

SB 618

Measure Title:

RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Report Title:

University of Hawaii; Veterans; Resident Tuition

Description:

Grants resident status to veterans for tuition purposes at the University of Hawaii system.

STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES
TESTIMONY ON S.B. No. 618, RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS AND ON
HIGHER EDUCATION

FEBRUARY 17, 2009

Good afternoon Chairs Will Espero and Jill Tokuda, Vice-Chairs Robert Bunda and Norman Sakamoto, and members of the Senate Committees on Public Safety and Military Affairs and on Higher Education.

I am Mark Moses, Director of the Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate this opportunity to comment on SB 618, which grants resident status to veterans for tuition purposes at the University of Hawaii. OVS supports the intent of the bill, as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Years 2009-2010.

Given our current economic circumstances, it may not be practical to implement this measure at this time. It most definitely is a matter worthy of consideration when the state's fiscal situation improves.

Thank you for allowing me to present the Veterans' perspective on this issue. I will respond to any questions.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs & Committee on Higher Education
February 17, 2009 at 2:30 pm

by

Karen C. Lee

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

SB 618 – Relating to the University of Hawai'i

Chairs Espero and Tokuda and Members of the Committees:

The purpose of SB618 is to grant resident status to veterans for tuition purposes at the University of Hawai'i.

The University appreciates the outstanding service that military veterans have provided to our country, and we do support the overall intent of this bill as long as the legislature is able to adequately appropriate funds to the University for the forgone revenues from the non-resident tuition differential.

We currently do waive payment of the non-resident tuition differential for active duty military members and their spouses as well as those in the National Guard or reserves, regardless of their residency. This waiver is in UH Board of Regents policy (see attached). In the 2007-08 academic year, this amounted to \$5,171,626 in lost tuition revenues to the University.

Regarding this bill, we offer two administrative points of clarification:

1) We respectfully ask that the Legislature not amend the definition of residency for tuition purposes in Section 304A-402 to include veterans, as they should not be deemed a "resident" for admission and tuition coding purposes. The more appropriate terminology for such a measure would be to "waive the non-residential tuition differential for veterans."

2) Being unfamiliar about exactly what types of documents could prove "veteran" status, we humbly suggest that the Hawai'i Office of Veterans Services or some other comparable state office screen for this eligibility for the University and provide us with documents to prove eligibility.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

UH Board of Regents Policy, Chapter 6 Excerpt

Section 6-11 Board Exemptions to Non-Resident Tuition

- a. The students affected by the following guidelines are classified as non-residents for admission and tuition purposes. In accordance with Board of Regents' policy, non-resident students are admitted on a space available basis with the understanding that priority for admission is given to qualified residents.
- b. The following categories of students will receive a waiver of the non-resident tuition differential:
 - (1) East-West Center student grantees pursuing baccalaureate or advanced degrees;
 - (2) United States military personnel stationed in Hawai'i on active duty, and their authorized dependents during the period that the personnel are stationed in Hawai'i;
 - (3) Members of the Hawai'i National Guard and the Hawai'i-based Reserves;
 - (4) Native Hawaiians whose domicile is outside of Hawai'i;
 - (5) Employees of the university, their spouses, and their dependents.
- c. Citizens from an eligible Pacific Island district, commonwealth, territory, or insular jurisdiction, state, or nation which provides no public higher education institution granting baccalaureate degrees are charged 150 percent of the resident tuition rate. The Office of the President updates and distributes the list of eligible Pacific Island jurisdictions.