

SB 2905

Testimony

- Measure Title:** RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.
- Report Title:** University of Hawaii; Asian Americans; Pacific Islanders; Appropriation (\$)
- Description:** Appropriates moneys to SEED at the University of Hawaii to fund 5 graduate assistant and student employee (2.5 FTE) positions to conduct and disseminate research relating to Asian American and Pacific Islander students in higher education, and to provide direct services to undergraduate and graduate students interested in diversity careers relating to student affairs and higher education.
- Companion:** [HB1952](#)
- Package:** None
- Current Referral:** HRE, WAM
- Introducer(s):** TANIGUCHI, KIM, Wakai

Testimony in Support of SB 2905

Submitted by Clifton S. Tanabe

Associate Professor and Lecturer in Law at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

February 7, 2014

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Kahele and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

I support SB 2905. While AAPI groups are among the fastest growing in the country. Many AAPI members continue to struggle with barriers to college access and degree completion. Locally, many AAPI sub group students are underrepresented at our universities. It is imperative that we support those that do attend our universities. This is precisely what the Office of Student Equity, Excellence, and Diversity (SEED) works to accomplish! Through a consistent and sustained effort SEED works both to improve our understanding of what contributes to the college success of AAPI students, and to directly support and address the needs of AAPI students.

Please pass SB 2905. By doing so you will help to ensure the long term success of our local students and the local communities to which they will contribute.

This testimony reflects my personal views and is not the official testimony of the University of Hawai'i.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 11, 2014 at 3:30 pm

by
Dr. Amy Agbayani
Director, Student Equity, Excellence & Diversity
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2905 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Kahele and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

The University of Hawai'i supports SB 2905 which would fund 5 graduate assistants to conduct and disseminate research and support students interested in Asian American and Pacific Islander educational issues as well as careers in higher education and student affairs. Recent research shows AAPIs are underrepresented and underserved in many higher education institutions. AAPIs are only 5% of the nation but are the two fastest growing racial groups in the United States. Hawai'i is the state with the highest proportion of AAPI population and these groups are the majority in the state and the University of Hawai'i.

Funding graduate student assistants will increase the capacity of the Office of Student Equity, Excellence and Diversity at Mānoa to work collaboratively with AAPI scholars nationally and with faculty from academic units at Mānoa and other campuses to address critical issues in higher education, and support careers in student affairs and higher education.

We support the intent of this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in the University's Board of Regents Approved Executive Biennium Budget.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [HRETestimony](#)
Cc: reyesrj@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2905 on Feb 11, 2014 15:30PM
Date: Monday, February 10, 2014 3:05:44 PM

SB2905

Submitted on: 2/10/2014

Testimony for HRE on Feb 11, 2014 15:30PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ruel Reyes	Individual	Support	No

Comments: To the Honorable Chair Brian Taniguchi, Vice Chair Gilbert Kahele, and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education: I am writing this testimony in support of SB2905. Asian American Pacific Islander research and resources that foster diversity in the State of Hawaii are very important, given Hawaii's already rich diversity. Hawaii is a melting pot of families and individuals of asians and pacific islanders and they face many unique barriers to attaining a quality education and meeting their career goals. This is especially so for those who are of the first generation living in the United States and those who are the first generation to graduate high school or go to college. I am one of such individuals. I am currently a first-year medical student at the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine. I am the first in my family to graduate college, and am the first to pursue a professional degree. My journey here has not been without challenges, and it has always been obvious how few resources there are for students such as myself. Research on asian and pacific islander issues, especially in the area of education is greatly needed, and it is important that we determine the barriers that individuals face so that we may address them as a society.

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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SB 2905

LATE

Testimony

Measure Title: RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.

Report Title: University of Hawaii; Asian Americans; Pacific Islanders; Appropriation (\$)

Description: Appropriates moneys to SEED at the University of Hawaii to fund 5 graduate assistant and student employee (2.5 FTE) positions to conduct and disseminate research relating to Asian American and Pacific Islander students in higher education, and to provide direct services to undergraduate and graduate students interested in diversity careers relating to student affairs and higher education.

Companion: [HB1952](#)

Package: None

Current Referral: HRE, WAM

Introducer(s): TANIGUCHI, KIM, Wakai



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2905

Submitted by Doris Ching, Educator

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

February 11, 2014

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Kahele, and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

I fully support Senate Bill 2905. I am deeply grateful to the Senate Committee on Higher Education for this proposed measure that will help to address a critical concern regarding ethnic and racial groups that are underrepresented and underserved in higher education. This legislation will initiate a major step toward greater equity and much needed resources to meet the educational needs of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) groups that are underrepresented in higher education in Hawai'i and the nation. The passage of SB 2905 will enable the conduct and practical application of research, as well as direct support and mentoring of AAPI students for careers in student affairs and higher education. This bill will also increase the awareness of educational support needs of AAPI college students to assure their success on university campuses.

The multiple positive effects of SB 2905 are far-reaching. While the graduate assistants will benefit by the mentorship of faculty who are inspirational role models, the graduate assistants, in turn, will provide mentoring to undergraduate and other graduate students. Thus, the prospect of immeasurable long-term benefits of SB 2904 for developing future generations of AAPI scholars is immense.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are the two fastest growing racial groups in the United States, as confirmed by 2010 U.S. Census data. Yet, Filipino Americans, Southeast Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and low-income AAPIs continue to face inequalities in college access and degree completion. These groups continue to lack visibility and attention in institutions of higher education. There is ongoing need for research and scholarship that inform policies, programs, and practices that will enhance the educational success of AAPI populations that are underrepresented and underserved in higher education. It is most appropriate that Hawai'i, with our high percentage of AAPI populations, and the UH at Mānoa's Student Equity, Excellence and Diversity (SEED) Office, with its locally and nationally respected competence and track record in equity and diversity efforts, lead this project.

I deeply appreciate the Senate Committee on Higher Education for your interest in this important issue. I urge you to pass SB 2905. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important bill.

Testimony in Support of SB 2905

Submitted by Linda Furuto

Associate Professor of Mathematics Education, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

1776 University Avenue, Everly Hall 224, Honolulu, HI 96822

Telephone: 808-956-3359, Email: Ifuruto@hawaii.edu

February 11, 2014

Honorable Chair Brian Taniguchi, Vice Chair Gilbert Kahele, and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

I fully support Senate Bill 2905 and commend the Senate Committee on Higher Education for the proposed measure that will fund the Office of Student Equity, Excellence, and Diversity at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to address a critical need for an underserved and underrepresented group in higher education.

As an educator and a resident of the State of Hawai'i, I urge you to consider measures that will provide resources for the conduct and dissemination of research relating to Asian American and Pacific Islander students in higher education, as well as provide direct support for careers in student affairs and higher education. These are significant measures aimed at addressing a critical need within higher education that will have tremendous returns for our communities.

I urge you to pass Senate Bill 2905 and thank you for your support.

This testimony reflects my personal views and is not official testimony of the University of Hawai'i.



UNIVERSITY
of HAWAII
MĀNOA

February 8, 2014

Testimony in Support of SB 2905
Submitted by Patricia Halagao, Ph.D., Associate Professor
February 11, 2014
3:30pm
State Capitol Conference Room 414

To Chair Brian Taniguchi, Vice Chair Gilbert Kahele, and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

I strongly support Senate Bill 2905 to appropriate moneys to the University of Hawaii, Manoa's Student Equity, Excellence and Diversity (SEED) office to support graduate student funding to conduct and disseminate research relating to Asian American and Pacific Islander students in higher education, and to provide direct services to undergraduate and graduate students interested in diversity careers in student affairs and higher.

As you may know, research shows AAPI's are underrepresented and underserved in higher education. This appropriation of money will support a pathway of graduate students to complete their graduate work as well as to doubly contribute to the dearth of scholarship on AAPI's in higher education.

I know first hand the importance of funding under-represented graduate students. I myself was a recipient of a Minority Graduate Scholarship at the University of Washington's College of Education. I used my graduate fellowship to advance my research on multicultural education in higher education as well as worked as a Research Assistant in our Office of Minority recruitment and retention. I would not have completed my graduate studies without the support of graduate funding. I completed my studies in a timely manner, as well as gave back to an important issue. I now serve on faculty at the University of Hawaii's College of Education.

I hope more graduate students at the University of Hawaii, Manoa may benefit from this specific, yet far-reaching bill. I urge you to pass SB 2905 and thank you for the opportunity to support it.

Though I am employed at the University of Hawaii, my testimony is not the official testimony of UH.

Filipino American Citizens League

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2905

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Feb. 11, 2014, 3:30 p.m. | Hawai'i State Legislature | Room 414

To: Honorable Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair and Honorable Sen. Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair
Honorable Senate Committee Members: Sen. David Y. Ige, Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, **Required parameters are missing or incorrect.**, Sen. Jill Tokuda, Sen. Sam Slom

From: Charlene Cuaresma, Vice President, Filipino American Citizens League

Dear Hon. Sen. Taniguchi, Chair; Hon. Sen. Kahele, Vice Chair; and Hon. Senate Committee Members:

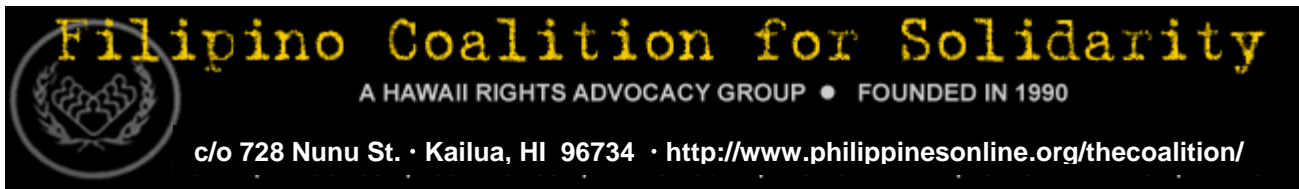
My name is Charlene Cuaresma. As vice president of the Filipino American Citizens League, I am very proud to strongly support this bill. The League was formed over ten years ago to contribute to the advancement of civil rights and social justice for minority groups, underserved populations, and vulnerable communities through education, advocacy, and social action.

Deepest appreciation for hearing this bill to create 2.5 FTE student research positions to conduct and disseminate knowledge that addresses education disparities in Asian American and Pacific Islander communities for increased recruitment, retention, and graduation of students, better student services, increased student achievement, and accountability in advancing the Diversity Initiative of the University of Hawai'i. This will go a long way to address the disparities where Filipinos and Native Hawaiians are disproportionately over-represented in under-achieving public schools and under-represented in UH Mānoa.

Thank you for the opportunity for the Filipino American Citizen's League to speak up on behalf of under-represented groups, on whose talents and assets Hawai'i's strong economy and healthy communities depend.

Very Sincerely,

Charlene Cuaresma, Vice President, Filipino American Citizens League



TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2905

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Feb. 11, 2014, 3:30 p.m. | Hawai'i State Legislature | Room 414

To: Honorable Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair and Honorable Sen. Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair
Honorable Senate Committee Members: Sen. David Y. Ige, Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, **Required parameters are missing or incorrect.**, Sen. Jill Tokuda, Sen. Sam Slom

From: Helena Manzano, Vice President, Filipino Coalition for Solidarity

Description: Appropriates moneys to SEED at the University of Hawaii to fund 5 graduate assistant and student employee (2.5 FTE) positions to conduct and disseminate research relating to Asian American and Pacific Islander students in higher education, and to provide direct services to undergraduate and graduate students interested in diversity careers relating to student affairs and higher education.

Dear Hon. Sen. Taniguchi, Chair; Hon. Sen. Kahele, Vice Chair; and Hon. Senate Committee Members:

My name is Helena Manzano, vice president of the Filipino Coalition for Solidarity. The Coalition strongly supports this bill. Since its inception in 1990, the Coalition has represented more than 50 Filipino community leaders, whose aim is to work for social justice issues to empower Filipinos to make socially responsible contributions to Hawai'i and our global neighbors through education, advocacy, and social action.

I strongly support this bill from the vantage points of a community leader, a trained social worker, and a UH alumnae. Filipinos, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and other groups are still under-represented at UH Manoa. It is important to support students to conduct cutting edge research to address education disparities. It is just as important to create student employment positions in order to make education affordable for them. The knowledge gained to understand how to increase equal access and student achievement for Hawai'i's under-represented communities in higher education will inform policy makers, improve student services, and ensure a diverse and competitive work force.

The Coalition extends our gratitude to you for hearing this important bill.

Respectfully,

Helena Manzano, MSW, Vice President, Filipino Coalition for Solidarity



TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2905

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Feb. 11, 2014, 3:30 p.m. | Hawai'i State Legislature | Room 414

To: Honorable Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair and Honorable Sen. Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair
Honorable Senate Committee Members: Sen. David Y. Ige, Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, **Required parameters are missing or incorrect.**, Sen. Jill Tokuda, Sen. Sam Slom

From: Rouel Velasco, Chair, National Federation of Filipino American Associations Region 12

Dear Hon. Sen. Taniguchi, Chair; Hon. Sen. Kahele, Vice Chair; and Hon. Senate Committee Members:

My name is Rouel Velasco, Chair, NaFFAA Region 12, which strongly supports this bill. NaFFAA Region 12 represents the interests of Filipinos in Hawai'i, Guam, and the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands. We are an affiliate of the National NaFFAA. Washington policy-makers, private industry and national advocacy groups recognize NaFFAA as the Voice of Filipinos and Filipino Americans throughout the United States. We are a non-partisan, non-profit national affiliation of more than five hundred Filipino-American institutions and umbrella organizations that span twelve regions throughout the continental United States and U.S. Pacific territories.

NaFFAA strongly supports this bill because education is key to help empower marginalized Asian American and Pacific Islander people to continue making significant contributions in all fields for a thriving and civil society. Evidence-based policy making and student service programs are integral for good stewardship of limited resources and capacity building to uplift under-represented students, who can contribute significantly to Hawai'i's future through research, student services and student employment.

The members of NaFFAA Region 12 extends our appreciation to you for hearing this bill.

Sincerely,

Rouel Velasco, Chair
NaFFAA Region XII

c/o NaFFAA Region 12, 91-803 Oaniani Street, Kapolei, HI 96707

Rouel Velasco, Chair · Charlene Cuaresma, Vice Chair · Jake Manegdeg, Treasurer · Jason Espero, Secretary



Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc.

... a non-profit organization with a mission to address the global nursing shortage by providing guidance and assistance for nursing colleagues to obtain their professional license in nursing.

NAMI, P.O. Box 2034 Aiea, HI 96701

E-mail: bramosrazon@aol.com

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2905

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Feb. 11, 2014, 3:30 p.m. | Hawai'i State Legislature | Room 414

To: Honorable Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair and Honorable Sen. Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair
Honorable Senate Committee Members: Sen. David Y. Ige, Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Sen. Michelle Kidani, Sen. Jill Tokuda, Sen. Sam Slom

From: Beatrice Ramos-Razon, Founder and President, Nursing Advocates and Mentors, Inc.

Description: Appropriates moneys to SEED at the University of Hawaii to fund 5 graduate assistant and student employee (2.5 FTE) positions to conduct and disseminate research relating to Asian American and Pacific Islander students in higher education, and to provide direct services to undergraduate and graduate students interested in diversity careers relating to student affairs and higher education.

Dear Hon. Sen. Taniguchi, Chair; Hon. Sen. Kahele, Vice Chair; and Hon. Senate Committee Members:

My name is Beatrice Ramos-Razon. As the founder and president of NAMI (Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc.), I am proud to submit our strong support for this bill. NAMI's membership is comprised of over 75 volunteer nurses, instructors, allied health care professionals, and Filipino leaders, who are dedicated to improve the health of Hawai'i's people through education, mentoring, advocacy and service.

NAMI nurses have seen firsthand, the importance of creating research positions for graduate and undergraduate students to shed light on education disparities in Asian and Pacific Islander communities. As education is a social determinant of health, NAMI nurses served as mentors to UH SEED students, who aspired to gain social justice research experience by addressing persistent cancer disparities affecting the very communities to which they belong. These students represented groups that are first generation to attend college, that are over-represented in struggling public schools, and under-represented at UH Mānoa. As a result, these students are continuing on critical pathways to attain masters and doctoral degrees. At the same time, they in turn are mentoring other students. This dynamic process of recruitment, retention, and graduation of these students demonstrates the return in investment in student achievement.

Thank you for hearing this bill and for the opportunity to provide our full community support to you for its passage.

Sincerely,

Beatrice Ramos-Razon, RN, FACDONA
President, Nursing Advocates and Mentors, Inc.

Hannah M. Tavares

1003 Spencer Street, Apt #5
Honolulu, HI 96822
hmtav3602@gmail.com
808-393-6184

Testimony in Support of SB 2905
Submitted by Hannah M. Tavares
Associate Professor in Higher Education
February 11, 2014
State Capitol Room 414
3:30pm

To: Chair Brian Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Gilbert Kahele, and members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education

I submit this testimony in full support of Senate Bill 2905 and commend the Senate Committee on Higher Education for the proposed measure that will fund the Office of Student Equity, Excellence, and Diversity (SEED) at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to address the underrepresentation of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) in higher education institutions.

The 2010 U.S. Census Data indicate that AAPI groups are the two fastest growing racial groups in the United States. Yet, Filipino Americans, Southeast Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders, and low-income AAPI's continue to face numerous barriers to college access and degree completion. As you may know, Filipinos represent a very large portion of our state's population and our public school students, yet they are significantly underrepresented at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

As an educator and a citizen of the state, I fully support SB 2905 and I fully support the SEED office at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to lead this project. The proposed measure will provide resources for the conduct and dissemination of research relating to AAPI students in higher education, as well as, provide direct support for careers in student affairs and higher education. These are significant measures aimed at addressing a critical need within higher education that will, in the long term, have huge returns for our communities.

I urge you to pass SB 2905 and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2905.

Though I am an employee of the University of Hawai'i, my testimony is not the official testimony of UH.

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Sen. Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair
February 11, 2014
3:30pm
State Capitol Room 414

RE: SB2905 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.

Position: **In Strong Support**

Dear Members of the Committee on Higher Education:

I am writing to testify **in strong support** of SB 2905.

As a current University of Hawai'i student and graduate assistant, I consider the intent and scope of SB 2905 to be a beneficial contribution to our educational community. The Office of Student Equity, Excellence, and Diversity (SEED) is an integral part of the University and I support this bill that would allow SEED to continue its mission of promoting the success of students from underrepresented groups.

The bill's purpose, to support SEED to research the AAPI experience in higher education and provide services to both undergraduate and graduate students interested in diversity-oriented student service careers, is commendable. Additionally, SB 2905's intent to offer this support through graduate assistant and student employee positions will allow those students to gain valuable experience that will benefit their future, as well as contribute to research vitally needed at the university level regarding underrepresented groups.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass this bill, and continue to help SEED pursue its mission.

Though I attend and am employed as a graduate assistant at the University of Hawai'i, this testimony does not reflect the official testimony of the University of Hawai'i.

Sincerely,
Amy Sojot
Mililani, HI 96789

Kiana Yasuyo Shiroma
Academic Advisor
Honors & Regents & Presidential Scholars Programs
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
kianak@hawaii.edu
808-542-6191

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2905

Submitted by Kiana Shiroma, Academic Advisor
Honors & Regents & Presidential Scholars Programs, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
February 10, 2014

Chair Brian Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Gilbert Kahele, Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

I fully support Senate Bill 2905 and commend the Senate Committee on Higher Education for the proposed measure to fund five graduate assistants and student employee positions for the Student Equity, Excellence and Diversity (SEED) Office at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) to conduct and disseminate research regarding Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students in higher education, and to provide direct services to undergraduate and graduate students interested in diversity careers within the fields of student affairs and higher education. As an employee and student of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa for 10 years, I am sure that AAPI faculty, staff, and students will benefit from this legislation. Being born and raised in Kailua, I also know that the larger community and state will be better because of this appropriation as well.

The 2010 U.S. Census demonstrates that AAPIs are the two fastest growing racial groups in the country. However, specific populations, including Filipino Americans, Southeast Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and low-income AAPIs continue to face challenges in post-secondary retention and graduation that other ethnic and racial groups do not have to overcome. Presently, there is still a need to research and support underrepresented and underserved racial and ethnic minorities in higher education, making the SEED Office the ideal location for these proposed graduate assistant and student employee positions. I wish to express my deep appreciation to the Legislature for your interest in this important issue. I urge you to pass SB 2905. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2905.

I am an employee of the University of Hawai'i, however, my testimony is not the official testimony of UH.

Filipinos for Affirmative Action

P.O. Box 61068 • Honolulu, HI 96839

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2905

Senate Committee on Education

February 11, 2014, 3:30 pm

Hawai`i State Legislature

Hawai`i State Capitol, Conference Room 414

To: Honorable Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Honorable Sen. Gilbert Kahele, Vice-Chair
Honorable Senate Committee on Higher Education Members: Sen. David Ige,
Sen. Keith-Agaran, and Sen. Michelle Kidani, Sen. Jill Tokuda, and Sen. Sam Slom

From: Agnes Malate, MEd, and Filipinos for Affirmative Action & UH-Manoa Faculty Specialist
P.O. Box 61068; Honolulu, HI 96839 • armalate@yahoo.com

My name is Agnes Malate and I am in strong support of SB2905 to fund part-time graduate assistant and student employee positions for Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) research and provision of services to students interested in diversity careers in student affairs and higher education. I am a member of the Filipinos for Affirmative Action and a Faculty Specialist at the University of Hawai`i at Mānoa (UHM), as well a doctoral student in Educational Foundations at the UHM.

The majority of research and data portray Asian American/Pacific Islanders (AAPI) as high achieving groups that are able to successfully mitigate difficulties faced by other racial and ethnic minorities in the nation. However, more recent studies and statistics reveal that this is not necessarily the case for all Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders* who have been lumped together and treated as a single entity in the past. When data is disaggregated the disparities in this population is glaring. Demand for more specific details on the AAPI subpopulations has become more urgent as the growth in numbers has overtaken the rest of the U. S. population, increasing three times more from 2000 to 2009.

The information that the Census Bureau has collected on AAPI reveals remarkable differences especially in the area of education. SB2905 is a step towards gaining a better understanding of the diversity and needs of the AAPI population in Hawai`i and across the nation. If funded, it will also provide valuable opportunities for students to conduct research and receive mentoring and other services.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony, and I hope you will give SB2905 your full consideration.

* Until 2007 Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders were one category until the group was split into two by the U. S. Education Department for data collection purposes and “Native Hawaiian and Pacific Island” became its own category.

Testimony in Support of SB 2905
Senate Committee on Higher Education
February 11, 2014
Conference Room 414
3:30pm

To Chair Brian Taniguchi, Vice Chair Gilbert Kahele, and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

I would like to extend my sincere support of the Senate Bill 2905 and commend the Senate Committee on Higher Education for the proposed measure to fund five graduate assistants and student employee positions for the Student Equity, Excellence, and Diversity (SEED) Office at the University of Hawaii at Manoa to conduct and disseminate research on Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI). In October 2012, I attended the Asian American & Pacific Islander Research Coalition (ARC) Summit at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM). As a 1.5 generation Filipina-American, I greatly benefitted from the panel discussions and conversations on the Asian American Pacific Island Higher Education issues. Attending the ARC Summit has immensely enthused me to learn more on critical issues in higher education that challenge Filipinos and Filipino Americans, specifically in Hawai'i with their limited access to higher education. I believe that there is a great need to continue this initiative and conversation, especially here in Hawai'i, where we largely serve AAPI students and the community. Therefore, I fully support the funding of 5 graduate students and student assistants because they would help in conducting more research projects and other initiatives to increase awareness and consciousness in these particular issues. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB2905.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Custodio

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2905

Submitted by Jenna Caparoso, Graduate Student and Research Assistant
Educational Administration, Assessment Office

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

February 11, 2014

3:30pm

State Capitol Conference Room 414

Chair Brian Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Gilbert Kahele, Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

I would like to express my strong support for Senate Bill 2905 and to urge you to consider this critical legislation to fund five graduate assistants and student employee positions for the Student Equity, Excellence and Diversity (SEED) Office at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM). This measure addresses a significant matter concerning the current state of higher education and its' ability to embrace the educational needs reflective and inclusive of its entire student population.

Although Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) are the two fastest growing racial population in the United States, they remain underrepresented, underserved, and often invisible at higher education institutions. This is evident in the lack of AAPI faculty and staff presence on campuses, disregard and devaluation of AAPI-focused research and dissemination, and limited access to resources for AAPI students and those interested in diversity careers.

The proposed measure would greatly aid in these issues by providing opportunities and resources for both undergraduate and graduate students to engage in research and scholarship that gives AAPI students and the larger AAPI communities a voice – one I must contribute to. As a Hawai'i-born and raised mixed-Asian American woman and masters student in the Educational Administration program at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, I have committed my career path to actively supporting AAPIs and AAPI-focused scholarship. Much of my research interests surround racial and ethnic minority students, specifically students of Hawai'i. Furthermore, a large part of my decision to attend UHM (including my recent application to the doctoral program in Educational Administration) was because it is an ideal location for engaging in AAPI research. However, similar to the situations of other graduate students, I share funding concerns that may significantly impact my ability to continue a PhD at UHM. The opportunities afforded by SB 2905 would surely help to alleviate these personal concerns, as well.

The timing has never been more critical for educators and policy makers to engage in discussions on appropriate courses of action, such as Senate Bill 2905, that seek to give AAPIs in the state of Hawai'i and across the nation the currently overlooked attention in higher education they deserve. Such dialogues are catalysts for change – the beginnings of uniformed policies and practices that have the potential to cultivate awareness, respect, and compassion towards the entire student body – one inclusive of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your support on this issue. I urge you to pass SB 2905 and thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2905.