
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TUITION WAIVERS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that there is a need to
2 require the University of Hawaii system to provide higher
3 education tuition waivers to all enrolled students who are native
4 Hawaiian, as defined in section 10-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

5 Native Hawaiian students comprise approximately twenty-six
6 per cent of Hawaii's public school population and more than
7 eighty-five per cent of those native Hawaiian students finish
8 high school. However, while about half of all native Hawaiian
9 high school graduates go on to attend college, native Hawaiians
10 have the lowest college graduation rates of all ethnic groups in
11 Hawaii. Of those who are able to attend college, far fewer
12 actually graduate with a college degree than students from any
13 other ethnic group in the State. According to the University of
14 Hawaii's institutional research office, native Hawaiians account
15 for only fourteen per cent of the total University of Hawaii
16 student population, which is a figure that includes all native
17 Hawaiians attending the system's three four-year and seven two-
18 year campuses. Further, while more than eighty per cent of the



1 University of Hawaii system's non-native-Hawaiian students
2 return for a second year of college, the percentage of native
3 Hawaiian students returning to college for a second year is
4 nearly ten per cent lower.

5 The low college matriculation and retention rates of native
6 Hawaiians throughout the University of Hawaii system seriously
7 impact the ability of native Hawaiians to complete college and
8 earn a degree. Nationwide, more native Hawaiians have dropped
9 out of college than have earned either a two-year associate or
10 four-year baccalaureate degree. According to the 2000 United
11 States census, even though twenty-five per cent of all native
12 Hawaiians have earned some college credits, most have not
13 completed their undergraduate degrees, and only fifteen per cent
14 of all native Hawaiians have earned at least a bachelor's
15 degree.

16 The statistics are even more troubling for native Hawaiians
17 attempting to attain the highest academic degrees in their
18 fields, including master's, professional, and doctorate degrees.
19 Only three and two-tenths per cent of native Hawaiians statewide
20 have earned a graduate degree of any kind, compared with eight
21 and four-tenths per cent of all Hawaii residents and eight and
22 nine-tenths per cent of the total United States population.



1 Further, only three and six-tenths per cent of the current
2 doctoral candidates at the University of Hawaii are native
3 Hawaiian and nearly seventy per cent of them do not receive any
4 type of financial aid or tuition waivers.

5 The academic stress of earning a college degree is
6 dramatically increased for many native Hawaiian students by high
7 levels of economic stress. Statistically, Hawaiians attending
8 the University of Hawaii are, on average, far more affected by
9 negative economic indicators than students from other ethnic
10 groups. For example, native Hawaiian students who do complete
11 their degrees take, on the average, a full year longer to do so
12 than students of other ethnic groups and many native Hawaiian
13 students must work full- or part-time jobs while attempting to
14 complete their college degrees. This slower-than-average
15 completion rate is due primarily to the consequences of native
16 Hawaiians' poor access to available socio-economic resources,
17 combined with their ongoing need to produce income for
18 themselves and their families and Hawaii's high cost of living.

19 The low numbers of native Hawaiians with college and
20 professional degrees seriously affects the ability of Hawaii's
21 indigenous people to participate in the State's higher education
22 system as professors, deans, administrators, and policy makers.



1 At the University of Hawaii at Manoa, only four per cent of all
2 faculty positions are held by native Hawaiians and less than one
3 per cent of permanently tenured positions are held by native
4 Hawaiians.

5 The purpose of this Act is to require the University of
6 Hawaii to provide higher education tuition waivers for all
7 enrolled native Hawaiian students. This academic and economic
8 support can have far-reaching positive consequences for the
9 State as a whole. As more native Hawaiians are able to earn
10 college degrees, more native Hawaiians can pursue the highest
11 levels of academic and professional achievement. Through their
12 participation in networks of civic responsibility in the
13 professional, academic, business, and other arenas, native
14 Hawaiian graduates of the University of Hawaii system will be
15 able to contribute more effectively to the economic and social
16 health of the State of Hawaii and of the native Hawaiian
17 peoples. Furthermore, providing tuition waivers to all of its
18 native Hawaiian students can serve as an important instrument by
19 which the university gives concrete expression to, and fosters
20 trust concerning, the State's responsibility to its indigenous
21 people.



1 SECTION 2. Chapter 304A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by adding a new section to part II to be appropriately
3 designated and to read as follows:

4 "§304A- Tuition waivers for native Hawaiians and
5 Hawaiians. Any law to the contrary notwithstanding, the board
6 of regents or its designated representatives shall grant a
7 waiver of all tuition to each and every student enrolled at any
8 of the university system's ten campuses who is native Hawaiian
9 or Hawaiian as defined in section 10-2; provided that a
10 student's possession of a card issued by the office of Hawaiian
11 affairs identifying the student as a person included in the
12 Hawaiian registry under section 10-19 shall constitute
13 conclusive proof that the student is native Hawaiian or
14 Hawaiian."

15 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

16 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

17

INTRODUCED BY:

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By Request

JAN 21 2011



Report Title:

University of Hawaii

Description:

Grants tuition waivers to native Hawaiian students at the University of Hawaii.

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