



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
Thursday, February 16, 2017 at 2:04 p.m.

by

Vassilis L. Syrmos, Vice President for Research and Innovation
University of Hawai'i System

HB 909 HD1 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports this measure.

The University of Hawai'i and local business community have partnered on the Hawai'i Innovation Initiative, a bold and proactive effort to help diversify the state's economy by building a thriving innovation, research, education and training enterprise -- to be driven by the growth of new industries in Hawai'i and fueled by UH's plans to aggressively commercialize its research over the next decade.

A key to the success of this initiative is the establishment of the Center of Commercialization, which will serve as a virtual umbrella that will encompass grant development/commercialization/innovation related programs to increase efficiencies, effectiveness and success necessary for the establishment of a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem at UH. The center will encompass the Strategic Grants Development Office, Office of Technology Transfer and Economic Development and the XLR8UH proof of concept center/venture accelerator – to help “quarterback” the three interwoven entities in assisting new strategic hires and current faculty with extramural funding, entrepreneurship and commercialization.

The University of Hawai'i appreciates the Legislature's amendment of this measure in HD1 to immediately establish the Center for Commercialization, in lieu of a lengthy study. To maximize the impact of the Center for Commercialization, UH urges the Legislature to concurrently allow passage of measures like HB 166, HB 1156 and HB 847 that will enable UH to start the programs initiatives necessary for successful research commercialization.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
On Thursday, Friday 16th at 2:04 p.m. Conference Room 309
by
Brandon Marc Higa (as current law student)

HB 909, HD1 (HSCR 83) – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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

My name is Brandon Marc Higa, a second year law student at the University of Hawaii William S. Richardson School of Law. I am submitting this testimony as a private citizen and not in my capacity as a current member of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents member.

I am writing in support of HB 909, HD1 (HSCR 83) RELATING TO UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII RESEARCH, as integral measures to support the University of Hawaii's Hawaii Innovation Initiative.

In particular, I am in support of HB 909, HD1's (HSCR 83) underlying purpose to provide timely and efficient commercialization of intellectual property created by basic and applied research at the university as a driver of economic health and diversification for the State of Hawaii.

The proposed Center for Commercialization is necessary for the University of Hawaii to proactively build the infrastructure needed to foster an environment conducive to innovation among faculty, students, and community members. The proposed commercialization hub will build capacity to greatly enhance the productivity in various revenue generating activities. I am optimistic the commercialization efforts will build confidence and excitement in the innovative activities taking place at the University of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of these measures.

Respectfully submitted: February 15, 2017.

s/Brandon Marc Higa



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

**Testimony to the House Committee on Higher Education
Thursday, February 16, 2017 at 2:04 P.M.
Conference Room 309, State Capitol**

LATE

RE: HOUSE BILL 909 HD1 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** HB 909 HD1, which establishes a Center for Commercialization at the University of Hawaii to commercially use intellectual property generated from research at the University for the benefit of the State and its residents.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 1,600+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

The University of Hawaii is the state's public institution supporting an array of programs and is considered a leading research university. Much of the research produced by these many fields has strong commercial potential that has not been capitalized. In order to reach its full potential, UH needs to proactively move these research projects to commercialization in order to become a major contributor to the state's economy and workforce. This bill would establish the Center for Commercialization and create the second state agency with this capability that could help move projects along and achieve maximum commercial potential within the University.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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LATE

HVCA

HAWAII VENTURE CAPITAL ASSOCIATION

Statement of
Melialani James
President
Hawaii Venture Capital Association (HVCA)

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
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In Consideration of
HB 909 HD1 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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

The Hawaii Venture Capital Association (HVCA) **strongly supports** this bill establish the Center of Commercialization.

Since its founding in 1988, the Hawaii Venture Capital Association (HVCA) has stood as a nexus for entrepreneurs, capital foundation, and networking opportunities in Hawaii. Fostering entrepreneurship through education and exposure to prime members of our business community continues to be our goal as we strive to grow a vibrant and successful venture community.

The University of Hawaii's research and innovation has the potential for successful commercialization that contributes directly to the State's economy, its academic and business reputation and to creating diverse, well-paying jobs and careers. This bill will assist in further developing and providing strategic direction for a thriving innovation ecosystem.

HVCA is committed to working with XLR8UH, and will actively connect newly formed companies to its wide network in order to maintain competitiveness and grow the industry. We fully agree on the relevance and importance of HB 909 HD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our comments on this bill.