



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Written Comments Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Thursday, March 31, 2016 at 9:00 a.m.

By  
Dr. Lori Ideta  
Vice Chancellor for Students  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### HB 1703 HD2 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa is in complete support of this measure that establishes three (3) full-time psychologists and one (1) full-time case manager at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

As you are well aware, college students are facing greater and more complex challenges in their personal and academic lives. Presenting issues amongst our students include anxiety, stress management, and suicidal ideations. We work hard to attend to all of our students. Our current team of psychologists, psychiatrists, and interns do an amazing job with limited resources.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa currently has 6.5 faculty positions, 1 temporary faculty position, 3 post-doc therapists, 3 doctoral Interns, and 2 doctoral practicum trainees. As the total number of students serviced each year increases, in the 2014-15 school year, the University has serviced approximately 1,300 students for close to 8,000 hours of therapy. The number of times students have sought services range from one intake appointment to over 30 individual therapy appointments. In the Fall 2015 semester, 559 intake appointments were scheduled, 296 emergency Blue Line appointments were scheduled, and 2591 therapy appointments were scheduled. On average, there are 32 hours each week dedicated to intakes, 40 hours of emergency Blue Line, and over 160 psychotherapy appointments available to undergraduate and graduate students.

However, the waitlist, which is for non-urgent clients, had 67 students on the list as of November 12, 2015, with an average number of days on the list being 7.17 days. As of February 01, 2016, 33 students are on the waitlist with an average numbers of days on the list is 16.06 days.

The demand for mental health services have increased across the country. According to data from the American College Health Association National College Health Assessment Fall 2014 Reference Group with in the last 12 months, 54% felt

overwhelming anxiety, 32.6% felt so depressed that it was difficult to function, and 8.1% seriously considered suicide. This data increased in the Spring 2015 Reference Group, with 56.9% felt overwhelming anxiety, 34.5% felt so depressed it was difficult to function, and 8.9% seriously considered suicide.

Any efforts to increase services to our students would be very much appreciated. These new positions will help to alleviate the current heavy workload on our therapists and increase our abilities to reach out to the campus through proactive educational efforts. Your investment in the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa will have a long lasting impact and will create a legacy of those who supported the students of higher education in our state.

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

Thank you for your consideration.



# ASUH

Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i

YOUR STUDENT GOVERNMENT

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

Date: Thursday, March 31, 2016  
Time: 9:00AM  
Place: Conference Room 211

**Re: Support of HB 1703 Relating to the University of Hawai'i**

My name is Kelly Zakimi and I currently serve as the President of the Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i (ASUH), the Mānoa undergraduate student government representing roughly 14,000 full-time undergraduates. Today, I am writing on behalf of the ASUH in strong support of HB 1703, which appropriates funds to hire psychologists and case managers to provide student mental health services.

On March 9, 2016, the ASUH Senate unanimously passed Senate Resolution 21-16: In Support of Increased Mental Health Services at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. The resolution also voiced support for HB 1703 and its companion bill, SB 2767.

Mental health is becoming a national concern as the number of students seeking services at counseling centers is growing at a rapid rate. The Counseling and Student Development Center (CSDC) at Mānoa has also felt the effects of the growing levels of students requesting mental health services. Although the CSDC does the best with what it has, many students are placed on the waitlist because the Center does not have the capacity to meet the influx of requests. With more staff, the CSDC can do more outreach and better serve undergraduates and graduates students alike.

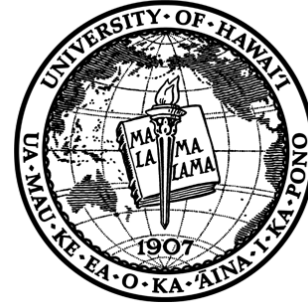
When assessing the college experience, most look at academics or extra-curricular activities. These areas are wonderful and much needed, but the mental and emotional well-being of students often gets overlooked. By appropriating funds for our severely understaffed CSDC, this bill takes tangible steps forward in prioritizing the mental health of students.

Please support HB 1703 and stand with students at UH Mānoa in supporting increased student mental health services. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kelly Zakimi, ASUH President  
Email Address: [zakimik@hawaii.edu](mailto:zakimik@hawaii.edu)

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

Date: Thursday, March 31, 2016  
Time: 9:00 AM  
Place: Conference Room 211



**Re: IN SUPPORT OF HB 1703 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I**

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

As the University of Hawai‘i Student Caucus – comprised of two delegates from each campus’ student government – we represent roughly 55,000 students in the University of Hawai‘i System, the only public institution of higher education in the state. The Caucus submits its testimony in strong support of HB 1703, which provides appropriate funds for psychologists and case managers to provide student mental health services.

As HB 1703 states, mental health is a growing national concern. According to the Center for Collegiate Mental Health 2015 Annual Report, college students are reporting increasing levels of distress and in particular, three types of self-reported distress have demonstrated consistent growth over the past five years: depression, anxiety, and social anxiety. This increase in self-reported distress parallels the increase in students requesting counseling services across the U.S. In Hawai‘i, this rings true as well. Many are waitlisted because our campus counseling centers are not able to meet the increasing demand of services. This is potentially dangerous for those waitlisted individuals and for those around them, as the same 2015 Report suggests that students seeking services are more likely to endorse “threat to self” indicators. More direct and timely assistance is pivotal.

The Counseling and Student Development Center (CSDC) at UH Mānoa is severely understaffed, with the number of specialists being significantly less than the national guidelines. However, this understaffing is not solely detrimental to Mānoa students, as it harms students across the UH System as well. When needed, the CSDC lends its specialists and services to other campuses. As the Student Caucus representing students across all ten campuses, we respectfully request that the new psychologists and case managers also extend their help to other campuses when necessary. Thus, passing HB 1703 will provide more sufficient resources for students beyond the Mānoa campus.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony. Once again, the University of Hawai‘i Student Caucus strongly supports HB 1703.

Sincerely,  
Melinda Alles  
UH Student Caucus Chair

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**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1703 on Mar 31, 2016 09:00AM\*  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 30, 2016 8:51:05 AM

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**HB1703**

Submitted on: 3/30/2016

Testimony for WAM on Mar 31, 2016 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
David Enriquez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1703 on Mar 31, 2016 09:00AM\*  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 29, 2016 9:16:11 PM

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**HB1703**

Submitted on: 3/29/2016

Testimony for WAM on Mar 31, 2016 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Eric Baxa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**HB1703**

Submitted on: 3/29/2016

Testimony for WAM on Mar 31, 2016 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Grant Takara	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1703 on Mar 31, 2016 09:00AM\*  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 30, 2016 8:37:00 AM

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**HB1703**

Submitted on: 3/30/2016

Testimony for WAM on Mar 31, 2016 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Maggie Hinshaw	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

Date: Thursday, March 31, 2016  
Time: 9:00 AM  
Place: Conference Room 211

Re: Support of HB 1703 Relating to the University of Hawai'i

My name is Todd Simeroth and I am an undergraduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I am writing in strong support of HB 1703, which appropriates funding for psychologist and case manager positions to provide students mental health services. Previously, this bill reasonably proposed funding for three psychologist positions and one case manager, which, although still below national guidelines, would provide a significant positive impact for our community.

Over the last three years that I have studied here, I have encountered among many of my peers a common state of struggle with the various difficulties brought on by our often-confining environment. I have unfortunately seen this culminate into experiences of seclusion, overwhelming, and desperation. It is not an element unique to those residing in student housing, nor to those without family nearby, nor to those of any particular study or demographic.

I have had friends leave the university because they could not overcome these feelings. I have seen several peers in student leadership positions resign because they could not manage the growing stresses of the expectations put upon us. I have personally met individuals adversely affected by the incidents of our peers resorting to gruesome self-harm, as recently as within the past few weeks.

It is clear that there is an ongoing and pressing need for additional mental health services at our campus. Students who need professional psychological help should not have to wait days or weeks to receive counseling, or simply be left to manage their own conflicts to detrimental ends. The funding for the positions sought by HB 1703 can help resolve these hardships and protect the integrity of our community, and that is why I strongly support HB 1703.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Simeroth  
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808.366.5469