

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
February 12, 2008 at 2:15 pm

by

Karen C. Lee

Interim Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, University of Hawai'i System

HB 2588, HD 1 – Relating to the University of Hawai'i

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

The purpose of HB 2588, HD1 is to grant resident tuition to veterans at the University of Hawai'i.

While the University appreciates the outstanding service that military veterans have provided to our country, we are opposed to this bill for both administrative and substantive reasons.

First of all, section 304A-402, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, is not an appropriate place to amend language to include veterans. It defines residency for tuition purposes at the University of Hawai'i. All ten campuses of the UH System use this definition, along with Hawai'i Administrative Rules which further delineate the policies of residency for tuition purposes, to determine whether a student is deemed a resident or non-resident in paying tuition. To amend this section would change the intent of the language to define residency for tuition purposes.

The Hawai'i Revised Statutes used to include a section which listed categories of students who *were waived the non-resident tuition differential*, which allowed them to pay in-state tuition. This is a different status than allowing them to be categorized as Hawai'i residents for tuition purposes. This section of HRS was recently repealed and more appropriately placed in UH Board of Regents policy. The pertinent section is attached. The BOR policy is a more appropriate place in which to amend language to exempt veterans from paying the non-resident tuition differential.

Secondly, and more substantively, as stated, the University has categories of students who are already afforded the privilege of paying resident tuition through an exemption of the non-resident tuition differential. Their waived non-resident tuition differential is foregone revenues for the University. Included in this privilege are active duty military and their dependents, and non-resident National Guard members and reservists.

Veterans, through the Federal Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) program, receive up to 36 months of education benefits. This benefit may be used for degree and certificate programs, flight training, apprenticeship/on-the-job training and correspondence courses. Even remedial, deficiency, and refresher courses may be approved under certain circumstances. Generally, benefits are payable for 10 years following release from active duty.

Because veterans have the opportunity of special funding for their education, and because they also have the option of returning to their home of record and pay in-state tuition there, the University opposes passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Attachment

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2588, HD1
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

FEBRUARY 12, 2008

BY

OFFICE OF VETERANS' SERVICES

Good morning Chair Cindy Evans, Vice Chair Sharon Har, and members of the Committee.

I am Mark Moses, Director for the Office of Veterans' Services (OVS). We strongly support the intent of House Bill 2588, HD1, as long as it does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in the Executive Supplemental Budget Request.

We share this Legislature's interest in residence for tuition fee purposes to veterans who have served our country honorably and want to attend any campus of the University of Hawaii system. We question the 36-month limitation, because it raises questions about when the 36-month starts – at application, or acceptance, or when the person moves to Hawaii and what happens if there is an education break. This portion of the legislation should be clarified or deleted.

We defer to the University of Hawaii to determine the cost implications of implementing this program.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit testimony.

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TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM M, BASS, CDR, CEC, USN Ret
House Committee on Higher Education hearing.
on House Bill 2588, H.D.1
Relating to the University of Hawaii
On
February 12, 2008

Representative Jerry L. Chang, Chair
Representative Joe Bertram, III, Vice Chair
House Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 12, 2008 2:15pm Hearing

Chair Chang and Vice Chair Bertram,

As a veteran of 21 years of Naval Service, I support HB 2588 HD1, Relating to the University of Hawaii. This bill would express a small token of our State's appreciation for the sacrifices and service of our veterans. By providing in-State tuition for those who have served honorably, it would be a clear statement of our gratitude.

I am appalled at University of Hawaii's opposition to this bill. While it might deny the University nickels and dimes in revenue, the positive signal it would send would more than offset the losses. Is the University of Hawaii so devoid of those who have served their country honorably that it does not understand the importance of such statements of support? I hope not.

I appeal to the honorable members of this committee to support this Bill and send it forward. It is the least we can do for those who sacrifice so much on a daily basis. Please approve HB2588, HD1.

Most respectfully,

William Martin Bass
Commander, Civil Engineer Corps, USN