



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 3, 2015 at 2pm

By

Robert Bley-Vroman, Chancellor

And

Christy Nishita, Interim Director
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB493 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama, and members of the committee:

We strongly support HB493 because funding for both a permanent Director position and Associate Specialist position will better equip the University of Hawai'i Center on Aging (COA) in fulfilling its mission. Currently, with an Interim Director and temporary researchers, funded through grants and contracts, the COA's capacity to expand is limited. However, with funding for a permanent director and a permanent faculty position, we will be able to expand our capacity and responsiveness to the needs of our state.

Funding for these positions will enhance COA's capacity in all 3 key areas of our *mission*; to develop innovative programs of interdisciplinary gerontological education and practice, to promote collaborative and interdisciplinary research within the university and other academic partners, and provide state-of-the art information to policy makers, program managers, clinicians and the general public.

With base funding and support, COA can:

- Reinststate (currently on hold) and administer the undergraduate and graduate certificate in gerontology to build a workforce that is prepared to care for our aging population
- Collaborate and conduct high quality research to improve older adults' quality life and improve systems of care for older adults.
- Greater capacity to respond to requests from the State to address the escalating needs of our growing aging population, including issues of long-term supports and services (LTSS), caregiving, dementia and end of life, systems change, and workforce development

The Center on Aging is committed to improving the quality of life of all older adults in Hawai'i, and has the ability to be recognized locally and nationally for both education and research endeavors. With funding for these positions, we will have a greater capacity to respond to State needs, including a workforce that is educated and prepared

to address an aging population and applied research to improve the care and quality of life of older adults.

Please note, we strongly support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.

ichiyama2-Brandon

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 02, 2015 1:27 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: deborah.stone-walls@co.maui.hi.us
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB493 on Feb 3, 2015 14:00PM*

HB493

Submitted on: 2/2/2015

Testimony for HED on Feb 3, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Deborah Stone-Walls	Maui County Office on Aging	Support	No

Comments:

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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February 3, 2015

House Committee on Higher Education
Representative Isaac Choy, Chair

Re: **HB 493, RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII**

Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama, and members of the committees:

I am Barbara Stanton, AARP Hawaii State Director. AARP is a membership organization of people fifty and over with nearly 148,000 members in Hawaii alone. AARP advocates for issues that matter to Hawaii families, including the high cost of long-term care; access to affordable, quality health care for all generations; providing the tools needed to save for retirement; and serving as a reliable information source on issues critical to people over the age of fifty.

AARP Hawaii strongly supports HB 493, Relating to the University of Hawaii. This bill provides funding for two permanent positions within the University of Hawaii Center on Aging. The two positions are for the Director (1.0FTE) and an Associate Specialist (1.0FTE).

The health and quality of life of older adults is a vital concern in Hawaii, which has one of the oldest populations in the nation. The University of Hawaii Center on Aging plays a critical role in enhancing the well being of older adults through interdisciplinary and collaborative efforts in research, educational programs and service to the community.

The Center on Aging needs permanent funding for a Director and Associate Specialist to properly continue this work.

Funding these positions will help reinstate the undergraduate and graduate certificates in gerontology, which are currently on hold. Additionally, a properly funded Center on Aging will:

- Train professionals in gerontology;
- Conduct applied research on aging issues such as dementia care and chronic disease management;
- Test and evaluate pilot projects and new models of elder care services and programs; and
- Provide evidence-based information to policy makers who can introduce and support effective policies and funding for aging programs and services that benefit the State.

Because Hawaii deserves a top Center on Aging that produces a high quality professional workforce, research and education, **we urge you to support HB 493**. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

alzheimer's association®

ALOHA CHAPTER

1050 Ala Moana Blvd. Suite 2610, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Phone: 808.591.2771 Fax: 808.591.9071 www.alz.org/hawaii

February 2, 2015

Executive Director
Christine Payne

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Honorable Representative Isaac Choy, Chair
Committee on Higher Education
House of Representatives
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 208
415 South Berentania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HB 493 relating to the University of Hawaii

Dear Chairman Choy and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 493. On behalf of the Alzheimer's Association, Aloha Chapter, I am pleased to extend our full support for House Bill 493, which creates two permanent funded positions within the UH Center on Aging.

The Alzheimer's Association, Aloha Chapter has seen families within the state struggle to find adequate and timely assistance for their aging loved one. This dilemma is often a result of a lack of gerontologists within Hawaii. Systems change is necessary to address this huge gap in service. We believe that the creation of permanent funded staff within the UH Center on Aging will help address this detrimental community need. By doing such, there will be a permanent and consistent focus on the development and administration of both undergraduate and graduate studies in the field of gerontology. This will in turn, produce professionals in the field of gerontology that will be able to meet the community's growing need for aging services.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this legislation and applaud your leadership in bringing it forward.

With best regards,



Christine Payne
Executive Director
Alzheimer's Association, Aloha Chapter

Testifier's Name: Gary Simon
President, Hawaii Family Caregiver Coalition

Testimony Is Directed To: House Committee on Higher Education

Measure: HB493 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Date & Time of Hearing: Tuesday, February 3, 2015, 2:00 p. m.

Position: The Hawaii Family Caregiver Coalition strongly supports HB493

Dear Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama, and Honorable Members of the House Committee on Higher Education:

I am Gary Simon, President of the Hawaii Family Caregiver Coalition (HFCC), whose mission is to improve the quality of life for both those who give care and those who receive care.

I am testifying as an individual who has worked in healthcare for over twenty-seven years, and I am offering testimony on behalf of HFCC.

HFCC wholeheartedly supports HB493.

The bill appropriates funds for a permanent full-time director (1.0 FTE) and a permanent full-time faculty specialist position (1.0 FTE) within the University of Hawaii Center on Aging, both permanent funded and tenure tracked.

With base funding and support, COA can:

Foster Workforce Development throughout Hawaii

- Reinstate (currently on hold) and administer the undergraduate and graduate certificate in gerontology to build a workforce that is prepared to care for our aging population
- Increase gerontology course offerings on UH campuses
- Strengthen Hawaii's current workforce by developing continuing gerontology education for existing professionals
- Develop a pipeline of students interested in gerontology education, thereby attracting students to professions in aging
- Increase awareness of aging and caregiving issues

Strengthen Local Research and Collaboration

- Conduct high quality research to improve older adults' quality life and improve systems of care for older adults.
- Collaborate with faculty across campus and community partners to conduct applied research.

- Increase the visibility of local research and collaborations, subsequently growing the capacity, visibility and reputation of the COA nationally

Build Capacity within Hawaii's Systems of Care

- Increased capacity to respond to requests from the State to address the escalating needs of our growing aging population, including issues of long-term supports and services (LTSS), caregiving, dementia and end of life, systems change, and workforce development
- Apply research findings to the community, improving the quality of life and systems of care for older adults and their caregivers.

Leverage Additional Funding

- Through a COA director's academic and administrative leadership, additional funding opportunities through local/ federal grants and private foundations can be secured.

The Center on Aging is an excellent program (collaborative, interdisciplinary research; development of innovative programs; a repository of state of the art information on aging) based upon good policy (enhancing the well-being of older adults). Continuing development of the Center of Aging will benefit residents throughout the State.

We urge you to support HB493 and to recommend its passage, and we thank you for seriously considering the Bill.

Very sincerely,
Gary Simon
President
Hawaii Family Caregiver Coalition

TO : COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Rep. Isaac W. Choy, Chair
Rep Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair

FROM: Eldon L. Wegner, Ph.D.
HAWAII FAMILY CAREGIVER COALITION (HFCC)

HEARING: 2 PM Tuesday, February 3, 2015
Conference Room 309, Hawaii State Capitol

SUBJECT: HB 493 Relating to the University of Hawaii

POSITION: The Hawaii Family Caregiver Coalition, **supports** HB 493 which appropriates funds for 2 positions in the Center of Aging at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

RATIONALE:

The Center on Aging of the University of Hawaii has experienced devastating budget cuts over the past years which has resulted in only .5 FTE staff of an acting director. Consequently, the Center had to suspend offering its Interdisciplinary Certificate program in Gerontology. The lack of staff also has impacted its ability to pursue grants and to serve as an initiator of new programs in such fields as caregiver education and active aging.

Despite the minimal resources and the lack of permanent leadership, the Center on Aging has an outstanding record of securing contracts for needs assessments and evaluation research.

With the growing numbers of both frail elderly and well-elderly, the Center on Aging should be addressing the challenges and opportunities of meeting the needs of our population. Furthermore, there are serious workforce shortages in every area of aging, from paraprofessional training to such professions as geriatric medicine and social work. These are job growth areas and the University needs to develop curriculum which is coordinated and articulated across its different curriculum

However, without a permanent director and staff, it cannot address these important needs. I urge you to approve these two positions in order to begin the process of re-building programs of the Center to meet the critical needs of our community.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to submit testimony.

February 2, 2015

TO: Rep. Isaac Choy, Chair
Rep. Linda Ichiyama, Vice-Chair
Members of the House Higher Education Committee

Subject: Testimony in Support of HB493 -- Related to the University of Hawaii Center on Aging

Dear Members of the House Higher Education Committee:

I am writing in support for proposed funding of 2 positions for the University of Hawaii's Center on Aging. I am Cullen Hayashida, the recently retired Director – Professor of Kapiolani Community College's Kupuna Education Center. At this time, I am providing testimony as a concerned citizen and one who has had 36 years of *experience in elder care in Hawaii as a researcher, policy analyst, nursing home administrator, home care director and educator.* I have also been heavily involved with the development of a variety of long term care programs for older adults in Hawaii, on the US mainland and in East Asia. One of the most significant challenges facing us today is the very rapid pace of the aging of Hawaii's population. Presently, there are only about 3 or 4 states in the USA that have elderly growth rates faster than ours. The shortage of trained professionals in gerontology will have far-reaching consequences on the quality of services that Hawaii can render its kupuna. Over the past decade, KCC has directed its attention to increasing the supply of well-trained paraprofessionals and family caregivers. Needless to say, the work required is far beyond the capacity of one training program. Moreover, we are in continuous need for more professionals with credentials in gerontology. That is the work of UH Manoa's Center on Aging. This work was once done by the Center with its Certificate on Aging programs about a decade ago. This is a program that needs to be reinstated as soon as possible for the sake of the needs of Hawaii's growing eldercare workforce.



Cullen T. Hayashida, Ph.D.

Retired Director

Kupuna Education Center

Kapiolani Community College

4303 Diamond Head Road

Honolulu, HI 96816

Email: cullen@hawaii.edu

Ph. 781-6604

Written Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 3, 2015, 2pm
By Kirk Uejio and Allison Blankenship
Teachers at 'Iolani School

HB493 – Relating to the University of Hawaii (\$). Appropriates funds for a permanent full-time director (1.0 FTE) and permanent full-time faculty specialist position (1.0 FTE) within the University of Hawaii Center on Aging.

In the Fall of 2013, an innovative high school class was created at 'Iolani School called the One Mile Project. The One Mile Project began as an idea to learn about and address issues in our immediate neighborhood. Through the development of the course and the introduction to the UH Center on Aging and Dr. Nishita, we chose to focus the class entirely on learning about aging issues and designing and implementing projects that could benefit older adults in our community. Since the beginning of this class, the University of Hawaii Center on Aging and Dr. Christy Nishita have been closely involved and an invaluable resource. With Dr. Nishita's support, we created a diverse curriculum in which students learned about our aging population, policy issues, health and well-being in late life, and creating an age-friendly community. Because of Dr. Nishita's contacts in the field of aging, students were able to develop relationships with Club 100 members, Moiliili Community Center seniors, and Project Dana clients.

Through the class, students have developed projects to help the community, such as a presentation to Kahala Mall management on becoming more age-friendly, a training course for Hawaiian Airlines in-flight trainers to make the travel experience for older adults better and an app to help older adults manage diabetes.

Inspired by the One Mile Project class at 'Iolani, other intergenerational initiatives have begun on campus, including a grandparent iPad class, grandparent and student movie day, a Grandparent Relations Committee, school involvement with Moiliili Community Center, a Grandparent recipe contest, grandparent letters to graduating seniors, as well as many more programs and activities.

We appreciate the University of Hawaii Center on Aging's involvement and partnership with the 'Iolani School. The One Mile Project would not be possible without Dr. Nishita and the UH Center on Aging. We have seen a clear impact of the class on our students every semester. Students have not only gained empathy and an understanding of aging issues, they have gained an appreciation for the importance of intergenerational connections. We believe these students will use and apply this knowledge as they move on to college and into the workplace.

Heather Chun, MSW
420 Poipu Drive
Honolulu, Hawaii 96825

House Committee on Higher Education

February 3, 2015 at 2:00pm
State Capitol, Conference Room 309

In consideration of

HB 493

Relating to the University of Hawaii

I strongly support **HB 493**, which seeks to appropriate funding for two permanently funded and tenure tracked positions within the University of Hawaii's Center on Aging (COA). With a rapidly aging local population, there is a demand for innovative and cost-effective programs to ensure care is available to all of Hawaii's older adults, research to support the escalating needs of our aging community, and publicly available and up-to-date information. Since its origin, COA's mission aims to fulfill this role throughout Hawaii. Unfortunately, COA's staffing has been scarce since the inception.

Currently, without base funding and support, COA's capacity continues to be limited with an interim director and two temporary researchers funded through grants and contracts. Without a sufficiently staffed office, these limitations will have a profound impact on Hawaii's efforts to solidify long-term services and supports (LTSS) systems and an infrastructure capable of withstanding the escalating demands of those in need of support. If appropriated, this funding would significantly enhance the reach of COA to foster workforce development, strengthen local research and collaborations, build capacity within Hawaii's systems of care, and leverage additional funding to further expand COA's capabilities and ensure its sustainability.

Should you have any questions, you may reach me at heathmc1400@yahoo.com or (808) 286-2982. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Heather Chun, MSW

Written Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 3, 2015, 2pm
By Sierra Greene
Senior at 'Iolani School

HB493 – Relating to the University of Hawaii (\$). Appropriates funds for a permanent full-time director (1.0 FTE) and permanent full-time faculty specialist position (1.0 FTE) within the University of Hawaii Center on Aging.

Last semester, I was a student in One Mile Project class at 'Iolani. In this high school class, I learned about aging issues and created projects to help older adults in our community. Since the beginning of this innovative class in the Fall of 2013, the University of Hawaii Center on Aging and Dr. Christy Nishita were closely involved and have been great partners. With Dr. Nishita's support, we learned about age-friendliness by doing a walkability audit of our community. We also met and developed relationships with Club 100 and met with Project Dana clients. We did empathy challenges so I knew how it felt to have a visual and physical impairment. We also had discussions about complex issues like ageism and caregiving problems.

Through the class, students have developed projects to help the community, such as giving a presentation to the Hawaiian Airlines staff that trains flight attendants about how to better serve and help kupuna on their flights. Another group of students collected \$1 from 500 people and donated the \$500 to St. Francis Hospice.

Inspired by the One Mile Project class at 'Iolani, there are more intergenerational activities on campus, including a student and grandparent book club, Grandparent Relations Committee projects, class involvement with Moiliili Community Center, an Adopt-a-Grandchild program, as well as many more programs and activities.

I appreciate the University of Hawaii Center on Aging's involvement and partnership with the 'Iolani School One Mile Project. I have an appreciation of aging issues and see the importance of intergenerational connections. My eyes are opened to new perspectives and beautiful moments are made for both generations when stories and legacies are passed on. I will take this knowledge with me as I move on to college next year.

TESTIMONY TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Representative Isaac W. Choy, Chair

Representative Linda Ichiyama, Vice-Chair

Testimony Supporting HB 493: "Relating to the University of Hawaii – Center on Aging"

February 3, 2015

2:00 p.m.

Conference Room 309

Individual Testimony of

Audrey Suga-Nakagawa, Elder-Care Consultant

ASN Consulting Services

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony in support of HB# 493 which provides funding for two permanent positions within the University of Hawaii Center on Aging. The two positions are for the Director (1.0FTE) and an Associate Specialist (1.0FTE). Adequate funding for these critical positions and support for the Center on Aging in general, is long overdue. With the rapidly aging population, the State needs the academic leadership, research, and educational training to help build a strong workforce and social and health care infrastructure to care for our aging residents and provide support to their families. The University's Center on Aging must have a highly skilled and qualified staff that can expand the Center's capacity and role to meet this vital need. It is a travesty that the Center is grossly underfunded and understaffed especially when the State leads the nation with its people having the longest life expectancy and a large percentage of the population over the age 65.

A strong academic think-tank will train our professionals in gerontology; conduct research on aging issues such as dementia care, chronic disease management, fall prevention and safety; test and evaluate pilot projects and new models of elder care services and programs; and provide evidence-based information to policy makers who can introduce and support effective policies and funding for aging programs and services that benefit the State. This funding request to establish a permanent faculty base at the Center of Aging is a sound investment for our future. Hawaii deserves a top-rated gerontology center that produces a high quality professional workforce, research and education.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF UH CENTER ON AGING
Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 23rd 2 pm
HB 493

I am submitting this testimony in robust support of appropriating funds for a full-time director and full-time faculty specialist position for the UH Center on Aging.

I have been both an instructor and researcher at UH Manoa for over ten years and have personally experienced the need for these positions and their potential value to students at UH as well as families and communities statewide. Many of the students that I teach and advise in the Family Resources Program would like to pursue careers in Aging. Unfortunately, I cannot refer them to the Certificate on Aging because the Center on Aging does not have the funds or personnel to manage this certificate. Because of this, many talented students are choosing to pursue careers outside of gerontology. As a national board member of Sigma Phi Omega, an Honors Society for Gerontology, I know that Hawaii is behind most other states in gerontological education, despite the fact that the population of Hawaii is, on average, one of the oldest in the nation. A full time director and specialist in the Center on Aging would greatly enhance gerontological education at UHM, which would revitalize our aging workforce.

Funding these positions would also financially benefit the University as a whole. Although many researchers at UHM study aging-related topics, they are scattered among varied academic departments. Strong, consistent, leadership and support staff would allow the Center on Aging to serve as a nexus for research grants, allowing UH to be much more competitive in applying for multidisciplinary aging grants.

HB 493 is critically important for the people and families of Hawai`

Respectfully Submitted,

Loriena (Lori) Yancura
Associate Professor
UH Manoa Dept. of Family and Consumer Sciences
Health Psychology and Gerontology Focus
(Personal Testimony)
loriena@gmail.com

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2015
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Rep. Isaac W. Choy, Chair
Rep. Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING
DATE:
Tuesday, February 03, 2015
TIME:
2:00 PM
PLACE:
Conference Room 309
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

SUPPORT FOR HB493: Permanent FT Director and Faculty Specialist Position in the UHM Center on Aging

Dear Representatives Choy, Chair, Vice-Chair Ichiyama, and Higher Education Committee members,

My name is Barbara Yee and I am speaking as a private citizen who moved back to live with and provide care for my frail elderly father. I am also a gerontologist, Chair of Family and Consumer Sciences and faculty member in Family Resources program. I personally and professionally understand that Hawaii is currently experiencing a caregiving and gerontological crisis. Every citizen of this state has, had, or will have an elderly relative, friend, or neighbor who will need a great deal of help to cope with the physical, emotional or cognitive frailties of aging. We are unprepared in Hawaii because there is an absence of gerontological training for professionals who will become teachers for the current and future workforce and family caregivers in the graying tsunami. As important, our elderly caregivers are not prepared for the enormous responsibility for our parents, grandparents, and elderly relatives, or neighbors who need our support each and everyday.

Funding the gerontological workforce infrastructure and personnel to direct this urgent need is immediate and must be done during this legislative session. I strongly urge you to provide needed personnel for the UHM Center on Aging, so that we can take giant steps to provide education and training of personnel with gerontological expertise in Hawaii.

Respectfully,

Barbara Yee
Honolulu, HI 96816

LATE

Testimony by:

Linda Axtell-Thompson, DBioethics, MBA
46-147 Hinapu Street
Kaneohe, HI 96744

Submitted to:

House of Representatives
Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 3, 2015, 2:00pm

Concerning:

HB 493: Relating to the University of Hawaii: Appropriates funds for permanent full-time director and faculty specialist positions within the University of Hawaii Center on Aging.

Committee Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama, and Members of the Committee on Higher Education:

I am writing in support of HB 493 which proposes to appropriate funds for two permanent positions for the University of Hawaii Center on Aging. I am submitting my testimony as a private citizen concerned about improving care for our kupuna.

As you know, the challenges of aging we face are growing as rapidly as our population is aging. The UH Center on Aging has been a critical resource for many years in researching and piloting innovative ways to improve the lives of our kupuna. But their effectiveness has been hampered by the impermanent nature of their funding and leadership. HB 493 would provide greatly needed institutional stability that would enhance the Center's ability to collaborate effectively across public and private sectors and to access additional public and private funds to tackle the challenges of our aging society. Equally important, the financial and administrative stability would enable the University of Hawaii to reinstate and strengthen the undergraduate and graduate gerontology programs that are the academic backbone to building adequate workforce capacity to care for our aging population.

The UH Center on Aging has done remarkable work for many years under clouds of uncertainty. Please support HB 493 to enable the Center to fulfill its greater potential for the benefit of our kupuna and our entire community.

Respectfully yours,

Linda Axtell-Thompson, DBioethics, MBA

LATE

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Written Testimony by Michael Cheang
Assistant Professor
Family & Consumer Sciences Department
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
University of Hawai'i at Manoa

HB 493 Relating to the University of Hawaii

Appropriates funds for a permanent full-time director (1.0 FTE) and permanent full-time faculty specialist position (1.0 FTE) within the University of Hawaii center on aging.

My name is Michael Cheang. I am a resident of Honolulu, and employed as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii at Manoa. I am providing personal testimony for HB 493.

Twenty years ago, I remember being at a public meeting at the Hawaii State legislature when the need for educating and training a work force to address the issue of the baby boomer generation getting into their older years was raised. At that time, community leaders who have this foresight pointed out that the need for a workforce to plan, and care for the aging baby boomers is very important to set as a priority, and that we needed to do this sooner rather than later.

Unfortunately, not much has happened since, and a recent conversation with one of these community leaders resulted in her comment, "we talked about this same thing for the past 20 – 30 years, and nothing has happened, except that now the baby boomers are now older adults, the needs are greater!"

The only entity that helped to train a workforce to care for our older adults (The Kupuna Education Center at Kapiolani Community College) has recently been shut down. I am also aware that the cohort of employees who work in the state and county office on aging have or will retire soon, and many of the the new cohort of employees in these positions working in the office on aging do not have a background in gerontology.

With the passing of every year, there will be more older adults in proportion as well in absolute numbers, and the needs will be greater than ever. As is, many of the needs are unmet because we do not have a workforce that is adequately trained. I hope that the members of this legislature will see the significance of HB 493 and that funding these two positions is instrumental in getting a workforce that can be educated and properly trained to help care for our elders in our state. Two full time positions to help statewide is not unreasonable to ask for, and this investment will bring significant returns in terms of workforce development, the care of our elders, and the quality of lives of our families in Hawai'i.

LATE

Testimony of Tom Dinell,
Emeritus Professor of Urban and Regional Planning
University of Hawai'i at Manoa
in Support of H.B. No. 493
Being Heard by the House Committee on Higher
Education
on Tuesday February 3, 2015 at 2pm

I strongly urge passage of H.B. 493 providing two permanent positions for the Center on Aging at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. There are a host of reasons for adopting this bill, but let me just focus on two.

First, in fifteen year one out of four Hawai'i residents will be age 65 or older. We have to prepare ourselves now for this significant demographic change. We know what is coming. It would be the height of foolishness to wait 15 years and then say, "I wish we had taken steps year ago to address this situation." The Center on Aging has the ability to help Hawai'i prepare now for what we all know is occurring. What the Center needs is permanent, tenured track staffing to be the on-going action-oriented research infrastructure we so badly require.

Second, the Center on Aging has already proven itself as a can-do, community-oriented organization. I am co-chair of the Honolulu Age-Friendly Steering Committee. The Center on Aging has served as our consultant. They have done an excellent job. They understand what it takes to maintain an active, healthy aging population. They understand the importance of the built environment as well as the range of social and health services that an aging population requires.

Keeping our older residents physically active, mentally sharp, and socially involved will make Hawai'i a better place for people of all ages and reduce the need for vast public expenditures to take care of older people who can no longer live independently.

This is what the Center on Aging is all about and why we need the Center as a permanent part of the University and the State. Passing H.B. 493 will accomplish just this.