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Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2017 1:27 PM
To: HWNTestimony
Cc: blawaiianlvr@icloud.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1294 on Feb 9, 2017 13:15PM

SB1294

Submitted on: 2/9/2017

Testimony for HWN/HRE on Feb 9, 2017 13:15PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
De MONT R. D. CONNER	Ho'omana Pono, LLC.	Support	Yes

Comments: We STRONGLY SUPPORT this bill. As a native Hawaiian Advocacy Corporation, that operates out of the Wai`anae Coast, we greatly believe that it is about time that we, the first peoples of this Ko Pae`aina, is able to bring back that which was taken from us: our Language, Culture & Country. This is a huge step forward. Mahalo.

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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 9, 2017

TO: The Honorable Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Chair
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

The Honorable Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair
Senate Committee on Higher Education

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 1294 - RELATING TO NATIVE HAWAIIAN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Hearing: February 9, 2017, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 414, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of the bill to the extent it does not conflict with priorities identified in the Governor's Executive Budget request, and offers comments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of SB 1294 is to establish an undergraduate health sciences academy at the University of Hawaii to increase recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and first generation college students; and makes an appropriation.

DHS participated in the work of the Native Hawaiian Health Task Force created by Senate Resolution 60 Senate Draft 1, Regular Session of 2014, and supports the Task Force's efforts to advance health care equity for Native Hawaiians and all people of Hawaii. As a department, DHS provides benefits and services to 1 in 4 residents in Hawaii; this includes providing Medicaid coverage to more than 350,000 Hawaii residents. DHS strives to encourage self-sufficiency and supports the well-being of individuals, families, and communities in Hawaii through its major benefit programs that provide financial assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), medical insurance coverage (through

Med-QUEST), vocational rehabilitation services, and protective services for vulnerable children and adults.

There is considerable evidence that education is strongly linked to better health and well-being, while reducing the need for health care, dependency, lost earnings and human suffering. More years of education also promotes healthy lifestyles, personal, family and community well-being.

Increasing the number of Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders holding bachelor's degrees, supporting further access to careers in health services through the establishment of a health sciences academy will underpin the health and well-being of Native Hawaiians, and the residents and communities in which they serve.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on this bill.