



ASUH

Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i
YOUR STUDENT GOVERNMENT



To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means (WAM)
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2018

Time: 10:10 AM

Place: Conference Room 211

Re: OPPOSITION TO SB 2316 – PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE X, SECTION 6, OF THE HAWAII STATE CONSTITUTION, TO MODIFY THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS FOR THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.

My name is Jannah Lyn Dela Cruz, and I am the president of the Associated Students of the University of Hawaii, the undergraduate student government at UH Manoa. We represent the voices of over 10,000 full-time classified undergraduate students on the UHM campus. Our constituents **strongly oppose** the passage of Senate Bill 2316 - Proposing an amendment to Article X, Section 6 of the Hawaii State Constitution, to modify the appointment process for the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

The final candidates of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii have historically been first recommended by the Regents Candidate Advisory Council for the University of Hawaii, then referred to the Senate for advice and consent, and are finally appointed by the Governor. The amendments being proposed to Article X, Section 6 of the Hawaii State Constitution would eliminate the Regents Candidate Advisory Council's role in the selection process for the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, allowing the Governor and members of the State Legislature to have sole control of the appointments to these positions. Although the ASUH recognizes the important roles that the Governor and the Legislature play in ensuring the University's success, SB 2316 represents a step in the wrong direction.

The ASUH recognizes supports and respects the current processes in place to appoint Board of Regents members. The Regents Candidate Advisory Council for the University of Hawaii was formed specifically for the purpose of creating the most fair selection process possible. The current process is also much more selective, as the Regents Candidate Advisory Council provides an additional layer of screening that the Board of Regents candidates must pass through before being appointed. Finally, members of the Regents Candidate Advisory Council are often experts in UH's governance, facilities, students, faculty, and education. This indeed makes the Council best qualified to recommend candidates to serve on the Board of Regents.

The ASUH foresees a detrimental impact to the entire university system if this current selection process is not honored and a candidate unfit to serve on the Board of Regents is appointed simply because it did not go through screening of the Regents Candidate Advisory Council.

It is for these reasons that the 10,000 full-time classified, undergraduate students on the UH Manoa campus strongly urge you to defer SB 2316 - proposing an amendment to Article X, Section 6 of the Hawaii State Constitution, to modify the appointment process for the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

Thank you very much for your time.

Jannah Lyn Dela Cruz

President

Associated Students of the University of Hawaii at Manoa

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UNIVERSITY OF
HAWAI‘I
STUDENT CAUCUS

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My name is Jannah Lyn Dela Cruz, and I am the Chairperson of the UH Student Caucus, the UH system wide association of all campus student governments. We represent over 50,000 students in the University of Hawaii System. The UH Student Caucus (UHSC) stands in **strong opposition to SB 2316**, that proposing an amendment to Article X, Section 6 of the Hawaii State Constitution, to modify the appointment process for the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

SB 2316 as currently written does not revise the current selection process and qualifications to serve on the Board of Regents for the University of Hawaii to be effective or efficient. The proposed language in SB 2316 instead creates the process to be unfair and makes the opportunity to serve on the BOR inequitable to students in the University of Hawaii System.

Like any election process to serve on campus student governments or organizations, anyone who is a qualified student can be nominated and elected or appointed to be a representative in that group. The opportunity to serve and be a voice for others, should not be restricted. Roles like these should be passed onto or offered to those who are supported by their peers amongst the related constituency or by those that are most objective, yet also most familiar with the organization. All Regent positions on the BOR are similar of that they are voluntary positions that are filled with people who want to share their voice, and in particular, the Student Regent position is similar of that to being a representative of students wanting to represent student perspectives in discussions and decision making.

By allowing full authority of the selection of Regents to the Governor, eliminates the opportunity for many qualified students to be selected to serve on the BOR. Opportunities to serve on the Board of Regents should be equally accessible for students. Students who are willing to serve, willing to take time out of their own personal and academic schedules to commit, should be listened to or recognized in the selection process by individuals that are well informed and familiar with the University System. Without referencing names provided by the Candidate Advisory Council (CAC), or most importantly utilizing the CAC to specifically review all nominations, we lose out on the additional layer that thoroughly considers nominations of qualified students. This additional layer of review provides equal opportunity for students to move forward for selection by a group that is familiar with the University.

While the UHSC feels that the oversight of the University System by the Board of Regents can become more efficient, we support the current processes in place to appoint Board of Regents members. We feel that it is necessary that an additional screening process is needed in addition to the selection by the Governor. While we currently have the Regent Candidate Advisory Council, it is a step of the current process that we see can and should still be continued to be referenced to when the Governor makes appointments to the Board of Regents. The current process is much more selective than previously, and members of the Regents Candidate Advisory Council (CAC) are often informed in UH's governance, facilities, students, faculty, and education. This makes the CAC best qualified to recommend candidates to serve on the Board of Regents.

The UHSC urges you to defeat SB 2316 so that our students have the equal opportunity to serve on the Board of Regents and to ensure the consideration of quality of the candidates in the appointment process. We thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jannah Lyn Dela Cruz
Chairperson
UH Student Caucus
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