



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Human Services
Wednesday, February 1, 2017 at 9:30 am

By
Noreen Mokuau, Dean
Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 609 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Morikawa, Vice Chair Todd, and Members of the Committee on Human Services,

As Dean of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work, I strongly support HB 609. By 2030, 24% of Hawai'i's population will be age 65 or older, compared to 21% nationally. The graying of Hawai'i is associated with challenges including elder abuse, dementia, caregiving, affordable age-friendly housing and transportation, and long-term care.

With support from the legislature, the UHM Center on Aging (COA) can build capacity to respond to such issues. Currently, with a permanent G-funded Director and a temporary researcher, funded through short term grants and contracts, the COA's capacity to expand is limited. Ongoing projects address important community needs, but are limited to activities specified in grant and contract language. The larger systemic needs of the community, for example, developing the eldercare workforce and retraining older adults to remain in the workforce, require additional professional support. Funding for a permanent associate professor position and associate specialist position, will equip the COA in achieving all areas of its *mission*: to engage in workforce development through innovative programs of interdisciplinary gerontological education and practice; to engage in collaborative and interdisciplinary research on critical aging-related areas; and to provide state-of-the-art gerontological information to policy makers, program managers, clinicians and the general public.

The UHM COA is committed to the highest level of excellence in education, research and service to our community. Specifically, we need staff to help us:

- Respond to requests from the state to address the escalating needs and challenges faced by our growing aging population.
- Assist state agencies to develop and evaluate services for older adults.
- Seek and secure extramural funds for aging research from local, federal, and international sources as well as support state agencies in grant proposal development.
- Provide high quality gerontological education programs, both on the Mānoa campus as well as continuing education and training in the community and through online courses to neighboring islands.

- Reinstatement (currently on hold) and administration of the undergraduate and graduate certificates in gerontology, informed by the latest national *Standards and Guidelines for Gerontology and Geriatrics*, as defined by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) and also conforming to AGHE's *Gerontology Competencies for Undergraduate and Graduate Education*, to build a workforce that is well-prepared to care for our aging population.
- Work with faculty and students interested in gerontology to further their scholarship and publication.

Your support is requisite in providing UHM COA with the capacity to be a community resource for older adults, students, professional groups, healthcare organizations, private and governmental agencies, service providers, caregivers, and diverse consumers, with the intent of improving our health care workforce and the quality of life for all older adults in Hawai'i.

Please note, I strongly support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Biennium Budget.



Testifier's Name: Gary Simon
President
Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition

Testimony Is Directed To: House Committee on Human Services

MEASURE: HB609
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
Appropriates funds for a permanent full-time associate professor and permanent full-time associate specialist position within the University of Hawaii Center on Aging.

Date & Time of Hearing: Wednesday, February 1, 2017, 9:30 a. m.

Position: **The Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition strongly supports HB609.**

Dear Chair Morikawa, Vice Chair Todd, and Honorable Members of the House Committee on Human Services:

I am Gary Simon, President of the Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition (HFCC).

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

In 2030, 24% of Hawai'i's population will be aged 65 or older, compared to 21% nationally. This dramatic increase is associated with growing and devastating challenges including elder abuse, dementia, care giving, affordable age-friendly housing and transportation, and long-term care.

With support from the legislature, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UH Mānoa) Center on Aging (COA) can build capacity to respond to such issues.

Currently, with a permanent Director and a temporary researcher who is funded through grants and contracts, the COA's capacity to expand is limited. Current projects address important community needs, but are limited to activities specified in grant and contract language.

The larger systemic needs of the community (for example, developing the eldercare workforce and retraining older adults to remain in the workforce) are not being addressed.

Funding for a permanent associate professor position and associate specialist position, with support from ancillary UH Mānoa endowment funds, will equip the COA in achieving all areas of its *mission: to engage in workforce development through*

innovative programs of interdisciplinary gerontological education and practice; to engage in collaborative and interdisciplinary research on critical aging-related areas; and to provide state-of-the art gerontological information to policy makers, program managers, clinicians and the general public.

The UH Mānoa COA is committed to the highest level of excellence in education, research and service to our community. Specifically, we need staff to help us:

- Respond to requests from the State to address the escalating needs and challenges faced by our growing aging population.
- Assist state agencies to develop and evaluate services for older adults.
- Seek and secure extramural funds for aging research from local, federal, and international sources as well as support State agencies in grant proposal development.
- Provide high quality gerontological education programs, both on the Manoa campus as well as continuing education and training in the community and through online courses to neighboring islands.
- Reinstate and administer the undergraduate and graduate certificates in gerontology (which are currently on hold), informed by the latest national *Standards and Guidelines for Gerontology and Geriatrics*, as defined by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) and also conforming to AGHE's *Gerontology Competencies for Undergraduate and Graduate Education*, to build a workforce that is well-prepared to care for our aging population.
- Work with faculty and students interested in gerontology to further their scholarship and publication.

Your support is imperative in providing COA with the capacity to be a community resource for our kupuna, care givers, students, professional groups, healthcare organizations, private and governmental agencies, and service providers, with the intent of improving our health care workforce and the quality of life for all older adults in Hawai'i.

We urge you to support HB609 and to recommend its passage, and we thank you for seriously considering the Bill.

Sincerely,



Gary Simon

President

Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition

Phone 808 547 8140

Email gsimon@stfrancishawaii.org

HUStestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, January 28, 2017 3:49 PM
To: HUStestimony
Cc: elwegner1@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB609 on Feb 1, 2017 09:30AM*

HB609

Submitted on: 1/28/2017

Testimony for HUS on Feb 1, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Eldon L. Wegner	Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs (PABEA	Support	Yes

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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Representative Dee Morikawa, Chair
Representative Chris Todd, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Human Services

Testimony by Patrick J. Duarte, President & CEO, Kāhala Senior Living Community, Inc.

Wednesday, February 1, 2017

Support of HB 609, Relating to the University of Hawai'i Center on Aging

Kāhala Senior Living Community, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization that operates Kāhala Nui, a life plan community that is home to approximately 450 seniors, and Live Well at Iwilei, a senior wellness center. As a provider of residential services, day care services, assisted living, memory support, and nursing care, we are faced with the challenge of finding enough qualified staff to serve the needs of our senior population. We are also well aware that the seniors served by institutional providers like Kāhala Nui represent only a very small percentage of the kūpuna needing care or assistance in Hawai'i. With the expected continued growth of our senior population, we are likely approaching a severe care-provider workforce shortage in our state. It is vital that action be taken now to help our state avoid a future crisis.

Development of the eldercare workforce has to be one of our state's top priorities, and HB 609 will be instrumental in enabling the state to address this looming issue. The University of Hawai'i at Manoa Center on Aging (UHM COA) can play a pivotal role in workforce development by providing gerontological education programs at the University and continuing education and training in the community and online. They can also provide assistance to state agencies tasked with developing and evaluating services for seniors. With the additional staff HB 609 will provide, UHM COA will be able to reinstate the undergraduate and graduate certificates in gerontology, which will be crucial in preparing students for careers in service to older adults. A fully operational Center on Aging will ensure that Hawaii's providers, policy makers and general public have access to state-of-the-art gerontological information and practices.

My organization strongly supports the passage of HB 609. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick J. Duarte', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above the printed name.

Patrick J. Duarte



House of Representatives
Committee on Human Services
Wednesday, February 1, 2017
9:30 a.m.
Conference Room 329

TO: Representative Dee Morikawa, Chair

RE: **HB 609- RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII**

I am Audrey Suga-Nakagawa, Advocacy Director for AARP Hawaii. AARP is a nonprofit, non-partisan membership organization representing nearly 150,000 members in Hawaii. It serves as a trusted source on issues critical to people over age 50 and their families, and advocates on issues that matter to Hawaii's families –including support for family caregivers, access to affordable health care and building a livable community for all generations.

AARP Hawaii strongly supports HB 609 –Relating to the University of Hawaii

The rapid aging of Hawaii's population calls for greater capacity in gerontological education programs aimed at responding to the needs of the state's elderly residents and their families, including a workforce that is educated and prepared to address their needs. The funding of two permanent positions at the UH Center on Aging would represent an important step in meeting the evolving need of Hawaii's older adult population.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support for HB 609.

Audrey Suga-Nakagawa, Advocacy Director
AARP Hawaii



LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE: House Committee on Human Resources

DATE: Wednesday, February 1, 2017

TIME: 9:30

PLACE: Conference Room 329

RE: HB 609 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

KOKUA COUNCIL POSITION: STRONGLY SUPPORT

Chair Morikawa, Members of the Committee

In spite of having a population that is aging faster than that of most states, Hawaii has been a bit slow in responding to their needs. We woefully underfund our quality control mechanisms, from failing to inspect and post reports on residential facilities, to starving our Long Term Ombudsman.

At the University of Hawaii, public policy units are not seen as high priorities. Most survive by stretching the workloads of existing faculty. With our rapidly increasing aging population, we might hope that our state in general, and our University in particular, would appreciate the need for good policy research and growing our gerontology workforce.

This bill is important in two respects. It recognizes that the UH can play an important role in the state's intelligent commitment to our seniors. And it recognizes that the Center on Aging in particular is a valuable asset deserving of more financial support.

Kokua Council strongly supports more funding for this program.

Mahalo for your sincere consideration of our testimony.

Prepared by Jim Shon on behalf of Kokua Council.

The **Kokua Council** is one of Hawaii's oldest advocacy groups. Kokua Council seeks to empower seniors and other concerned citizens to be effective advocates in shaping the future and well-being of our community, with particular attention to those needing help in advocating for themselves. We meet monthly at Hawaii United Methodist Church.



Kokua Council is an advocacy group basing its policy recommendations on the type of information

summarized below. Also see Demographic profile:

http://uhfamily.hawaii.edu/publications/brochures/477d1_Hawaii's%20Older%20Adults%20-%20A%20Demographic%20Profile%20HZ%2009-13-16%20v2.pdf

- In 2010, persons aged 60 and over made up 20.6% of the state's population. This share is projected to increase to 28.5% by 2040.
- In Hawaii, 35% of those aged 60 or older live alone.
- By 2020, 40% of Hawaii's workforce will be providing care for older parents.
- Family caregivers provide 70% of all care for frail elderly persons.
- Forty percent of Hawaii workers do not have access to a single day of leave from work for family caregiving.
- There are approximately 12,000 residents of nursing and other residential care facilities.
- The Long-Term Care Ombudsman, with a staff of one, serves all 12,000, or a staff to resident ratio that is six times the recommended ration of one for every 2,000.
- In Hawaii, 46% of the long-term care beds are in small community residential care homes (1,630), and 54% in larger nursing and assisted living facilities.
- The state faces a shortage of eldercare workers and currently many people entering these jobs have no formal training in gerontology.
- In 2016, the cost of home health care in Hawaii was almost \$10,000 higher than the national average.
- The Alzheimer's Association projects that in 2025 ten percent of all Hawaii residents age 65 and over will have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

The **Kokua Council** is one of Hawaii's oldest advocacy groups. Kokua Council seeks to empower seniors and other concerned citizens to be effective advocates in shaping the future and well-being of our community, with particular attention to those needing help in advocating for themselves. We meet monthly at Hawaii United Methodist Church.



hawaii pacific gerontological society

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Human Services
Wednesday, February 1, 2017 at 9:30am

HB609 – Relating to the University of Hawaii Center on Aging (\$). Appropriates funds for a permanent full-time associate professor (1.0 FTE) and permanent full-time associate specialist position (1.0 FTE) within the University of Hawaii Center on Aging.

Chair Morikawa, Vice Chair Todd, and Members of the Committee on Human Services,

The Hawaii Pacific Gerontological Society (HPGS) is in **strong support of HB609**. HPGS is a nonprofit, professional organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of Hawaii's older adults. Currently, more than 400 gerontology educators, medical and social service practitioners, health care providers, agency personnel and organizations from all sectors of the community, older adults, and caregivers make up the membership.

We see the UH Center on Aging as a vital partner in the aging network. The Center has the capacity to be the leader in gerontological education in the state. There is a significant need to attract students to the field of aging. Within the current aging network, professionals need continuing education and training. Without the Center on Aging's leadership in this area, we are concerned about the future growth of the older adult population and the capacity of our workforce to care for and support our kupuna.

The request for 2 permanent positions will provide the Center on Aging with the permanent positions it needs to develop and implement educational initiatives both on campus and in the community.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in strong support of **HB609**.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Percy Ihara', written in a cursive style.

Sincerely,

Percy Ihara
President
Hawaii Pacific Gerontological Society

HUStestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2017 10:41 PM
To: HUStestimony
Cc: marseel@aol.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB609 on Feb 1, 2017 09:30AM

HB609

Submitted on: 1/30/2017

Testimony for HUS on Feb 1, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marilyn	Individual	Support	No

Comments: LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY COMMITTEE: House Committee on Human Resources
DATE: Wednesday, February 1, 2017 TIME: 9:30 PLACE: Conference Room 329 RE: HB 609
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII I am in strong support of this measure. Chair Morikawa, Members of the Committee The University of Hawaii, Center on Aging provides much needed research, education and development of public policy in the field of aging. This is a unique resource for the state for developing a workforce in gerontology, a source for consultation and research and support for policy making in this field. The numbers of elders is growing more rapidly in Hawaii than in other states and compels us to move forward to enhance the lives of seniors and their caregivers. The University of Hawaii Center on Aging must expand to meet the needs of this segment of our society. It deserves this additional funding for its excellent work in the past and for future opportunities to serve the field of gerontology. Mahalo for your consideration of this testimony. Marilyn Seely 46 402 Haiku Plantations Drive Kaneohe, HI 96744 Marseel@aol.com

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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Capt. T. J. Davies, Jr. (Ret.)
909 Kapiolani Blvd # 601
Honolulu, HI 96814-2132
tjdavies@juno.com
808-593-1026

To: House Committee on Human Resources, Chair Dee Morikawa

Date: Wednesday, February 1, 2017

Re: HB 609 Relating to the University of Hawaii, Center on Aging

Chair Morikawa and members of the committee:

My name is T. J. Davies Jr. I am 82 years old, retired and live in Kakaako. I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 609 Relating to the University of Hawaii.

I am an advocate for Kupuna issues and I am writing to ask for your support for the State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.

Hawaii has been a bit slow in responding to kupuna needs In spite of having a population that is aging faster than that of most states, . We woefully underfund our quality control mechanisms, from failing to inspect and post reports on residential facilities, to starving our Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.

Public policy units are not seen as high priorities at the University of Hawaii, and most survive by stretching the workloads of existing faculty. With our rapidly increasing aging population, we might hope that our state in general and our University in particular, would appreciate the need for good policy research and growing our gerontology workforce.

This bill is important in two respects. It recognizes that the UH can play an important role in the state's intelligent commitment to our seniors. And it recognizes that the Center on Aging in particular is a valuable asset deserving of more financial support.

Your favorable consideration of this legislation is requested. Mahalo & Aloha

T. J. Davies Jr., Volunteer
Treasurer, AARP Chapter 60 Honolulu
Treasurer, Kokua Council for Senior Citizens of Hawaii Education Fund
Director, Hawaii Alliance for Retired Americans
Kakaako (District 26 / Senate District 12)

COMMITTEE: House Committee on Human Resources

DATE: Wednesday, February 1, 2017

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 329

RE: HB 609 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

POSITION: STRONGLY SUPPORT

Chair Morikawa, Vice Chair Todd, and members of the Committee on Human Services:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide my personal testimony in support of HB609, relating to the University of Hawai'i Center on Aging (COA). I strongly support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in the University's Board of Regents Approved Executive Biennium Budget. As a member of the faculty at the University of Hawai'i, I support the prioritization process that the administration utilizes to establish their annual budgetary request to the legislature and can only advocate for additional funding of university programs if it does not negatively impact existing requests that are included in the executive budget.

I am Margaret A. Perkinson, PhD, the new director of the UH COA. My doctoral degree is in Human Development and Aging from UC San Francisco, and I have been actively involved in the field of gerontology for over 35 years. In this testimony I will review some unique challenges of aging in Hawaii and potential contributions the COA could make toward addressing these challenges as outlined in the Hawaii State Plan on Aging.

The State of Aging in Hawaii: As noted in the State Plan on Aging, "the State of Hawaii is on a voyage through uncharted waters" in regard to its aging population. In only 13 years, 24% of Hawaii's population will be aged 65 or older. Older adults in Hawaii face unique challenges: they have the longest life expectancy of any state; they confront cost of living and housing costs that are among the highest in the nation; they represent a highly diverse group, requiring culturally competent service providers; and almost 18% speak English "less than very well," requiring services that are linguistically accessible. The State requires a gerontological workforce that is equipped to meet these challenges.

The Hawaii State Plan and Potential COA Contributions The State Plan calls for the forging of strategic partnerships and alliances to meet the needs of Hawaii's elders. With appropriate resources, the COA could be an essential partner in those alliances, acting as consultant to identify state-of-the-art research relevant to pivotal aging issues as defined by the State, such as:

- (1) Maximize opportunities for older adults to age well, remain active, engage in meaningful activities, and contribute to the community. Gerontological research on "successful/positive aging" (e.g., what is it, how to facilitate it, barriers to it) could suggest ways to optimize life situations and choices for elders.
- (2) Address issues of affordable housing and enable older adults to "age in place" at home. NORCs, i.e., "naturally occurring retirement communities" of older adults aging in place are a growing phenomenon, prompting the development of new models of community-based long-term support and services (LTSS) that are less expensive than traditional nursing home care. Gerontologists in housing, community development, technology, and urban planning are proposing various solutions to allow older adults to age in place, and the State's constituents could benefit from this knowledge.
- (3) Support family caregivers. Family members provide approximately 80% of long-term care for older adults. Research on caregiving stress and coping, burden, and uplifts can inform evidence-based

programs to support and enable families to provide more effective care and avoid dropping out of the workforce (at added cost to the State) due to overburden.

(4) Advance social justice and protect the human rights of older adults. Gerontologists in ethics, law, and counseling psychology have addressed issues of elder abuse, whether physical, emotional, financial, sexual, neglect, abandonment, or self-neglect. Occupational justice, promoting the right to engage in activities that are meaningful to the individual, is especially relevant for older adults who are seeking opportunities to engage in the community, whether remaining in the workforce, embarking on second careers, volunteering, redefining the role of grandparenthood, engaging in life-long learning experiences, or exploring new types of meaningful activities as yet unknown.

The COA should be viewed as a resource to the State. It should serve as a conduit to relevant gerontological developments, identify best practices, and convey relevant research findings that will further advance the goals expressed in the State Plan. The field of gerontology is vast, interdisciplinary, and rapidly changing, especially in areas such as technology, the understanding of cognitive changes in later life, and evolving models of LTSS. The field is assuming a less medicalized approach to aging, recognizing that assistance to older adults should not be limited to healthcare and that the impact of an aging population permeates all sectors of society. There is a growing interest in developing supportive, enabling physical and social environments. Practically every component of contemporary life could be made “age-friendly”: transportation (an effort currently underway in the State), housing, business and finance, law, fashion design, and so on. Especially relevant to Hawaii, age-friendly tourism could redefine recreation in later life by offering supportive environments either through technology, enhanced physical environments, or personnel trained in basic applied gerontology.

In addition to identifying relevant information and practices, the COA could assist in (1) adapting these resources to best fit the particular needs and resources of the State’s elder population, (2) informing implementation of evidence-based practice, and (3) evaluating both the process and impact of gerontological programs and policies.

Why HB609: Professional gerontologists with interdisciplinary training and specialized, complimentary expertise working in synergy within the COA can make significant contributions to the fulfillment of the State Plan on Aging. In addition to informing community stakeholders of the latest relevant gerontological findings and conducting our own research on Hawaii-specific aspects of aging, we can provide gerontological training to students, service providers, members in other sectors of the workforce, family caregivers, policy-makers, and to older adults themselves through certificate programs, continuing education offerings, focused seminars and workshops, and small conferences. We work with stakeholders to develop a system of gerontological (and intergenerational) programs and policies that are evidence-based, person-centered, and participant-directed.

However, the field of gerontology is vast, bridging numerous disciplines and addressing numerous issues. It is too vast to be absorbed and translated into practice and policy by one or two individuals. Thus, we strongly support the addition of the two positions requested in HB609, one a traditional faculty member who will generate new research and assist in training the upcoming gerontological workforce in Hawaii, the other as a gerontological specialist who will be more involved in working in the community.

January 30, 2017

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Human Services
Wednesday, February 1, 2017 at 9:30am

RE: Legislative Testimony in support of HB609

Chair Morikawa, Vice Chair Todd, and Members of the Committee on Human Services:

Aloha and thank you for the opportunity to submit my personal testimony in strong support of HB609, regarding the financing of two additional positions for the Center On Aging (COA).

COA plays an important role in Hawaii's community. Funding for a permanent associate professor position and associate specialist position, with support from ancillary UHM endowment funds, will provide COA the much needed opportunity to implement its *mission*: to engage in workforce development through innovative programs of interdisciplinary gerontological education and practice; to engage in collaborative and interdisciplinary research on critical aging-related areas; and to provide social and gerontological information to policy makers, program managers, clinicians and the general public.

As a doctoral student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and a recipient of the COA and Kahala Nui scholarship, I believe that it is important to support the Center by passing HB609. The important research findings and information, as well as the opportunities COA offers to the community and to graduate students like myself, could not be possible without the full support and advocacy of Committee on Human Services.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony.

Mahalo,



Joy Iacanieta

HUStestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2017 3:13 PM
To: HUStestimony
Cc: Tlenzer@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB609 on Feb 1, 2017 09:30AM

HB609

Submitted on: 1/27/2017

Testimony for HUS on Feb 1, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anthony Lenzer, Ph.D	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Workers in the field of aging in Hawaii have long recognized the importance of a strong Gerontology program at the University of Hawaii. Such a program is critical, given the fact that Hawaii's population is aging at a faster rate than the rest of the nation, and Hawaii's people live longer than most Americans. In addition, our older population consists of many different ethnic groups. This means that Hawaii has an even greater need than most states for a well-educated professional and paraprofessional workforce to serve our older population; a robust multiethnic research program to understand our ethnic differences and similarities; and a source for trusted, unbiased information about aging and older people. The University's Center on Aging is the key component in developing this type of campus-wide, interdisciplinary program. As House Bill 609 indicates, the Center's mission has three parts: research, education, and public service. To successfully carry out its mission, permanent full-time staff is needed. For many years, the University Administration has not included staffing for the Center in its budget requests to the Legislature. The Center presently has a permanent director together with a part-time researcher, hired through short-term grants and contracts. This limits the Center to those activities funded by such grants, which are not supportive of the Center's basic mission. Passage of House Bill 609 will greatly strengthen the Center, by funding (a) an Associate Professor position for professional education and training, including reinstating the undergraduate and graduate certificates in Gerontology for students interested in careers in aging; and (b) an Associate Specialist position to stimulate and coordinate paraprofessional training and workforce development. Passage of this Bill will also demonstrate to the University Administration that the Legislature regards Gerontology as an important part of the University's mission. In the interest of full disclosure, I should indicate that I was the first Director of the Center on Aging, serving from 1988 to 1993. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important legislation.

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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