



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
February 9, 2017 at 2:02 p.m.

By
John Morton
Vice President for Community Colleges
University of Hawai'i System

HB 1591 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PROGRAM

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1591. This measure would establish a new scholarship program called Hawai'i's Promise that provides support for students with financial need as defined by the U.S. Department of Education, to attend the UH Community Colleges at no cost for tuition, fees, books, supplies and transportation.

Hawai'i's Promise would be a "last dollar" scholarship. Other sources of financial aid such as federal Pell grants, UH opportunity scholarships, and other public and privately sponsored scholarships would be applied first, and then Hawai'i's Promise would provide for any unmet needs in the categories mentioned above. This measure would allow any Hawai'i resident who meets the eligibility criteria to attend a UH Community College campus, at no cost for tuition, fees, books, supplies, and transportation. We are hopeful that this measure will encourage more students to attend a community college, leading to a better trained workforce to meet the employment demands of our state.

The University of Hawai'i fully supports this bill.



Ken Hayashida, P.E. | President
Michael Hunnemann, P.E. | Vice President

**Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on [Higher Education](#)
February 9, 2017 at 2:02 PM
by
Ken Hayashida
KAI Hawaii, Inc.**

HB 1591 - RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII'S PROMISE PROGRAM.

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 1591 which provides "last dollar" scholarships for the unmet need of qualified students at any University of Hawai'i community college campus who meet certain criteria.

I strongly support HB 1591. As a UH Alumni and business person, I am proud of the education I received at the University of Hawai'i and recognize the critical role UH plays in educating our citizenry for Hawai'i's multi-faceted workforce.

The University of Hawai'i Promise Program will effectively remove cost as a barrier to higher education for UH community college students statewide facing prohibitive financial challenges. It will ensure that promising, ambitious students have the resources they need to focus on their studies and build a better future for themselves and their families.

Their future success impacts us all.

The University of Hawai'i Promise Program will help our state's educational leaders meet the goal of having 55% of working-age adults hold a two- or four-year degree by the year 2025. Achieving this goal is critical to Hawai'i's future economic health, and our community's wellbeing.

According to the [Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce](#), by 2020, 70% of jobs in Hawai'i will require some college education. In 2014, 43.5 percent of Hawai'i's working age adults (25-65 years) held a 2- or 4-year college degree according to the U.S. Census. *More Hawai'i residents with college degrees are needed to fill workforce demands of the future.*

The University of Hawai'i Promise Program will also help our most economically disadvantaged students escape the cycle of poverty. High school graduates are three times more likely to live in poverty than college graduates, and eight times more likely to depend on public assistance.

With your support, we can truly open the doors of education for all, and strengthen our families and community as a whole. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Hayashida
President
KAI Hawaii, Inc.

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on [Higher Education](#)
February 9, 2017 at 2:02 PM
by
Bernadette Baraquio

HB 1591 - RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I PROMISE PROGRAM.

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 1591 which provides "last dollar" scholarships for the unmet need of qualified students at any University of Hawai'i community college campus who meet certain criteria.

I strongly support HB 1591. As a proud *UH Alum and President of the UH Alumni Association*, I am grateful for the education I received at the University of Hawai'i and recognize the critical role UH plays in educating the future generations of our state.

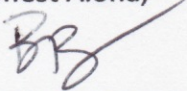
The University of Hawai'i Promise Program will effectively remove cost as a barrier to higher education for UH students statewide facing prohibitive financial challenges. It will ensure that promising, ambitious students have the resources they need to focus on their studies and build a better future for themselves and their families.

Their future success impacts us all.

The University of Hawai'i Promise Program will help our state's educational leaders meet the goal of having 55% of working-age adults hold a two- or four-year degree by the year 2025. Achieving this goal is critical to Hawai'i's future economic health, and our community's wellbeing.

I truly believe that higher education offers many opportunities for economically disadvantaged students to escape the cycle of poverty. With your support, we can truly open the doors of education for all, and strengthen our families and community as a whole. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

Warmest Aloha,



Bernadette Baraquio

Meiyi Wong
(808) 681-2197
meiyik@hawaii.edu

Supporting Testimony for HB1591 and 1594
Hearing: Thursday, February 9, 2017, 2:02 PM

To the House Committee on Higher Education,

My name is Meiyi Wong, and I'm 21 years old. This spring, I will receive my Associate Degree in Human Services from Honolulu Community College. From there, my plan is to attend the UH School of Social Work and earn my BSW. My ultimate goal is to earn my MSW to fulfill my dream of becoming a licensed social worker in mental health.

As a full-time college student who has been attending HCC for the past two years, I can personally attest to the myriad benefits free tuition would offer. Most students I know are struggling to balance work, school, volunteering, family responsibilities, and their personal lives, and a frequent topic of discussion among us is the rapidly climbing cost of tuition and books. Many of us young adults are forced to rely on our parents' financial support, for much longer than we'd like, because we simply can't afford the cost of living in Hawai'i while pursuing an education. Several of my classmates who are supporting themselves, and often their families as well, can only attend school part-time due to their hectic schedules. These men and women are often working more than forty hours per week while juggling papers and studying for exams, and still they may be living paycheck to paycheck. Jobs that community college students are eligible for typically don't pay enough to cover both living and tuition expenses, resulting in a generation of students who are stressed and sleep-deprived not due to partying it up in the dorms but to working night shifts in bars and tending to crying babies while trying to complete tomorrow's English homework.

I am fortunate enough to have my father's support for my schooling, knowing that were I to be on my own, I would not be in school at all. I've worked since I was eighteen years old, and none of my jobs have paid me more than \$13 an hour. I spent six months working in a restaurant where I was paid below minimum wage to be on my feet all day. I've held two jobs simultaneously, working full-time, and my combined paychecks were not even enough to pay the rent for my modest apartment. Add to that the fact that employees are increasingly being relegated to "on-call" status. I can't imagine the pressure and difficulties faced by students who are trying to maintain their GPAs while paying for classes each semester, commuting to school and their jobsite(s), and carving out mandatory time for housework, family, and themselves. Providing free tuition for eligible students would relieve us of an enormous burden. Imagine what would happen if students no longer had to worry about coming up with the money to fund their education, education crucial to getting their dream job or simply a job that pays enough to sustain a decent standard of living. How many recent (and not-so-recent) high school graduates could be motivated to begin pursuing their degrees, how many hundreds of hard-earned dollars could be saved and devoted to other necessary expenses, how many hours could be spent not working overtime in retail but in playing with one's children or working out to better one's

health. Instead of investing precious time in menial jobs merely to pay the bills, students could take up opportunities for travel, volunteer with causes that are meaningful to them, or pursue independent projects, contributing their unique genius to a world that needs them. I strongly pledge my support for HB1591 and HB1594, and the ideas they espouse. It's commonly stated that students are the future; it's time to afford us tangible proof that you believe in our potential and are willing and intentional regarding your support of us.

Sincerely,

Meiyi Wong

Attention: Mr. Justin H. Woodson

My name is Ro-Ann Delos Reyes and I am currently a student at Leeward Community College. I am currently residing in Kapolei. Personally as a mother and a student I strongly support bill HB1591 because I feel that higher education will benefit our society. Lastly, I would like to thank you for supporting the bill. We appreciate your time.

Sincerely,
Ro-Ann Delos Reyes

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 8, 2017 10:27 AM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: mkaleikini@ormat.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1591 on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM

HB1591

Submitted on: 2/8/2017

Testimony for HED on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mike Kaleikini	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem and members of the committee: Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 1591 which provides “last dollar” scholarships for the unmet need of qualified students at any University of Hawai‘i community college campus who meet certain criteria. I strongly support HB 1591. As a member of our community and a business person, I recognize the critical role UH plays in educating our citizenry for Hawai‘i’s multi-faceted workforce. The University of Hawai‘i Promise Program will effectively remove cost as a barrier to higher education for UH community college students statewide facing prohibitive financial challenges. It will ensure that promising, ambitious students have the resources they need to focus on their studies and build a better future for themselves and their families. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

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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Testimony presented before the
House Committee on Higher Education

DATE: Thursday, February 9, 2017

TIME: 2:02 P.M.

PLACE: Conference Room 309,
State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

By Rovy Anne Dipaysa
Waipahu High School Early College Student

HB 1591 and HB 1594 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE
PROGRAM

POSITION: Support

Dear Honorable Committee Chair Rep. Justin H. Woodson, and Vice Chair Rep. Mark J. Hashem, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rovy Anne Dipaysa. During the summer 2014, after graduating from Waipahu Intermediate School and before beginning Waipahu High School, I enrolled in the Waipahu High School Early College Program as one of the State of Hawaii's first Early College Olympians with the aim and purpose of earning my Associate in Arts degree by the time I graduate from high school. Presently, I am in 11th grade at Waipahu High School and by the end of this spring semester, I will have completed 50 of the 60 credits (or 83%) required for the Associate in Arts degree. After I graduate from high school, I plan to attend UH West Oahu and major in Healthcare Administration. Ultimately, I have high aspirations to earn a Ph.D.; however, I am still exploring various fields study for graduate school.

As a new immigrant, who arrived in Hawaii in May 2012, I stand firmly in support of HB 1591 and HB 1594 because I believe that higher education is a powerful way to transition people out of the poverty.

“Using data from the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, Wendy Erisman and Shannon Looney found that approximately half of students who entered four-year and two-year colleges in 1995 had earned a credential six years later. The figure was similar for immigrants and for the native-born (including the children of immigrants).”

As a first-generation immigrant, my family struggles in poverty. When we lived in the Philippines, my family came from a rural area where subsistence was a daily challenge. My family and I were blessed to have been given visas to come to America where, through hard work and sacrifice, we could have a better life. When we moved to Hawaii, we rented a crowded and cramped apartment (together with our extended family) because my parents were unable to own or even rent their own place. Because my parents did not have chance to go to college here in the U.S, they both have low-income jobs. The hardships of poverty have been the driving force behind my motivation to get a college education so that I can help move my family out of the poverty.

When I was in 8th grade at Waipahu Intermediate School, Dr. Mark Silliman, Early College Director at Waipahu High School, introduced us to the Waipahu High School Early College Program. Without any hesitation, I seized the opportunity and took my first Early College course when I was a rising freshmen in the summer 2014 term before I took any high school classes. I felt that this was the start of my journey toward earning a college degree. Together with 13 other Early College Olympians at Waipahu High School, we anticipate getting our Associate in Arts degree by the same time we graduate from high school in May 2018. However, our journey will not end there. All of my Olympian classmates agree that our goal is to go beyond the Associate degree. We all aspire to earn a Bachelor's, Master's or even a doctoral degree one day.

I humbly submit this testimony in support of Hawaii's Promise bill, not merely for myself, but for the many thousands of lower-income, underrepresented, first generation college students who live in Hawaii and who follow in our early college foot steps. The passage of this bill should not be viewed as a “handout,” but rather a “hand up.” We ask only to be given the opportunity to improve our lives and the quality of life for everyone in our communities. In return for passing the Hawaii Promise, we promise to work hard and help the State of Hawaii

reach its goal of having 55 percent of its citizens earn a college degree by 2025. Thank you for supporting the passage of this bill and for investing in a more promising future for all of Hawaii's residents.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2017 1:20 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: fu_dog_5@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1591 on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM*

HB1591

Submitted on: 2/6/2017

Testimony for HED on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
robert	Individual	Oppose	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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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 8, 2017 4:54 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: cildefon@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1591 on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM



HB1591

Submitted on: 2/8/2017

Testimony for HED on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
christian ildefonso	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I believe that two years of free college is great for students. It is a great start for people who decides to continue their education and if they would want to continue to their four years in college, they would need to pay less. With an associate, people could have a higher pay in their jobs than just having a high school diploma.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 8, 2017 4:50 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: eigordon@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1591 on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM

LATE

HB1591

Submitted on: 2/8/2017

Testimony for HED on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Eric Gordon	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: Hi my name is Ericson Gordon. I agree with the bill to support people with education. I would solely help people to afford school. I vote yay for the bill.

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hashem2 - Michael

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 8, 2017 4:32 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: kylie7@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1591 on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM

LATE

HB1591

Submitted on: 2/8/2017

Testimony for HED on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
kylie okada	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am a college and broke .. working full time but not enough money live in Hawaii. I don't make slot of money and would like free tuition . It will help me get a collage degree. And I turn I will be able to help infant and toddler with parent with young child.

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LATE

To: Chair Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair Mark J. Hashem

House Higher Education Committee Members

From: Christine Kaye Guira

Subject: TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 1591

Establishes the University of Hawaii Promise Program to provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of qualified students enrolled at a University of Hawaii Community College. Appropriates funds to establish and implement the program.

Hello my name is Christine Kaye Guira, I am currently studying at Leeward Community College and I am majoring in computer science. This is now my second semester in college. Someday I want to achieve my goal of becoming a computer science degree holder because I want to contribute in expanding the industry of technology and give back what society have given me.

I support this bill because it will help many students like me to achieve their dreams. I also believe that education is very important because it gives us the baseline to survive as adults in this world. The courses that each of us are achieving will someday help our economy grow, every individual have their own dreams and we all want to achieve those dreams that we have but if money is a problem for everyone, I hope that you will help us. Education is always the key to success and getting a higher-level education will help us get a secure and decent job that can produce enough money for our everyday spending.

Thank you for supporting the bill, that can help a lot of college students with their problem with money and not only that you support it, instead you really pushed it to be put in hearing. I hope this bill will be passed as soon as possible. We are willing to study hard to get the grade that you require.

HEDtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 8, 2017 10:20 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: geryll@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1591 on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM



HB1591

Submitted on: 2/8/2017

Testimony for HED on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Geryll Anthony Agno	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I STRONGLY SUPPORT this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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HEDtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 8, 2017 9:17 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: ramizusawa@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1591 on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM*



HB1591

Submitted on: 2/8/2017

Testimony for HED on Feb 9, 2017 14:02PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Richard Mizusawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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