

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
CIVIL DEFENSE DIVISION

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2075
A BILL RELATING TO THE VETERANS

PRESENTATION TO
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY,
& INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, & CULTURE AND THE ARTS

BY
MAJ GEN DARRYLL D. M. WONG
STATE ADJUTANT GENERAL AND DIRECTOR OF STATE CIVIL DEFENSE
February 5, 2014

Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the House Committee on Veterans, Military, & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts:

I am Maj Gen Darryll D. M. Wong, State Adjutant General and Director of State Civil Defense. I am testifying in **SUPPORT** of House Bill 2075.

The broadening of the eligibility to the tuition assistance program will benefit both the Hawaii National Guard and the State of Hawaii. This expansion will create more opportunities for Hawaii National Guard members to further their education. In turn, this will help Hawaii achieve the "55 by 25 Campaign goal" – 55% of the adult population with a college degree by 2025.

As National Guard mobilizations decline, fewer Guard members will qualify for G.I. Bill benefits. More Guard members will turn to the tuition waiver as the means to work toward their degrees.

Since its inception, the State tuition waiver program has been a major recruiting and retention tool. While some Guard members leave when they receive their degrees, most remain in the Guard to serve their nation and state.

I ask for your support to pass this bill.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in **SUPPORT** of HB 2075.

Testimony

Carswell J. Ross, Jr. M.A., Chief Master Sergeant, USAF Ret.
94-1020 Puana Street
Waipahu, HI 96797

Testimony on House Bill2075, RELATING TO TUITION ASSISTANCE

Presentation to the House Committee on Veterans, Military & International Affairs & Culture
and the Arts

Good morning Chair K. Mark Takai and Vice Chair Ken Ito and members of the Committee on
Veterans, Military & International Affairs & Culture and the Arts

I **support** the intent and substance of HB 2075 which broadens the scope of tuition assistance to Hawaii National Guard members working towards a post-secondary educational degree. Although some members of the Guard may have received a degree, many find that without a specialized degree for example a Master Degree in Business, Education, and Social Services they are not eligible to progress within their field of employment. By enabling these individuals to obtain post-secondary degrees their earning potential will increase and this benefit will cascade as their spouse and children join in the process of seeing a family member succeed through educational endeavors. The family and can I say the society will benefit as these individuals contribute their knowledge and skills to their community. Yes, even the State and County will benefit as the family income increases the tax base rises, discretionary spending increases; choice of foods selected contributes to the growth for local farmers. In short education benefits the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this measure.

Roxanne Kamalu

From: ito3-George
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 10:21 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: FW: veteran students

From: takai4-Michael
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 8:38 AM
To: ito3-George
Subject: FW: veteran students

Hi George,

Below is an email I received in relation to HB2075.

Michael

From: Hilario Franco [<mailto:hbfranco@hawaii.edu>]
Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2014 2:28 PM
To: takai4-Michael
Subject: veteran students

Aloha Mr. Hall,

I am a student-veteran (as well as a husband and father and Army reservist) who spoke with you over the phone a few days ago regarding my concerns over the narrowness of bills HB158 and HB2075. I am afraid that many student-veterans such as myself would fall between the cracks and not receive educational assistance with the way those bills are worded.

My particular situation is that I was living in Hawaii in 2002 and then joined the US Navy to help out with the War on Terrorism. I served honorably, was discharged and started attending classes at UH Manoa. I used my 36 months of Post 9/11 GI Bill benefit and still have about a year left to complete my bachelor's degree. I enlisted in the Army Reserve and was just recently approved to receive the Reserve GI Bill.

As I'm sure you know, the Reserve GI Bill gives nowhere near the financial assistance of the Post 9/11 GI Bill. Just to continue my education, my wife and I were forced to apply for food stamps and TANF-FTW benefits. Fortunately we were approved for those benefits, but understandably are only barely surviving with these benefits in addition to my Army Reserve drill pay and Federal work study.

Any tuition or educational assistance would be welcome for someone in my shoes, and if someone like me was excluded simply on the basis of being in a different Reserve component of the Armed Forces (such as in the above stated bills), that seems a bit arbitrary and unfair. Look at the example of states such as Texas (with the Hazlewood Act) that provide free tuition to military veterans. That example seems like it would help many more people in Hawaii than just National Guard members. It would certainly help me. Why not have a bill that would provide tuition assistance to all Hawaii veterans and/or reservists?

Please contact me if you have any questions at: 808-589-6771 or here at this email address.

Mahalo,
Hilario Franco

Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 4:12 PM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: grant.chartrand@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2075 on Feb 5, 2014 08:30AM

HB2075

Submitted on: 2/3/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 5, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Grant Chartrand	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support HB2075 to broaden access to tuition assistance to all Guard members looking to attend an authorized post-secondary educational institution in Hawaii. I would like to see more Guard members take advantage of graduate education (MA/MS, JD, PhD, etc.) as well. Hawaii will benefit when the level of educational attainment of Guard members increases.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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Headquarters: Department of State of Hawaii
438 Hobron Lane, Suite 407
Honolulu, Hawaii 96815

February 4, 2014

**Testimony in Support of HOUSE BILL 2075
Relating to Tuition Assistance
Before the
House Committee On Veterans, Military, & International Affairs,
& Culture and the Arts
Hearing On Wednesday, February 5, 2014, 8:30 A.M.
In Conference Room 312**

Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito and Committee Members,

The Department of Hawaii, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) represents 3,800 members in 20 Posts located throughout the State of Hawaii. VFW is a federally chartered national association of soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen who have served the United States of America in wars, campaigns, and expeditions on foreign soil or in hostile waters.

H.B. 2075 broadens the scope of tuition assistance for Hawaii National Guard members working toward a post-secondary educational degree with priority given under specified conditions. It appropriates up to \$1,000,000 out of General Fund revenues for fiscal year 2014-2015.

This bill prioritizes the tuition assistance from the “bottom up”—offering financial aid first to enlisted personnel, then to warrant and commissioned officers. It opens the educational opportunities to guardsmen also studying at other than University of Hawaii campuses.

By helping Hawaii Army and Air National Guard members to improve themselves, taxpayers will benefit by having better educated and, thus, better qualified personnel serving them in defending Hawaii and the United States.

VFW Hawaii members are grateful for your efforts to provide this opportunity to members of the Hawaii National Guard to enhance their education at any college or university in Hawaii.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 524.

Lawrence M.G. Enomoto

Lawrence M.G. Enomoto
VFW Hawaii State Legislative Liaison

Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 12:01 PM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: sonnyfernan@msn.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2075 on Feb 5, 2014 08:30AM

HB2075

Submitted on: 2/4/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 5, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stanley Y. Fernandez Sr.	Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States	Support	No

Comments: In full support of this measure.

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Position Paper

Subject: Hawaii National Guard Tuition Assistance funding

1. Purpose: Recommend eligible institutions for Hawaii National Guard Tuition Assistance be expanded to include other accredited higher education institutions located and authorized to operate in the State of Hawaii.
2. Key Points:
 - a. Hawaii National Guard Tuition Assistance can only currently be used toward University of Hawaii (UH) system institutions.
 - b. One reason for this is due to the relative low cost of resident tuition at UH system schools
 - c. Schools with Memoranda of Understanding on Hawaii military bases have tuition comparable to the UH system and in some cases cheaper.

3. Discussion

- a. Schools that are MOU'd on Hawaii's military bases have tuition comparable to or lower in some cases to UH system schools. For example, Hawaii Pacific University (HPU) has been serving the military in Hawaii since the mid-1970s and offers the military highly discounted tuition compared to its main campus through its Military Campus Programs (MCP) which offers about 1,000 courses per year on Hawaii's military bases and online.

HPU-MCP tuition 2013-14:
\$250 per credit hour

UH System Tuition 2013-14:
UH Manoa, \$381 per credit hour
UH West Oahu \$254 per credit hour
Community College, \$106 per credit hour

Other MOU schools on Hawaii's Military Bases also have a discounted tuition rate for military generally around \$250 per credit. Other schools offering classes on Hawaii's bases include Chaminade University, Wayland Baptist University, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, and Central Texas College among others.

- b. The programs of the schools with MOUs on Hawaii's military bases are designed to help military students succeed. For example, HPU-MCP's degree programs which include majors such as Business Administration, Computer Science, History, Justice Administration, Psychology, Diplomacy and Military Studies, and International Studies can be completed entirely in the evening after work. They are also scheduled with methods to assist military and adult students to succeed such as with more frequent start dates, accelerated terms that run year round, and are taught professors that are trained to accommodating emergent military duty.
- c. In addition to having the highest level of academic accreditation, MOU schools are also under the additional oversight of the military base command and Education Service Officer (ESO), as well as a Third Party Assessment program run by the Department of Defense to ensure the schools are offering quality courses and programs to military students.

4. Recommendation

- a. In some cases, the best option for Hawaii National Guard personnel to meet their educational and professional goals may be a school with an MOU on Hawaii's military bases. Recommend that in

in addition to the UH system, the Hawaii National Guard allow its personnel to use Tuition Assistance at schools with MOU's on Hawaii's military bases up to a cap of \$250 per credit.

Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 5:22 PM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: cavinjm@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB2075 on Feb 5, 2014 08:30AM*

HB2075

Submitted on: 2/4/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 5, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James Cavin	Hawaii Alliance of Student Veterans	Support	No

Comments:

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