

# SB 707

## Testimony –

**Measure Title:** RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.

**Report Title:** University of Hawaii Sustainability Office; Appropriation (\$)

**Description:** Establishes the University of Hawaii sustainability office. Appropriates funds

**Companion:** [HB1206](#)

**Package:** None

**Current Referral:** HEA, WAM

**Introducer(s):** GABBARD, CHUN OAKLAND, INOUE, RUDERMAN, Dela Cruz, Espero, Taniguchi



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
February 10, 2015 at 2:00 p.m.

by  
Jan Gouveia  
Vice President for Administration  
University of Hawai'i System

### SB 707 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in SUPPORT of SB 707 – Relating to The University of Hawaii. This bill seeks to establish an Office of Sustainability at the System level for the University of Hawai'i, and to provide funding for key staff to coordinate implementation of the Board of Regents' sustainability policy across all 10 campuses of the University. Given the State's ambitious energy and sustainability goals, this bill allocates resources to support the University of Hawai'i – one of the state's largest consumers of electricity – in reducing its energy use, better steward its resources, and contribute to creating a vibrant green sector of our local economy.

Over the last few years, a committed and growing group of representatives from students, faculty, facilities and administration have been developing a systemwide strategy to integrate sustainability into the culture and operations of the University of Hawai'i so that the institution can improve its energy performance, reduce its operational costs, and create graduates who are engaged, informed global citizens equipped with the skill sets required to help our communities meet the climate change challenges of our times. In response to the growing and enthusiastic support of sustainability from all 10 campuses, University of Hawai'i Leadership has dedicated funding, amended policies, and otherwise supported this strategic initiative.

Funding for a University System Office of Sustainability would allow the University to aggressively pursue the following priorities: 1) develop mechanisms to track and re-invest savings realized from sustainability initiatives; 2) support the establishment of a Strategic Energy Partnership in collaboration with stakeholders that may include the Public Utilities Commission, external experts as necessary, the utility company, the UH Foundation, and others to finance energy efficiency and demand management projects to reduce energy consumption and costs; 3) develop more opportunities for students to develop real-world skills to equip them to meet the sustainability challenges of our times by developing mechanisms to provide financial support through paid positions, internships and fellowships; 4) provide coordination across all 10 campuses to help students articulate courses in sustainability studies to support the growth of our green economy; 5) convene the annual Sustainability in Higher Education Summit, an important catalyst to integrate sustainability into campus life, operations, curriculum development, and community engagement across

all 10 campuses; 6) cultivate sustainability funding opportunities with UH Foundation; 7) work to implement the Board of Regents' sustainability policy to achieve carbon neutrality, zero waste, and local food self-sufficiency; and 8) support the state in achieving its sustainability goals as stated in the Aloha+ Challenge Resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 707. The University will be happy to continue productive and forward-looking discussions on this issue.

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**SB707**

Submitted on: 2/8/2015

Testimony for HEA on Feb 10, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Angela Huntemer	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members. As an alumni of The University of Hawaii at Manoa and mother of two teenage sons I am in strong support of SB707. This bill gives our university system the opportunity to incorporate 21st century strategies, programs, technology, engineering, architecture and design into buildings which will in turn lead to savings for the state. It is a win win proposition. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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**SB707**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for HEA on Feb 10, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
James McCay	Individual	Support	No

Comments: SUPPORT SB 707 Aloha! Thank you to the fine folks who created this awesome bill! I would hope that everyone in an elected position knows the importance of this bill to Hawai'i. We need this - and more importantly this can and must be done as a cost efficient measure. I have worked in solar and energy issues for years, and the amount of money wasted at UH for energy (from HECO) is crazy. A team of competent people working on energy opportunities will save UH FAR more than this initiative will cost the state. Additionally, once these measures are in place, the recurring savings will flow in to all the other programs and areas that are wanted by staff, students, BOR, and the wider community. Please set an example and create the system that is so direly needed today. Support this bill and be proud of what you do. Thank you for your time and serious consideration. Mahalo, James McCay, LEED AP Private, concerned citizen 2957 Kalakaua Ave Honolulu HI 96815

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**SB707**

Submitted on: 2/8/2015

Testimony for HEA on Feb 10, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Laura Williams	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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I have been involved w/ Sustainability in Higher Education / Hawaii for 2 years in the capacity of staff member of Kaua'i Community College, and testify that funding for a UH System Office of Sustainability would:

- support implementation of the Board of Regents' sustainability policy to achieve carbon neutrality, zero waste, and local food self sufficiency
- develop mechanisms to track and re-invest savings realized from sustainability initiatives
- provide coordination across all ten campuses to help students develop sustainability curriculum and articulate courses in sustainability studies to catalyze the growth of a green economy in Hawaii
- continue to develop more opportunities for students to work on their sustainability passions with financial support through paid positions, internships and fellowships
- support the establishment a Strategic Energy Partnership in collaboration with key stakeholders that may include the Public Utilities Commission, Hawaii Energy, the utility company, the UH Foundation, and others to finance energy efficiency and demand management projects that can realize significant energy cost savings
- expand the impact of the annual Sustainability in Higher Education Summit, an important catalyst that gathers sustainability practitioners, researchers, and advocates from across the university system and the communities we serve, to integrate sustainability into community engagement, campus life, operations, and curriculum development across all ten campuses
- support the state in achieving its sustainability goals as stated in the Aloha+ Challenge Resolution

CHAIR OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE

SB 707

Tuesday, February 10, 2015

2:00pm State Capitol conference room 224

Aloha, my name is Laurel Pikcunas and I am a master's student of the University of Hawai'i. I am testifying to support SB 707 for establishing a University of Hawai'i sustainability office. I have been involved with Sustainability in Higher Education and Hawaii for seven years in the capacity of learning from my classes, participating in service projects, and volunteering my time with the Student Sustainability Coalition of the University of Hawai'i and I testify that funding for a UH System Office of Sustainability would:

- Support implementation of the Board of Regents' sustainability policy to achieve carbon neutrality, zero waste, and local food self sufficiency
- Develop mechanisms to track and re-invest savings realized from sustainability initiatives
- Provide coordination across all ten campuses to help students develop sustainability curriculum and articulate courses in sustainability studies to catalyze the growth of a green economy in Hawaii
- Continue to develop more opportunities for students to work on their sustainability passions with financial support through paid positions, internships and fellowships
- Support the establishment a Strategic Energy Partnership in collaboration with key stakeholders that may include the Public Utilities Commission, Hawaii Energy, the utility company, the UH Foundation, and others to finance energy efficiency and demand management projects that can realize significant energy cost savings
- Expand the impact of the annual Sustainability in Higher Education Summit, an important catalyst that gathers sustainability practitioners, researchers, and advocates from across the university system and the communities we serve, to integrate sustainability into community engagement, campus life, operations, and curriculum development across all ten campuses
- Support the state in achieving its sustainability goals as stated in the Aloha+ Challenge Resolution

Student efforts on campus are building with excitement. A University of Hawai'i system sustainability office would be a key move to catalyze the creative energy we student have to share. I strongly endorse SB 707, and I thank you for your help and support.

Laurel Pikcunas

University of Hawai'i at Manoa  
Masters, Urban and Regional Planning

Phone: 808-557-0317

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**SB707**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for HEA on Feb 10, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
makoto lane	Individual	Support	No

Comments: This office and the funding for it is necessary in finding financially feasible solutions to climate change. Sustainability is needed around the world for Hawaii and other places most impacted by climate change. We have to set a good example and be a driving force in the world stage to bring new technologies and policies. A three to six foot rise in sea levels and unpredictable weather patterns will greatly impact our islands, people and culture. The financial impact of losing shoreline, healthy reef ecosystems and vacationer dollars is going to be catastrophic. It's much cheaper and healthier to mitigate climate change rather than adapt. It's the pono thing to do.

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**SB707**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for HEA on Feb 10, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Matthew Lynch	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I strongly support this bill. Funding for a UH System Office of Sustainability would: - support the state in achieving its sustainability goals as stated in the Aloha+ Challenge Resolution - provide coordination across all ten campuses to help students articulate courses in sustainability studies to support the growth of our green economy - continue to develop more opportunities for students to work on their sustainability passions with financial support through paid positions, internships and fellowships - work to implement the BoR sustainability policy to achieve carbon neutrality, zero waste, and local food self sufficiency - support the establishment a Strategic Energy Partnership to finance energy efficiency and demand management projects and unlock energy cost savings - develop mechanisms to track and re-invest savings realized from sustainability initiatives - support the annual Sustainability in Higher Education Summit, an important catalyst to integrate sustainability into campus life, operations, curriculum development, and community engagement across all ten campuses

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**SB707**

Submitted on: 2/7/2015

Testimony for HEA on Feb 10, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nancy Redfeather	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**SB707**

Submitted on: 2/7/2015

Testimony for HEA on Feb 10, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Natalie Hanson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**SB707**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for HEA on Feb 10, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Peter Mouginis-Mark	University of Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

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Dear Hawaii Senate:

**I wish to support Senate Bill 707**, which would establish a University of Hawaii sustainability office for the entire UH System, and hire the necessary staff.

As a university professor, I have been involved in sustainability research at the University's Manoa campus for the past four years, principally guiding faculty research in renewable energy, coastal sustainability and, most recently, water sustainability. I have had the good fortune to interact with many faculty and students across the Manoa campus, and I see that there are many fine individual efforts already under way. But what has become abundantly clear is that there is no central organization to these efforts, and many faculty members are unaware of the opportunities to either teach interdisciplinary courses on sustainability, or to submit research proposals involving multiple areas of sustainability expertise.

Hawaii is at great risk due to climate change and our geographic location in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. We are extremely dependent on imported oil for our energy and for imported food to feed our population. As rainfall patterns change due to climate change, we will also be highly challenged to deal with potential water shortages over the next few years to decades. Sustainability deals with all of these issues, as well as many other topics (e.g., recycling, green buildings, smart grids, and zero waste) and so a single office within the UH System would enable the University to address all of these issues in a coordinated manner. With this office, the University would then be in the position to inform the general public about the issues involved, as well as make recommendations on how we might mitigate against the sustainability hazards that we are facing.

Both as an academic and a long-term (32+ years) resident on Oahu, I feel that it is vital that Hawaii takes an aggressive stance in the wide range of topics that sustainability covers. Hawaii is a unique place, and we must do everything that we can to preserve it for future generations. Furthermore, our economy will be badly impacted if we ignore these sustainability issues until it is too late. The creation and funding of the University of Hawaii sustainability office would be a significant important step in addressing these concerns.

Thank you for your support of this Bill.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter Mani-Ruh".

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**SB707**

Submitted on: 2/6/2015

Testimony for HEA on Feb 10, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
R. Kinslow	Individual	Support	No

Comments: An essential step towards a low carbon resilient future is the establishment and funding of visionary coordinators of the efforts to move towards sustainability, especially at cumbersome slow-moving organizations such as UHM.

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**SB707**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for HEA on Feb 10, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Rafael Bergstrom	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I would like to voice my strong support for SB707. As a graduate of the University of Hawaii with a masters in Natural Resources and Environmental Management I see great possibility for UH in its sustainability programs. To achieve goals of becoming a nationally leading campus in sustainability it will be vital to have dedicated staff pursuing the mission. Creating a campus that is a model for Hawai'i in renewable energies, stormwater management, low impact development, and green infrastructure will need on the ground staff studying and implementing these transformative innovations. There is great opportunity in these positions and I strongly support this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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**SB707**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for HEA on Feb 10, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Robert Franco	Individual	Support	No

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*I have been involved w/ Sustainability in Higher Education / Hawaii for 35 years in the capacity of East-West Center researcher and UH professor, and testify that funding for a UH System Office of Sustainability would:*

- support implementation of the Board of Regents' sustainability policy to achieve carbon neutrality, zero waste, and local food self sufficiency
- develop mechanisms to track and re-invest savings realized from sustainability initiatives
- provide coordination across all ten campuses to help students develop sustainability curriculum and articulate courses in sustainability studies to catalyze the growth of a green economy in Hawaii
- continue to develop more opportunities for students to work on their sustainability passions with financial support through paid positions, internships and fellowships
- support the establishment a Strategic Energy Partnership in collaboration with key stakeholders that may include the Public Utilities Commission, Hawaii Energy, the utility company, the UH Foundation, and others to finance energy efficiency and demand management projects that can realize significant energy cost savings
- expand the impact of the annual Sustainability in Higher Education Summit, an important catalyst that gathers sustainability practitioners, researchers, and advocates from across the university system and the communities we serve, to integrate sustainability into community engagement, campus life, operations, and curriculum development across all ten campuses
- support the state in achieving its sustainability goals as stated in the Aloha+ Challenge Resolution.

As our world confronts the existential challenge of climate change, and our islands confront the first feedback loops from sea level rise, ocean warming, acidification and coral reef degradation, the State and University of Hawaii need to lead mitigation, adaptation, and resilience building efforts. This position will signal that we are ready to lead despite the gridlock in our nations' capitol. Climate change is not a political issue, it is a public health challenge for our people in these islands, the islands and coastal communities of the world, and all humanity and ecology.

**SUPPORT SB 707**

Tai-An Miao  
1508 Iao Lane  
Honolulu, HI 96817

February 7, 2015

State of Hawaii Senate  
Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Lorraine Inouye, Vice-Chair

RE: SUPPORT SB 707

Aloha Committee on Higher Education and the Arts:

As a PhD Candidate at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, I testify that funding for a UH System Office of Sustainability would significantly contribute to the successful implementation of the sustainability policy of the UH BOR. The policy's goals of carbon neutrality, zero waste, and local food production are important to ensuring sustainable growth and development for Hawaii's future. Funding for the UH Office of Sustainability will support the BOR's ability to work in collaboration with other key agency stakeholders, develop an effective system for evaluating outcomes and reinvest savings resulting from sustainability initiatives; support student involvement in the initiative through student jobs and internships as well as curriculum development and training. SB707 will also support the state in achieving its sustainability goals as stated in the Aloha+ Challenge Resolution.

Mahalo,  
Tai-An Miao

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**SB707**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for HEA on Feb 10, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 224

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

Comments: I have been involved with Sustainability in Higher Education in Hawaii for 9 years as UH/CTAHR Faculty with Extension, Research and Instruction appointments in Sustainable and Organic Farming Systems, and testify that funding for a UH System Office of Sustainability would: •support implementation of the Board of Regents' sustainability policy to achieve carbon neutrality, zero waste, and local food self sufficiency •develop mechanisms to track and re-invest savings realized from sustainability initiatives •provide coordination across all ten campuses to help students develop sustainability curriculum and articulate courses in sustainability studies to catalyze the growth of a green economy in Hawaii •continue to develop more opportunities for students to work on their sustainability passions with financial support through paid positions, internships and fellowships •support the establishment a Strategic Energy Partnership in collaboration with key stakeholders that may include the Public Utilities Commission, Hawaii Energy, the utility company, the UH Foundation, and others to finance energy efficiency and demand management projects that can realize significant energy cost savings •expand the impact of the annual Sustainability in Higher Education Summit, an important catalyst that gathers sustainability practitioners, researchers, and advocates from across the university system and the communities we serve, to integrate sustainability into community engagement, campus life, operations, and curriculum development across all ten campuses •support the state in achieving its sustainability goals as stated in the Aloha+ Challenge Resolution

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