

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I SYSTEM

LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



HB 2393, HD1 Relating to the University of Hawaii

Written Testimony for the
House Committee on Higher Education

February 12, 2008 at 2:15 p.m.

by

Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor

and

Dr. Gary K. Ostrander

Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education &
Interim Dean for the John A. Burns School of Medicine

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

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Chair Chang, Vice Chair Bertram, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. Unfortunately, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa can only support the intent of the bill at this time because of our pressing priorities, such as our tremendous need for repairs and maintenance and health and safety issues, which are critical to our ability to perform our core mission for the State of Hawai'i. We are grateful to the Legislature's attention to these needs. We recognize that you have many priorities and issues to weigh for the state, so the following substantive information on this program is provided to assist you in your decision-making process.

It is appropriate to consider medical school loan programs for doctors that commit to serving in the rural/underserved areas of the State of Hawai'i. This legislation will bolster application interest in the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) and will likely lead to more doctors practicing in rural/underserved areas of Hawai'i.

A potential concern with the program would be ensuring recruitment of doctors in areas of specialty such as family medicine that best serve the needs of these rural/underserved communities.

There also remain issues of monitoring and implementation. The language of the current bill reads that the responsibility will fall to the University's Board of Regents to administer the program. The University currently does not have the infrastructure to track and administer such a program which would place extensive administrative hardship on our various offices.

Enacting this bill would be a positive step toward providing care to underserved people in Hawai'i. However, in its present form it is not likely to be fully effective in solving the problem it seeks to address.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, we appreciate all interest in the University, and want to emphasize that we will be able to perform better in all arenas and best serve the state with support of the current campus priorities approved by the Board of Regents.

**TESTIMONY OF ROBERT TOYOFUKU ON BEHALF OF THE CONSUMER
LAWYERS OF HAWAII (CLH) IN SUPPORT OF H.B. NO. 2393, HD 1**

February 12, 2008

To: Chairman Jerry Chang and Members of the House Committee on Higher Education:

My name is Bob Toyofuku and I am presenting this testimony on behalf of the Consumer Lawyers of Hawaii (CLH) in support of H.B. No. 2393, HD 1.

CLH agrees with and supports the purpose of the bill which attempts to create a loan repayment program for the University of Hawaii Medical School graduates who work in the rural areas of the state. CLH has always advocated for alternatives to provide health care in the underserved and rural areas especially on the neighbor islands.

CLH has submitted testimony in prior sessions advocating for alternatives such as this to create incentives to increase the number of physicians that would practice in our rural or underserved areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.