
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING ACCESS TO DEBT-FREE HIGHER EDUCATION AT PUBLIC
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.

1 WHEREAS, the economic competitiveness of the United States,
2 including Hawaii, in the global economy requires a well-educated
3 workforce; and
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5 WHEREAS, students in Hawaii currently average about \$23,000
6 in debt upon graduation from a four year college, and a majority
7 of students take six years or more to obtain a Bachelor's
8 degree, which significantly hinders their ability to participate
9 in the local economy; and
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11 WHEREAS, current and future generations of young people in
12 Hawaii should have the same opportunities as those who went to
13 college in previous generations, including the ability to attend
14 state colleges and universities without taking on burdensome
15 debt; and
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17 WHEREAS, in 2016, higher education is more important than
18 ever because it is an essential step to entering and remaining
19 in the middle class; and
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21 WHEREAS, public investment in higher education pays off, as
22 evidenced by the fact the GI Bill resulted in a seven to one
23 return on investment for our national economy and workers with
24 college degrees earn more money, pay more taxes, and rely less
25 on government services; and
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27 WHEREAS, student loan debt saddles the very students who
28 most depend on a college degree to level the economic playing
29 field with a burden that constrains their career choices and
30 hurts their credit rating, prevents them from fully



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1 participating in the economy, and threatens their achievement of
2 essential milestones of the American dream including purchasing
3 a home or car, starting a family, and saving for retirement; and
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5 WHEREAS, the federal Schatz-Schumer-Warren Senate debt-free
6 college Concurrent Resolution and Grijalva-Ellison-Clark House
7 debt-free college Concurrent Resolution have gained national
8 momentum in recent months, becoming central in the national
9 dialogue around higher education; and
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11 WHEREAS, achieving a national goal of debt-free college
12 will necessarily include significant federal aid to states,
13 including Hawaii; now, therefore,
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15 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
16 Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
17 Session of 2016, the Senate concurring, that this body supports
18 efforts to enact legislation that:
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- 20 (1) Ensures, through a combination of efforts, all
21 students have access to debt-free higher education,
22 defined as having no debt upon graduation from any
23 public institution of higher education;
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- 25 (2) Increases investments in higher education and brings
26 down costs for students;
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- 28 (3) Increases aid to students, helping them cover the
29 total cost of college attendance without taking on
30 debt;
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- 32 (4) Encourages innovation by the State and its
33 institutions of higher education to increase
34 efficiency, lower costs, and enable speedy and less
35 costly degree completion; and
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- 37 (5) Reduces the burden of existing student loan debt; and
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39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
40 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the
41 United States; the Majority Leader of the United States Senate;
42 the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives; the



1 members of Hawaii's congressional delegation; the Governor; the
2 Superintendent of Education; the Chairperson and members of the
3 Board of Education; and the President and respective Chancellors
4 of the University of Hawaii system.
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OFFERED BY:

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