



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Senate Committee on Education and Housing
March 23, 2010 at 1:15 p.m.

by
John Morton
Vice President for Community Colleges, University of Hawai'i

SCR 103 REQUESTING A REPORT ON THE FEASIBILITY OF CREATING A
VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL EDUCATION LEARNING CENTER AT
HONOLULU COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Chairs Tokuda, Sakamoto, Vice Chair Kidani and Members of the Committees:

I am here today to support SCR 103 that requests a feasibility study for the creation of a vocational/technical education learning center at Honolulu Community College (HCC). As pointed out in the resolution, HCC has a number of unique programs that could provide young people the opportunity to qualify for jobs that provide excellent careers and also pay above average wages. It is also important to note that the greatest percentage of its current workforce aged 55 or older qualified for their jobs by completing a career/technical degree from HCC. Therefore, we feel that this will more likely provide employment opportunities when the economy recovers.

There are a few minor editorial changes in the description of the programs at HCC that I would be happy to consult with the committees' staff to modify.

Date: 03/23/2010

Committee: Senate Education and Housing
Senate Higher Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SCR 103 Requesting a Report on the Feasibility of Creating a Vocational/Technical Education Learning Center at Honolulu Community College

Purpose of Bill: Requests a report on the feasibility of creating a vocational/technical education learning center at Honolulu Community College.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) supports SCR 103, which requests that the Department and the Honolulu Community College convene a task force to discuss and report on the feasibility of creating a Department of Education Vocational/Technical Education Learning Center at the Honolulu Community College.

Good afternoon, Senators. My name is Joanne Swearingen, retired from the Department of Education and the proud parent of two public high school graduates. I would like to testify in support of SCR 103, Requesting a Report on the Feasibility of Creating a Vocational/Technical Education Learning Center at Honolulu Community College.

I am currently a member of the Kaimuki High School School Community Council and Kaimuki High School PTA, serving as its Scholarship Chairperson. One son graduated from Kaimuki High School in 2001 and because I like the school, I have continued to be involved with it. My son Daniel attended Loyola Marymount University (LMU) in Los Angeles, graduated in four years and received his Master's in Counseling from LMU in two years. He is currently working as a counselor in Hawthorne, California. However, his best friends who also graduated with him from Kaimuki High have not yet achieved their career goals. One is driving a trolley, another is going from job to job, a third is about to finish his teaching credential requirements at U.H. The first two attended community college for a couple of semesters but couldn't find a career direction that appealed to them.

I think that a program like the proposed vocational/technical education learning center at Honolulu Community College would have provided his good friends and his other classmates at Kaimuki with options that they could have pursued beginning in high school. It's too late for Daniel's good friends but I hope that you will pass this resolution so that perhaps in the near future we can help other Honolulu district students in choosing and successfully achieving their career goals.

Thank you very much for your consideration.