



LATE

SB2319
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I BOARD OF REGENTS
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Senate Committee on Judiciary

February 14, 2018

10:00 a.m.

Room 016

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** the proposed inclusion of an at-large seat on the University of Hawai‘i (UH) Board of Regents with demonstrated expertise in Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, as proposed by SB2319. OHA does not take a position on the other amendments proposed in this measure.

An at-large member with expertise in Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices will provide the UH Board of Regents with invaluable and relevant insight in its academic and extracurricular decisionmaking. For example, UH’s Strategic Directions for 2015-21 identify four priorities developed by the UH Board of Regents for the university; one such priority is UH’s commitment to being a foremost indigenous-serving institution, by embracing its unique responsibilities to Hawai‘i’s indigenous Native Hawaiian people. Accordingly, having an individual with expertise in Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices would help UH advance this priority.

In addition, UH also administers lands and resources of particular significance in Hawaiian culture, and for Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices. Most notably, Maunakea, a place with great historical and cultural significance to the Native Hawaiian people, has been subject to UH control and management for decades; the failure of UH to ensure the cultural and environmental integrity of Maunakea, including through the protection of traditional and customary rights and practices, has led to significant controversy in the Native Hawaiian community. The administration of other UH-controlled lands and programs may also impact, positively and negatively, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices and underlying cultural sites and resources. An individual with expertise in Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, and familiarity with issues of importance to the Hawaiian community, will help to ensure that UH operations better recognize the cultural significance of places such as Maunakea, and protect the cultural practices associated with such places.

OHA notes that the language in SB2319 is similar to that describing the Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices expert seat on the Board of Land and Natural Resources, as found in in Hawai‘i Revised Statutes section 171-4(c). To better track this language, and to reflect the term of art “Native Hawaiian traditional and

customary practices,” we respectfully suggest that page 3, lines 18 and 21, be amended to replace the word “Hawaii” with the word “Hawaiian.”

Accordingly, OHA urges the Committees to **PASS** SB2319. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



ASUH

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

LATE

To: Senate Committee on Higher Education
Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado-Kim, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair

Date: Wednesday, February 14, 2018

Time: 10:00 AM

Place: Conference Room 016

Re: OPPOSITION TO SB 2319 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII BOARD OF REGENTS.

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 2319 - Relating to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

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.

Additionally, SB 2319 places a major restriction on many qualified students to be nominated and appointed as a Student Regent Member, or any regent member position at all. With the requirements as outlined in this bill, and the solo control over the selection process by the State Legislature, students are not given the fair chance to be recognized, seen, or heard by those who are most familiar with the University of Hawaii up to date to be nominated to serve on the BOR. The ASUH believes that the

processes to nominate and appoint members of the Board as outlined in SB 2319, most importantly the selection process of the Student Regent Member, limits equal access for students to take on the opportunity to be a member of the Board of Regents, ultimately affecting the quality of the pool of candidates, and the Board of Regents, and the quality of student representation.

As a Student Body President, representing the ASUH, I have been elected by my constituents through an election process. The role of president for a student government association and its responsibilities that are assumed are understood to be fulfilled for the constituents the body represents. I serve full-time, classified undergraduate students at UH Manoa. If the Student Regent were to be selected based on the selection process outlined in SB 2319, this would require time for the student to learn and develop as a Regent while learning and developing to serve as President or the equivalent at the student's campus student government, impact the student's commitment to their duty as a President or the equivalent, impact the student's time invested towards school and other responsibilities, as well as pose issues with continuity of student representation on the Board of Regents.

From my perspective as President of the ASUH, with the time invested to my course load for Architecture in the Bachelor's of Environmental Design program, in addition to serving undergraduates at UH Manoa and my commitment to work to earn money, it would be difficult to also serve as the BOR Student Regent during my term. My schedule as student would not permit my ability to attend all Board of Regents meetings. This can hurt my performance in school as I would have to miss classes to attend the meetings and I would need to find other time to study or work on my projects which I no longer have. While most presidents from each campus student government serve on the UH Student Caucus, the quality of student representation can still be of a concern if the President or equivalent that is also to serve as the BOR student regent is not informed of the activity by members of the UH Student Caucus. I feel that with the current processes to nominate and appoint our Regents, it is fair and equally accessible opportunity to our students at UH Manoa.

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 2319 - Relating to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Thank you very much for you time.

Jannah Lyn Dela Cruz
President
Associated Students of the University of Hawaii at Manoa
jldc2@hawaii.edu