

**SB 460**

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education and  
Senate Committee on Technology and the Arts  
Tuesday, February 5, 2013 at 2:50pm  
by  
Dr. Joyce N. Chinen  
Director, Center for Okinawan Studies, University of Hawai'i

SB 460 – RELATING TO THE CENTER FOR OKINAWAN STUDIES

Chairs Taniguchi and Wakai, Vice Chairs Kahele and Nishihara, and members of the Committees:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 460 today. I am Dr. Joyce Chinen, Director of the Center for Okinawan Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and I'm grateful for the opportunity to speak today in support of establishing and appropriating sufficient funds for an Okinawan studies Librarian position.

The Center for Okinawan Studies, or COS, at UHM opened its doors in 2008, and it is one of eight centers located in the School of Pacific and Asian Studies. COS' mission is to promote the academic study of Ryukyu, Okinawa and the Okinawan Diaspora and it is currently the only academic center of its kind outside of Japan. COS is uniquely positioned, therefore, to lead in this field, not only in Hawai'i but also nationally and globally.

One of the comparative advantages Okinawan studies at UHM enjoys is its unique library collections and a local Okinawan community which is, as many of you know, committed to preserving and perpetuating its culture. The Sakamaki-Hawley collection, in particular, and the Okinawan collection in general in the UHM Hamilton Library is world-renown, and many scholars come specifically to use the materials in this collection which date back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. What is more, we have many materials which even Okinawa Prefecture no longer possesses because of the destruction caused by the Battle of Okinawa in 1945. That so many Okinawans migrated to Hawaii and elsewhere means that many of the cultural artifacts, and records which were destroyed in Okinawa survived here in Hawai'i and elsewhere around the world. Our library collection, therefore, contains some of the cultural DNA of the Okinawans, and material that cannot be accessed except by coming here. We are also embarking on an ambitious collaborative digitization project which would eventually permit scholars to virtually access a catalog and selective materials from anywhere in the world.

Another advantage has been a supportive community. The Okinawan diaspora is dispersed throughout the world, but the second largest of which can be found in Hawai'i. Some of you know that Okinawa was the first destination of Okinawan immigrants in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and this community played a critical role in the second world war/Pacific war in offering up its sons for military service and in rebuilding Okinawa after the war. But while the local Okinawan community has been supportive, and has done much to carry on the rich performing arts traditions, it relies on scholars to do research and share the insights and information about Okinawa and the Ryukyus' ancient and contemporary concerns.

As the existence of the COS and the Okinawan collections in the Library have become more widely known, scholars from around the globe are coming to visit UHM's library to conduct their research using

these materials. As our collection has grown, and as the demands on the Okinawan collection has increased, it has put tremendous pressure on the Japanese studies librarian. She has had to shoulder this load in addition to her regular duties as Japanese area librarian.

While each of the other eight centers within the SPAS have dedicated Librarians to service their needs, COS has had to rely on the Japanese area studies librarian, Tokiko Bazzell, to collect and manage the Okinawan collection. While she has done a magnificent job, it is both unfair to her, to CJS, and to COS. In essence, we have been stymied in the service of our respective missions because this critical position does not exist. Alternatively, this "world class" collection, if and when staffed by a dedicated librarian, would probably move UHM's library to such a premier status. We therefore ask for your assistance in authorizing and funding an Okinawan studies Librarian position. Thank you for permitting us to share our thoughts and present our case for this Librarian position.

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by

Mary McDonald

Director, Center for Japanese Studies, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB460 Relating to the Center for Okinawan Studies, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Chairs Taniguchi and Wakai, Vice Chairs Kahele and Nishihara, and Committee Members:

I strongly urge your approval of SB460 to appropriate funds for one permanent full time librarian for the Okinawan collection at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

The people of our state have shown great commitment to the study of Okinawa and Japan at UH Mānoa. Some of our world-renown resources for scholarship about Okinawa are the Center for Okinawan Studies, established 2008, and the Sakamaki/Hawley Collection of the Library. The large and rare collection about Okinawa in our library warrants a full time librarian to preserve and disseminate historical and contemporary materials. Each year, scores of students and scholars from Hawai'i and the world wish to use our strong Okinawan collection. To date, other librarians have stretched to preserve and catalog the collection, and to make accessible the rare scrolls and other treasures. In the past year, symposia and exhibits have brought visitors to the collection, and items in the collection have gone to Okinawa and Japan for exhibit, study, and restoration. New courses about Okinawa at UH Mānoa are being added yearly from the research base the library provides. All this activity requires a specialized librarian dedicated to the Okinawan Collection.

As Director of the Center for Japanese Studies, I see the many students, scholars, and community members who recognize the value of these rare materials and use them in publications disseminating Okinawan languages, literature, history, and social studies. A librarian is a necessary building block for such scholarship about Okinawa and our institutional strength at UH Mānoa. The Center for Japanese Studies supports this bill, provided it does not adversely affect our UH priorities as set in our budget request. I respectfully urge your approval of this bill and appropriation.

Mary McDonald, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, Geography  
Director, Center for Japanese Studies  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education and  
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Tuesday, February 5, 2013 at 2:50pm

by  
Lynette Teruya  
Program Coordinator, Center for Okinawan Studies, University of Hawai'i

SB 460 – RELATING TO THE CENTER FOR OKINAWAN STUDIES

Chairs Taniguchi and Wakai, Vice Chairs Kahele and Nishihara, and members of the Committees:

I strongly support this measure and ask for your approval of SB 460 to appropriate funds for one permanent full-time librarian for the Okinawan collection at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

The Center for Okinawan Studies was established in 2008 with support from the Legislature. Its main mission is to promote Okinawan studies and we have been working on many fronts in trying to do that. However, one integral component of Okinawan studies that is still not in place at UH is a librarian position dedicated to the Ryukyuan / Okinawan collections. The librarian is a vital element in the research support that is crucial to the development of Okinawan studies at the University.

Because of the wealth of resources related to Okinawan studies that UH has, many researchers/scholars and institutions have sought to collaborate with UH in many disciplines. The Library has successfully collaborated on numerous occasions with different international institutions regarding its Okinawan studies materials. Therefore, many international scholars visit UH to access its collections and that makes the UH Library an invaluable resource for many. These present a unique advantage for the State and its people to be at the forefront of global exchange. These types of exchanges could be beneficial to the community, especially when they result in important discoveries or technologies.

The librarian would be the steward of valuable knowledge and resources and will be in charge of further developing the collections and managing the existing ones. This research support will allow researchers to be more efficient and productive at doing their respective research by acquiring the tools necessary. We need people to be more productive in research, application, and teaching at UH. There is potential for interdisciplinary studies and to use the Okinawa/Hawaii collaboration to achieve far-reaching results that could benefit not just our two island societies, but others in Asia and the Pacific as well. This would fit in perfectly with the University's mission, as it often prides itself as having strength in Asia-Pacific matters. But again, it involves insuring that we have the right resources and tools by which we are able to produce such results. The Okinawan studies librarian is that valuable resource that could help make that difference.