President and the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii to reaffirm their commitment to maintaining a systemwide Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and to fill the vacant position of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Testimony in support of the measure was submitted by the Hawaii Commission for National and Community Service, the Associated Students of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Hawaii, the University of Hawaii at Hilo Student Association, and four individuals. The Manoa Faculty Senate Executive Committee opposed the measure. The President of the University of Hawaii System offered comments.

Your Committee finds that there is agreement among all parties that attention to the needs of students is paramount, for students are the very reason the University exists. Your Committee further finds that a Vice President for Student Affairs is an essential resource for student advocacy, demonstrating a

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visible and pragmatic commitment to student affairs at the highest level of the University administration. Nevertheless, your Committee finds that the administration is proceeding with a "devolution initiative" under which the class specifications for the student affairs position will be revised to reflect a separation of the Manoa campus from the system administration. While your Committee recognizes that the subject of this concurrent resolution is a matter of internal management policy within the University, your Committee shares the concerns of the students and others who testified that a strong voice of advocacy for student interests is needed at the system level as well as on individual campuses.

Your Committee is very concerned that some members of the University administration and faculty appear fundamentally to misunderstand the nature and purpose of a legislative resolution. Far from being an attempt to dictate that the University "fill a particular position" or make an "unexamined commitment" to maintain the office of Vice President for Student Affairs, your Committee simply wishes to express its intent that, after duly considering all relevant options, the University continue to provide a system-wide advocate for student concerns at the highest level. Your Committee finds that otherwise, the students' voice may become lost within the University administration.

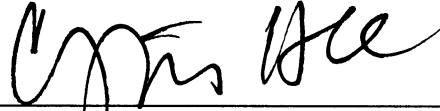
Your Committee finds the President's comments on the University's exclusive constitutional jurisdiction over its internal structure, management, and operations troublesome. Your Committee notes that this measure was introduced by, among others, the Speaker, Vice Speaker, and Chair of the Higher Education Committee of the House of Representatives, and was adopted by the House on a forty-eight to zero vote with only three members excused. Your Committee wishes to remind the University administration that pursuant to the State Constitution, it is the Legislature which appropriates funds to, and maintains oversight over taxpayer and other expenditures of, all entities of state government. Accordingly, your Committee emphatically and strongly insists that public funds allocated within the University budget to the position of Vice President of Student Affairs not be used for any other purpose.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Higher Education that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of H.C.R. No. 137, and strongly recommends its adoption.



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Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Higher Education,



CLAYTON HEE, Chair



