



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs
February 6, 2018 at 2:15 p.m.

By
Maenette K. P. Ah Nee-Benham, Chancellor
University of Hawai'i West O'ahu

SB 2320 – RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY

Aloha Chairs Kahele and Shimabukuro, Vice Chairs Kim and Galuteria, and members of the committees:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2320. This measure represents the collaborative leadership efforts of the Native Hawaiian Task Force, University of Hawai'i West O'ahu, University of Hawai'i at Hilo, and John A. Burns School of Medicine.

This bill would develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system, in cooperation with relevant educational institutions, including the John A. Burns School of Medicine and the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu Allied Health Program, to increase the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and first generation college students.

The University of Hawai'i supports this bill for numerous reasons:

- Traditional Hawaiian culture encouraged the concept of life-long learning. Education encompassed all aspects of their life and was central to Hawaiian philosophy. Education gave people the ability and expertise they needed to support their families, but most importantly, it was a valuable resource within the community.
- Many studies, including those done in Hawai'i, find that a person's income is strongly associated with his or her longevity, and income is also strongly tied to a person's educational qualifications. Native Hawaiians have lower educational attainment and income, and are more likely to engage in substance abuse and are at greater risk for behavioral health problems and chronic diseases.
- Current data suggest that Native Hawaiians are less likely to attend college than other ethnic groups partly due to low levels of preparation and inadequate finances. For those Native Hawaiian students who do attend college, graduation and retention rates are consistently lower than the general student population. Students also identified that a strong desire to live close to family and participate

in family activities and cultural pressures as factors that contributed to non-completion.

- Multiple studies testing factors leading to retention identified that the more involved Native Hawaiian students are in school activities and interact with faculty members and other peers, the more likely they are to persist in their education. The development of a Health Sciences Academy with a focus on Native Hawaiian student retention would target integration of both the student and their family in school activities.
- 30% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander children have parents with high school degrees as their highest education level while 18% have parents with a bachelor's degree or higher, considerably lower than other ethnic groups.
- Health care sector jobs are projected to increase by more than 160% by 2040 and wages are typically more in line with a livable wage for the State of Hawai'i. However, these jobs typically require a Bachelor's degree at minimum, and currently, about 15% of Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders hold bachelor's degrees.

The legislature's consideration is appreciated, as state funds could leverage private and federal support for this program. The University of Hawai'i supports passage of SB 2320 on the condition that any requested funds do not supplant any portion of the University's BOR Approved Supplemental budget request.

Mahalo for your consideration, and the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



PANKAJ BHANOT
DIRECTOR

CATHY BETTS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

LATE

February 6, 2018

TO: The Honorable Senator Kaiali'i Kahele
Senate Committee on Higher Education

Revised bill
number

The Honorable Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2320 – RELATING TO UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 at 2:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of the measure as creating educational opportunities such as the undergraduate health sciences academy aligns with the department's transformation efforts and mission to encourage self-sufficiency and improve the well-being of individuals, families, and communities in Hawaii.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to establish an undergraduate health sciences academy to be administered by the University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu to increase recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and first generation college students; it requires the University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu to submit a report to the legislature regarding educational outcomes; and it appropriates funds.

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.

DHS has a large stake in ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being. DHS provides benefits and services to one in four Hawaii residents, or nearly 360,000 individuals. The state's Medicaid program, QUEST Integration, provides medical insurance coverage for nearly one-half of Hawaii's children. We manage an annual budget of nearly \$3.5 billion to provide benefits and services relating to housing, education, employment, health care, safety, child care, food security, protective services, and vocational rehabilitation services.

As part of the DHS mission to transform the way we deliver benefits and services, and as part of the Governor's package, DHS proposed HB2366/SB2793 which requires DHS to use an integrated and multigenerational approach to delivering human services to reduce the incidence of intergenerational poverty and dependence on public benefits.

Ultimately, the goals of transformation are to improve well-being of individuals, families, and the community, reduce intergenerational poverty, reduce dependence on public benefits, and reduce the human and fiscal costs of poverty.

Multiple studies identify the consequences of growing up in poverty: "individuals who grow up in poor families are more likely to be poor in early adulthood;" and "the chances of being poor in early adulthood increases sharply the longer the time spent in poverty in early childhood." See, Robert L. Wagmiller, Jr., and Robert M. Adelman, "Childhood and Intergenerational Poverty: The Long-Term Consequences of Growing up Poor."

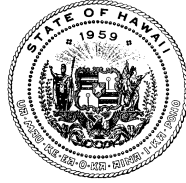
The groundbreaking 1988 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study showed clear linkage of the number of ACEs a child experienced to negative health outcomes in adulthood.

Further, a 2015 Swedish study, similarly confirmed the findings of the ACE study using Swedish population data, and concluded that "creating equal opportunities for educational attainment may help to reduce the long-term effect of a disadvantaged childhood and postpone functional health problems." See N. Agahi, B. Shaw, S. Fors, "Social and economic conditions in childhood and the progression of functional health problems from midlife into old age," *J Epidemiol Community Health* 2014; 0:1–7. doi:10.1136/jech-2013-20369.

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 the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB2320
RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY.

SEN. KAI KAHELE, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

SEN. MAILE SHIMABUKURO, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Hearing Date: February 6, 2018

Room Number: 016

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** Unspecified general fund appropriation.
- 2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health supports the intent of SB2320, which is to
- 3 establish an undergraduate health sciences academy to increase recruitment and retention of
- 4 Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and first-generation college students.
- 5 Investments in Hawaii's health care future should primarily come from Hawaii itself, for which
- 6 an undergraduate health sciences academy would be a strong foundational element. In addition
- 7 to workforce and economic development opportunities, the distinctly place-based and culturally
- 8 sensitive competencies are unlikely to be learned anywhere else. The department urges this
- 9 measure move forward so this important public policy discussion may continue.
- 10 **Offered Amendments:** N/A.

Native Hawaiian Health Coalition

Co-chairs:

Keawe'aimoku
Kaholokula
Kamana'opono Crabbe
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Lorrin Kim
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COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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Senator Maile Shimabukuro, Chair
Senator Brickwood Galuteria, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING

Tuesday February 6, 2018 at 2:15 PM
Conference Room 016
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2320

RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY

By

The **Native Hawaiian Health Task Force** convened pursuant to S.R. No. S.D.
1, regular session of 2014

Honorable Chair Kahele and Shimabukuro, Vice-Chairs Kim and Galuteria, and members of the committees, on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Health Task Force, we wish to submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2320. Established in 2014 and having completed our mandated activities in December 2016, we have since reconvened the group, now known as the Native Hawaiian Health Coalition.

SB 2320 would develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system, in cooperation with relevant educational institutions, to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students and first generation college attendees. This bill would also appropriate monies out of the general revenues of the State of Hawai'i for twenty permanent faculty and staff positions to establish and implement an undergraduate health sciences academy at the University of Hawai'i.

The Native Hawaiian Health Task Force was created during the 2014 legislative session with the goals of articulating priority areas that will help advance health equity for Native Hawaiians, and in turn, the health of Hawai'i's entire population. The task force recently presented its findings as well as 16 specific recommendations to improve the health of Native Hawaiians. One of these 16 recommendations was to develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian students.

We support this bill for numerous reasons:

- Traditional Hawaiian culture encouraged the concept of life-long learning. Education encompassed all aspects of their life and was central to Hawaiian philosophy. Education gave people the ability and

expertise they needed to support their families, but most importantly, it was a valuable resource within the community.

- Many studies, including those done in Hawai'i, find that a person's income is strongly associated with his or her longevity, and income is also strongly tied to a person's educational qualifications. Native Hawaiians who have lower educational attainment and income are more likely to engage in substance abuse and are at greater risk for behavioral health problems and chronic diseases.
- Current data suggest that Native Hawaiians are less likely to attend college than other ethnic groups partly due to low levels of preparation and inadequate finances. For those Native Hawaiian students who do attend college, graduation and retention rates are consistently lower than the general student population. Students also identified that a strong desire to live close to family and participate in family activities and cultural pressures as factors that contributed to non-completion.
- Multiple studies testing factors leading to retention identified that the more involved Native Hawaiian students are in school activities and interact with faculty members and other peers, the more likely they are to persist in their education. The development of a Health Sciences Academy with a focus on Native Hawaiian student retention would target integration of both the student and their family in school activities.
- 30% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander children have parents with high school degrees as their highest education level while 18% have parents with a bachelor's degree or higher. During the 2007 - 08 academic year, 34% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander undergraduate males were enrolled in postsecondary education, yet smaller sample size of the Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander population made it difficult to provide data for undergraduate completion.
- Health care sector jobs are projected to increase by more than 160% by 2040 and wages are typically more in line with a livable wage for the State of Hawai'i. However, these jobs typically require a Bachelor's degree at minimum, and currently, only about 15% of Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders hold bachelor's degrees.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted by the **Native Hawaiian Health Coalition**



LATE

To: The Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair
The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education

The Honorable Maile Shimabukuro, Chair
The Honorable Brickwood Galuteria, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

From: Trish La Chica, Policy and Advocacy Director, Hawai'i Public Health Institute

Re: **Support for SB 2320, Relating to an Undergraduate Health Sciences Academy**

Hrg: February 6, 2018 at 2:15 pm at Conference Room 016

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of SB 2320 which establishes an undergraduate health sciences academy to be administered by the University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu to increase recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and first generation college students.

The Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) supports and promotes policy efforts to create a healthy Hawai'i. HIPHI weaves silos into working relationships as an effective network, ensuring that we come together across sectors to advance collaboration and innovation in public health and work towards making Hawai'i the healthiest place on earth.

SB 2320 is a legislative priority of the Native Hawaiian Health Task Force (NHHTF), formed by the State Legislature in 2014 (SR 60) to improve the health of indigenous people and of all people in Hawai'i. The NHHTF has completed its mandates activities and has reconvened as the Native Hawaiian Health Coalition.

Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders have among the highest rates of obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease in the state. Native Hawaiians also have higher morbidity rates in diabetes, heart disease and cancer compared to other ethnic groups in Hawaii. In addition, Native Hawaiians are less likely to attend college than other ethnic groups partly due to low levels of preparation and inadequate finances. The development of a Health Sciences Academy with a focus on Native Hawaiian student recruitment and retention would benefit population health and help to address health disparities among NHPs.

SB 2320 provides the necessary resources for an undergraduate program that can target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students. HIPHI is in support of this measure and we respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trish'.

Trish La Chica
Policy and Advocacy Director



Papa Ola Lokahi
Nana I Ka Pono Na Ma

Papa Ola Lokahi

894 Queen Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: 808.597.6550 ~ Facsimile: 808.597.6551

Papa Ola Lokahi

is a non-profit Native Hawaiian organization founded in 1988 for the purpose of improving the health and well-being of Native Hawaiians and other native peoples of the Pacific and continental United States.

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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

SB 2329 - RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY

February 6, 2018, Tuesday, 2:15 PM, Conference Room 016, State Capitol

Greetings of aloha to Chairs Kahele, Shimabukuro, and members of the committees.

Papa Ola Lōkahi, the Native Hawaiian Health Board, **SUPPORTS** the establishment of an undergraduate health sciences academy at University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu.

The legislature may already know that the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act ([P.L. 111-148, Title 42 USC 122](#)), originally passed by Congress in 1988 and most recently in 2010 within the Affordable Care Act, authorizes Papa Ola Lōkahi, the five Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems, and the Native Hawaiian Health Scholarship Program to raise the health status of Native Hawaiians. We address health disparities in Hawai'i by being involved in policy, research, data & information, development and implementation of programs and initiatives, protection and perpetuation of traditional Hawaiian healing practices, workforce development, and more.

Since 1991, the Native Hawaiian Health Scholarship Program, administered by Papa Ola Lōkahi, has awarded 284 scholarships to Hawaiian in health professions. Our annual needs assessments demonstrates that the more Hawaiians there are as providers and clinicians, the more likely are Hawaiians to seek the care they need. Yet, Kanaka Maoli are underrepresented in almost all health care professions.

For example, although Native Hawaiians represent 20-25% of the population in Hawai'i, barely 5% of all licensed physicians in Hawai'i are Hawaiian. The representation is a bit better in nursing and social work, but we still lack parity. We need more Hawaiian nutritionists, social workers, public health educators, administrators, psychologists, family therapists, pharmacists, too.

Having a health sciences academy in West O'ahu is a key in the health professions pipeline, especially with the outreach to learners from West O'ahu

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to offer testimony **IN SUPPORT of SB 2320.**

SB-2320

Submitted on: 2/2/2018 11:05:50 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/6/2018 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jornal Maunakea-Forth	WCRC	Support	No

Comments:

February 2, 2018

Memo by Email- Support Testimony for SB 2320

Aloha mai kākou!

I am writing today in enthusiastic support of SB 2320 relating to the establishment of an Undergraduate Health Sciences Academy. As a native Hawaiian, a cultural practitioner, an 'aina based educator and a nonprofit executive, it is important to create educational strategies that will bolster a more holistic health and wellness profile for Hawai'i- particularly those who are most vulnerable to health disparities.

At WCRC and MA'O Organic farms, we firmly believe that our community, especially youth, should be engaged to take advantage of post-secondary opportunities. We accomplish this through the Youth Leadership Training (YLT), a 2 year Associates of Arts program that supports youth transitioning from high school to college.

During the 2 years, they work at MA'O part time while earning a stipend and a scholarship to attend college full-time. With the partnership of Leeward Community College and now UH West O'ahu, we are matriculating youth college and in the workforce through an 'auwai or pathway of organic, sustainable agriculture. There are many benefits, the students attain post-secondary degrees, they are producing local, healthy fruits and vegetables for our community and they are contributing to the health of our 'aina (our land).

An undergraduate program in health can ultimately do the same- nurture and cultivate college graduates in the field while creating experiential community based experience that will ultimately contribute to an educated and professional workforce. As a community member, this is an ideal opportunity to create an intentional, purposeful and relevant strategy to seed our community with better health outcomes. By creating educational opportunity, we not only educate the future professionals in the health sector, they are also transforming their families and communities with knowledge about health.

As a kanaka, as a daughter, sister, wife, mother, and grandmother who has lost many loved ones to preventable illness and disease, I am compelled to offer my support to SB2320. If we as a community are to seriously address the health disparities of native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and those vulnerable as a result of low-socio-economic status, we need to create the hā• lau, places in which we can teach, learn and practice, in order to attain the means to restore our health.

Esteemed Chairs and Committee Members, please support this bill that we may strengthen our collective efforts to create OLA, health and well-being for our people of Hawai'i nei.

Mahalo nunui!

J. Kukui Maunakea-Forth, Executive Director

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII
HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS CAUCUS

TESTIMONY IN **SUPPORT** OF
SB 2320, RELATING TO UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY
Hearing: Tuesday, February 6, 2018

Aloha,

The Hawaiian Affairs Caucus, DPH, supports SB2320 that would establish an Undergraduate Health Sciences Academy to be administered by the University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu to increase recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and first generation college students. We support appropriations for this initiative.

The Native Hawaiian Health Task Force was created during the 2014 legislative session with the goals of articulating priority areas that will help advance health equity for Native Hawaiians, and, in turn, the health of Hawai'i's entire population. The task force presented its findings to the legislature as well as 16 specific recommendations to improve the health of Native Hawaiians. One of these 16 recommendations was to develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian students.

For the many reasons articulated in this bill itself and in the numerous testimonies of support that were provided on bills introduced last year on this same subject, we likewise fully encourage your passage of SB2320. We strongly advocate that this Undergraduate Health Sciences Academy embody Hawaiian values and principles in the development of its curriculum. In the long-range vision, this academy could produce graduates who likely would return and contribute to their underserved communities.

Me kealoha pumehana

/s/ Leimomi Khan (On-line)

LEIMOMI KHAN
Chair

SB-2320

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 12:40:14 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/6/2018 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-2320

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 7:03:32 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/6/2018 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shelley Soong		Support	Yes

Comments:

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Chair

Senator Brickwood Galuteria, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING

Tuesday February 6, 2018 at 2:15 PM

Conference Room 016

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2320

RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY

Honorable Chairs Kahele and Shimabukuro, Vice-Chairs Kim and Galuteria and members of the committee, my name is Shelley Soong, I am a student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I wish to submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2320. This bill would develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system, in cooperation with relevant educational institutions, to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students and first generation college attendees. This bill would also appropriate monies out of the general revenues of the State of Hawai'i for twenty permanent faculty and staff positions to establish and implement an undergraduate health sciences academy at the University of Hawai'i.

The Department of Native Hawaiian Health at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa John A. Burns School of Medicine, created the Native Hawaiian Health Task Force during the 2014 legislative session with the goals of articulating priority areas that will help advance health equity for Native Hawaiians, and in turn, the health of Hawai'i's entire population. The task force presented its findings as well as 16 specific

recommendations to improve the health of Native Hawaiians. One of these 16 recommendations was to develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian students.

I support this bill for numerous reasons:

- Within the labor force, Native Hawaiians have a lower rate of college degrees and are less likely to be employed in high paying management and professional occupations.
- **Only 6.2% of individuals in areas with high proportions of Native Hawaiians (i.e., Nanakuli) hold a bachelor's degree compared to 21.6%** of individuals in the overall Honolulu County area.
- Graduate school attendance, after completing an undergraduate degree, is considered an important outcome for increasing the nation's professionals in health science careers. As access to graduate education is limited to those who excel at the undergraduate level, increasing the number of Native Hawaiian students that successfully complete and excel in undergraduate science degrees is critical at a national level.
- **Only 1.9% of individuals in areas with high proportions of Native Hawaiians (i.e., Nanakuli) hold a graduate or professional degree compared to 11.1%** of individuals in the overall Honolulu County area.
- Data also suggests low graduation rates in science fields among Native Hawaiians, and attrition from the sciences is associated with an overall shortage of professionals in the science and health fields.
- Many studies, including those done in Hawai'i, find that a person's income is strongly associated with his or her longevity, and income is also strongly tied to a person's educational qualifications. Native Hawaiians who have lower educational attainment and income are more likely to engage in substance abuse and are at greater risk for behavioral health problems and chronic diseases.
- Health care sector jobs are projected to increase by more than 160% by 2040 and wages are typically more in line with a livable wage for the State of Hawai'i. However, these jobs typically require a Bachelor's degree at minimum.
- Ultimately, a strong network of highly trained Native Hawaiian health professionals is needed to work in health care, conduct health disparities research and eliminate the racial and ethnic disparities that exist in health care.

Thank you for your consideration.

Shelley Soong

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2320

February 6th, 2018

Aloha Chair Kahele and Chair Shimabukuro,

I am a faculty member at the University of Hawaii West Oahu in Health Administration and I am in support of SB2320. This bill has the potential to be truly transformational in many ways:

- It will jump start the UH West Oahu Health Science Academy in preparation for degrees in Pre-Health Professional (Pre-Med, Pre-Dental, Pre-Pharm, Pre-OT, Pre-PT), Native Hawaiian & Indigenous Health & Healing and a new Admin/ Health Science Building
- It will give underserved and underrepresented youth in Hawaii, and especially in West Oahu, a chance at a bachelor's degree and a health career that will pay a living and sustainable wage, thus ending generational cycles of poverty
- It will connect the extremely bright and capable Early College high school students with a pathway into the Health Sciences and Health Professions UH System-Wide (MD, RN, MSW, MPH, PharmD)
- It will challenge the need to bring in healthcare workers from the mainland because those jobs will be filled by committed local graduates who will stay in Hawaii
- It will impact our health science workforce shortage, which is worse than the doctor and nursing shortage combined, by providing highly qualified local staff who will stay in Hawaii

Hawaii will benefit from providing post high-school educational opportunities to its community members in the field of healthcare. Improving access to health care professions through programs such as the UH West Oahu Health Science Academy will allow graduates to be competitive in the health care marketplace.

Thank you for your time.

Lisa Spencer, MPH, DHA
Instructor
Public Administration-Health Administration
University of Hawaii West Oahu

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Chair
Senator Brickwood Galuteria, Vice Chair

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Tuesday February 6, 2018 at 2:15 PM
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State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2320

RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY

Honorable Chairs Kahele and Shimabukuro, Vice-Chairs Kim and Galuteria and members of the committee, I am Winona K. Lee, MD, a Native Hawaiian Pediatrician and Associate Professor in the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's John A. Burns School of Medicine's Department of Native Hawaiian Health. I wish to submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2320. This bill would develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system, in cooperation with relevant educational institutions, to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students and first generation college attendees. This bill would also appropriate monies out of the general revenues of the State of Hawai'i for twenty permanent faculty and staff positions to establish and implement an undergraduate health sciences academy at the University of Hawai'i.

The Department of Native Hawaiian Health co-chaired the Native Hawaiian Health Task Force which was created during the 2014 legislative session with the goals of articulating priority areas that will help advance health equity for Native Hawaiians, and in turn, the health of Hawai'i's entire population. The task force presented its findings as well as 16 specific recommendations to improve the health of Native Hawaiians. One of these 16 recommendations was to develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian students.

I support this bill for numerous reasons:

- I work closely with disadvantaged students, many of whom are Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders in my work as the Director of the 'Imi Ho'ōla Post-Baccalaureate Program. 'Imi Ho'ōla has been providing educational opportunities to students pursuing careers in medicine for 45 years. I have witnessed the transformation and ultimate success of these students from non-traditional backgrounds and underrepresented populations in health careers. When given the opportunity in combination with a supportive learning environment, these students can overcome previous obstacles and achieve their dreams of becoming health professionals, scientists, educators, and leaders.

- Current data suggest that Native Hawaiians are less likely to attend college than other ethnic groups partly due to low levels of preparation and inadequate finances. For those Native Hawaiian students who do attend college, graduation and retention rates are consistently lower than the general student population. Students have also identified that a strong desire to live close to family and participate in family activities and cultural pressures as factors that contributed to non-completion. An Undergraduate Health Sciences Academy created with the intention of promoting culturally responsive educational curricula would contribute to the critical pipeline initiatives that will eventually resolve these disparities.
- Health care sector jobs are projected to increase by more than 160% by 2040 and wages are typically more in line with a livable wage for the State of Hawai'i. However, these jobs typically require a Bachelor's degree at minimum, and currently, only about 15% of Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders hold bachelor's degrees. This would be an ideal opportunity to offer undergraduate educational opportunities leading to a career in health care.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted by,
Winona K. Lee, MD

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2320
RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY

Honorable Chairs Kahele and Shimabukuro, Vice-Chairs Kim and Galuteria and members of the committee, I am Robin Miyamoto, a Clinical Psychologist and Assistant Professor with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's John A. Burns School of Medicine's Departments of Native Hawaiian Health and Family Medicine and Community Health. I wish to submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2320. This bill would develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system, in cooperation with relevant educational institutions, to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students and first generation college attendees. This bill would also appropriate monies out of the general revenues of the State of Hawai'i for twenty permanent faculty and staff positions to establish and implement an undergraduate health sciences academy at the University of Hawai'i.

Our department co-chaired the Native Hawaiian Health Task Force which was created during the 2014 legislative session with the goals of articulating priority areas that will help advance health equity for Native Hawaiians, and in turn, the health of Hawai'i's entire population. The task force recently presented its findings as well as 16 specific recommendations to improve the health of Native Hawaiians. One of these 16 recommendations was to develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian students.

I support this bill for numerous reasons:

- Traditional Hawaiian culture encouraged the concept of life-long learning. Education encompassed all aspects of their life and was central to Hawaiian philosophy. Education gave people the ability and expertise they needed to support their families, but most importantly, it was a valuable resource within the community.
- Many studies, including those done in Hawai'i, find that a person's income is strongly associated with his or her longevity, and income is also strongly tied to a person's educational qualifications. Native Hawaiians who have lower educational attainment and income are more likely to engage in substance abuse and are at greater risk for behavioral health problems and chronic diseases.
- Current data suggest that Native Hawaiians are less likely to attend college than other ethnic groups partly due to low levels of preparation and inadequate finances. For those Native Hawaiian

students who do attend college, graduation and retention rates are consistently lower than the general student population. Students also identified that a strong desire to live close to family and participate in family activities and cultural pressures as factors that contributed to non-completion.

- Multiple studies testing factors leading to retention identified that the more involved Native Hawaiian students are in school activities and interact with faculty members and other peers, the more likely they are to persist in their education. The development of a Health Sciences Academy with a focus on Native Hawaiian student retention would target integration of both the student and their family in school activities.
- 30% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander children have parents with high school degrees as their highest education level while 18% have parents with a bachelor's degree or higher. During the 2007 - 08 academic year, 34% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander undergraduate males were enrolled in postsecondary education, yet smaller sample size of the Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander population made it difficult to provide data for undergraduate completion.
- Health care sector jobs are projected to increase by more than 160% by 2040 and wages are typically more in line with a livable wage for the State of Hawai'i. However, these jobs typically require a Bachelor's degree at minimum, and currently, about 15% of Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders hold bachelor's degrees.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted by,



Robin E. S. Miyamoto, Psy.D.

Assistant Professor

Department of Native Hawaiian Health

Department of Family Medicine and Community Health

John A. Burns School of Medicine

University of Hawaii at Manoa

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NOTICE OF HEARING

Tuesday February 6, 2018 at 2:15 PM
Conference Room 016
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2320

RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY

Honorable Chairs Kahele and Shimabukuro, Vice-Chairs Mercado Kim and Galuteria, and members of the committees, on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Health Task Force, I wish to submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2320.

I am Joseph Keawe'aimoku Kaholokula, PhD, Professor and Chair of Native Hawaiian Health at the John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM). I am also a nationally recognized health disparities scientist whose community-based research projects involving Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities are supported by the National Institutes of Health. I wish to submit this personal testimony in strong support of SB 2320. This bill would develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system, in cooperation with relevant educational institutions, to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students and first generation college attendees. This bill would also appropriate monies out of the general revenues of the State of Hawai'i for twenty permanent faculty and staff positions to establish and implement an undergraduate health sciences academy at the University of Hawai'i.

I was one of these students the bill is seeking to support. I come from a low-income working-class family, graduated from our public school system, a system that did not prepare me for or encourage me on for higher education. In fact, I barely graduated from high school. I eventually found my way to college through Kapi'olani Community College and eventually to UHM where I became the first in my family to earn a college degree.

I know first-hand the importance of creating an educational support system that is rooted in Hawaiian values and practices, especially in the area of health sciences. It were these values and practices, these supports, that gave me the determination and fortitude to overcome the economic and cultural challenges I faced in higher education as a Native Hawaiian. Yes, there are cultural challenges in higher education for many Native Hawaiians, such as a focus on individual success and accomplishments over collective efforts and sharing of success. Long-standing institutional-based biases also exist that place Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders at a disadvantage in higher education. I recall often feeling alienated and out-of-place in my classes with no services available to address my concerns or culturally safe and relevant programs.

Not only has a college degree allowed me as a Native Hawaiian to rise above the economic circumstances I was born into, it has allowed me to give back to my community as a health professional and scientist addressing the health inequities experienced by Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders. The health professions and sciences offer Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders a wonderful opportunity to make a livable wage in their own ancestral lands and at the same time do so in professions that improves the quality of life for all.

Mahalo nui for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joseph K. Kaholokula". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'K'.

Joseph Keawe'aimoku Kaholokula, PhD

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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2320
RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY**

Honorable Chairs Kahele and Shimabukuro, Vice-Chairs Kim and Galuteria and members of the committee, I am Alika K. Maunakea, a biomedical researcher and Assistant Professor at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's John A. Burns School of Medicine's Department of Native Hawaiian Health. I wish to submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2320. This bill would develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system, in cooperation with relevant educational institutions, to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students and first generation college attendees. This bill would also appropriate monies out of the general revenues of the State of Hawai'i for twenty permanent faculty and staff positions to establish and implement an undergraduate health sciences academy at the University of Hawai'i.

Our department co-chaired the Native Hawaiian Health Task Force which was created during the 2014 legislative session with the goals of articulating priority areas that will help advance health equity for Native Hawaiians, and in turn, the health of Hawai'i's entire population. The task force presented its findings as well as 16 specific recommendations to improve the health of Native Hawaiians. One of these 16 recommendations was to develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian students.

Health science education incorporates a multi-disciplinary approach to understand health and wellbeing. This is essential as the origin of health disparities in Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities are complex and multivariate. In addition, an integrative approach is compatible with the holistic view of health and wellness embedded in traditional Native Hawaiian culture, called *mauli ola*.

Mauli ola underlies the traditional Native Hawaiian concept of health/wellness that incorporates the context of the environment, including nutrition and social behaviors, which *trans*-generationally impact physical/emotional/mental health outcomes in individuals and communities. Epigenetic mechanisms may now explain molecular links between these environmental factors and health outcomes, and is my area of research focus. This area of science, while viewed as the forefront of understanding health and is making strides worldwide to address health issues, is not unfamiliar to Native Hawaiians.

As a Native Hawaiian, I grew up with a profound appreciation and respect for nature and my community. I believe there remains a lot of valuable wisdom from indigenous cultures that share these values and we can learn from them to help others and protect our environment. My great-grandmother use to say that “if you take care of the land, the land will take care of you”. As a scientist, this simple phrase makes a lot of sense- we are all part of nature and a product of the environment, as my work in epigenetics is reinforcing. Maintaining a healthy environment will help all of us live healthier lives. Our ancestors not only understood this concept but also had ways of incorporating it into daily life. This kind of education and understanding can only be done in Hawai‘i, where there is an implicit connection between ‘āina and health, among academic-community partnerships. An undergraduate health sciences program in Hawai‘i would allow individuals from my community like myself to integrate a cutting-edge education in health sciences with cultural perspectives and philosophy, and emerge with valuable skills, knowledge, and drive to lift up the entire Hawai‘i community through offering something that the world desperately needs—something our kūpuna strived to preserve and pass on through generations; their ‘ike (deep knowledge) of health and wellbeing as absolutely connected to our ecosystem, and our kūleana is to build from their foundation to eliminate health disparities and restore health equity by intentionally creating opportunities for our youth to see a place in the health sciences as not only a viable and relevant career option that is inline with their cultural heritage, but enables them to give back to their communities and to the State.

I can attest from personal experiences the value of a health science education. Growing up in a four-generation household in the Nānākuli Hawaiian Homestead, my great-grandmother (one of Hawai‘i’s living treasures) taught us that health is part of an ecosystem. Using lā‘au lapa‘au, she directly demonstrated this. Therefore, I saw a career in biomedical research, and in particular the field of epigenetics, as an opportunity to learn how modern scientific tools can be used to build on our ancestral knowledge (‘ike kūpuna) and give back to my community. Having studied abroad at Creighton University, University of California San Francisco, and the National Institutes of Health, my work reinforced this ancestral knowledge and I understand now that this is something of value to the rest of the world. With the support of other faculty in the UH System across multiple disciplinary areas of science as well as vested community-based organizations, Hawai‘i is no better poised than now to build an undergraduate health sciences program that not only serves our communities here locally, but offer richer, deeper, and meaningful insights into health problems faced throughout the world.

Additionally, I support this bill for numerous reasons:

- Traditional Hawaiian culture encouraged the concept of life-long learning. Education encompassed all aspects of their life and was central to Hawaiian philosophy. Education gave people the ability and expertise they needed to support their families, but most importantly, it was a valuable resource within the community.
- Many studies, including those done in Hawai‘i, find that a person’s income is strongly associated with his or her longevity, and income is also strongly tied to a person’s educational qualifications. Native Hawaiians who have lower educational attainment and income are more likely to engage in substance abuse and are at greater risk for behavioral health problems and chronic diseases.
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general student population. Students also identified that a strong desire to live close to family and participate in family activities and cultural pressures as factors that contributed to non-completion.

- Multiple studies testing factors leading to retention identified that the more involved Native Hawaiian students are in school activities and interact with faculty members and other peers, the more likely they are to persist in their education. The development of a Health Sciences Academy with a focus on Native Hawaiian student retention would target integration of both the student and their family in school activities.
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Mahalo for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted by,



Alika Maunakea
Assistant Professor
Epigenomics Research Program
Department of Native Hawaiian Health
John A. Burns School of Medicine
University of Hawai'i, Manoa
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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2320
RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY

Honorable Chairs Kahele and Shimabukuro, Vice-Chairs Kim and Galuteria and members of the committee, I am Andrea Hermosura, PhD, a licensed psychologist, and an Assistant Professor of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's John A. Burns School of Medicine's Department of Native Hawaiian Health. I wish to submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2320. This bill would develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system, in cooperation with relevant educational institutions, to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students and first generation college attendees. This bill would also appropriate monies out of the general revenues of the State of Hawai'i for twenty permanent faculty and staff positions to establish and implement an undergraduate health sciences academy at the University of Hawai'i.

Our department co-chaired the Native Hawaiian Health Task Force which was created during the 2014 legislative session with the goals of articulating priority areas that will help advance health equity for Native Hawaiians, and in turn, the health of Hawai'i's entire population. The task force presented its findings as well as 16 specific recommendations to improve the health of Native Hawaiians. One of these 16 recommendations was to develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian students.

I support this bill for numerous reasons:

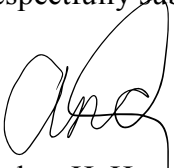
- Traditional Hawaiian culture encouraged the concept of life-long learning. Education encompassed all aspects of their life and was central to Hawaiian philosophy. Education gave people the ability and expertise they needed to support their families, but most importantly, it was a valuable resource within the community.
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- Current data suggest that Native Hawaiians are less likely to attend college than other ethnic groups partly due to low levels of preparation and inadequate finances. For those Native Hawaiian students who do attend college, graduation and retention rates are consistently lower than the

general student population. Students also identified that a strong desire to live close to family and participate in family activities and cultural pressures as factors that contributed to non-completion.

- Multiple studies testing factors leading to retention identified that the more involved Native Hawaiian students are in school activities and interact with faculty members and other peers, the more likely they are to persist in their education. The development of a Health Sciences Academy with a focus on Native Hawaiian student retention would target integration of both the student and their family in school activities.
- 30% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander children have parents with high school degrees as their highest education level while 18% have parents with a bachelor's degree or higher. During the 2007 - 08 academic year, 34% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander undergraduate males were enrolled in postsecondary education, yet smaller sample size of the Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander population made it difficult to provide data for undergraduate completion.
- Health care sector jobs are projected to increase by more than 160% by 2040 and wages are typically more in line with a livable wage for the State of Hawai'i. However, these jobs typically require a Bachelor's degree at minimum, and currently, only about 15% of Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders hold bachelor's degrees.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrea H. Hermosura', written in a cursive style.

Andrea H. Hermosura, PhD

SB2320 - RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY
Supporting Appropriations for an Undergraduate Health Sciences
Academy administered by the University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu

Testimony By: Ryan Bradley Domingo || University of Hawaii West Oahu - Student || 1001 Farrington Hwy, Kapolei, HI 96707

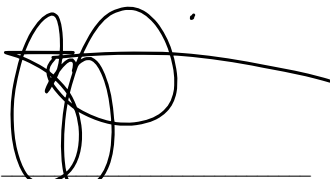
Addressing:
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
CHAIR: Kaiali'i Kahele, Donna Mercado Kim
COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
CHAIR: Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Brickwood Galuteria

On behalf of students pursuing a higher education within the University of Hawaii System, I, Ryan Bradley Domingo, a student at the University of Hawaii at West Oahu, fully support the objective of SB2320, specifically in its pursuit of standardizing a proper bachelor's program relating to Health Sciences.

University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu (UHWO) sits on a community that is encompassed by several neighboring areas most notably Kapolei, Ewa Beach, Waipahu, Waianae, Nanakuli, and Wahiawa. West Oahu caters the state's highest collegiate ratio of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islands, accounting 27% of the total student body. Additionally, UHWO also has a diverse student body, made up of minorities and other first generation college attendees. Showcasing a trend of exponential growth, West Oahu is pioneering an educational pedagogy that strives to service the aforementioned communities.

As a student at the University of Hawaii - West Oahu, I have been continually pursuing a degree in pre-professional health, most importantly within the areas of medicine. Wanting to go into the medical field brings upon challenges, specifically in terms of the selection of programs that are currently available. As of now, there is no proper bachelors of allied health program within my university, or better yet, the whole state of Hawaii, indicating that there is a niche that is left unfulfilled. With the introduction of the Health Sciences Academy as mentioned in SB2320, relating to Native Hawaiian Higher Education, we can jump-start a program that would engage the underrepresented communities within the allied health professions. Myself being a part of such community, brings upon possibilities that opens the door to many opportunities. My university, UH West Oahu, pioneers an educational pedagogy that strives to service community, following the Native Hawaiian ideology of "kuleana". With our aging population, there is a need for a proper program that caters towards the prospects of the future. Conclusively, this can be fulfilled through the establishment of the programs presented within SB2320.

The area that our university sits at has historically been a place of cultivation, sustaining the indigenous population that used to live there. Conforming with such traditions it is only right to observe such customs - by metaphorically cultivating students, flourishing the areas of allied health professions. SB2320 is not limited in its agenda of catering to our diverse body of students, but also to the many communities that the University of Hawaii at West Oahu gives service to.



Ryan B. Domingo, UHWO Student

SB-2320

Submitted on: 2/3/2018 3:50:04 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/6/2018 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu	Support	Yes

Comments:

As a native Hawaiian who received his doctorate in botany at the University of Hawaii, Manoa and a trustee of the Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu scholarship trust, I support this legislation.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2320

February 6th, 2018

Aloha Chair Kahele and Chair Shimabukuro,

I am a student at the University of Hawaii West Oahu campus. I have been studying to become a healthcare administrator for the past two years. Originally, I aspired to become a radiologist in the medical field. I graduated from Kapa'a High School with top honors as a valedictorian and gained the support of my teachers and family to pursue medical school. However, the cost associated with medical school and the thought of being away from my elderly parents discouraged me. I began to think that I was not smart enough to become who I wanted to be and settled on becoming a radiology technologist. I remained on the island of Kauai for a year, attending Kauai Community College to complete the requirements for the radiology program at Kapiolani Community College. Unfortunately, I was not accepted into the program since the competition was very intense. I remember receiving the heartbreaking news by my father over the phone and crying in front of my two nephews. I felt that I disappointed my parents who worked so hard to get me through school without relying on me to help with the cost. In addition, I felt that all the hard work throughout my high school career and first year of college was all for nothing. I wanted to continue my education and obtain a degree, so applied to the West Oahu campus and majored in healthcare administration.

Last summer I had the opportunity to work in the radiology department at Wilcox Medical Center as a paid intern. I found my love for radiology and was able to talk to two of the four radiologist. One of the radiologist encouraged me to attend medical school. He insisted that I had the potential to excel in medical school and even take over his job after his retirement. Yet, I had to convince myself that I was not worthy of such a position since I could not even get accepted into a technical school.

If there was a health science academy at the West Oahu campus, it would be my chance to pursue the career that I now believe and know that I can achieve. In the next two years, I plan to obtain my bachelor's degree in healthcare administration and start my journey to become a radiologist in the state of Hawaii. I want to provide quality healthcare to the people of Hawai'i and make a difference in their lives. It is with a strong belief in myself and the future educators of the health science academy at the West Oahu campus that I can reach this goal. For this reason, I support SB2320.

Aloha,

Kelli Jim
Student
University of Hawaii West Oahu

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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2320
RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY

Honorable Chairs Kahele and Shimabukuro, Vice-Chairs Kim and Galuteria and members of the committee, my name is Chessa Harris, MBA, a Native Hawaiian, and faculty member of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's John A. Burns School of Medicine's Department of Native Hawaiian Health. I wish to submit this testimony in **strong support** of SB 2320. This bill would develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system, in cooperation with relevant educational institutions, to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students and first generation college attendees. This bill would also appropriate monies out of the general revenues of the State of Hawai'i for twenty permanent faculty and staff positions to establish and implement an undergraduate health sciences academy at the University of Hawai'i.

Our department co-chaired the Native Hawaiian Health Task Force which was created during the 2014 legislative session with the goals of articulating priority areas that will help advance health equity for Native Hawaiians, and in turn, the health of Hawai'i's entire population. The task force presented its findings as well as 16 specific recommendations to improve the health of Native Hawaiians. One of these 16 recommendations was to develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian students.

I support this bill for numerous reasons:

- Traditional Hawaiian culture encouraged the concept of life-long learning. Education encompassed all aspects of their life and was central to Hawaiian philosophy. Education gave people the ability and expertise they needed to support their families, but most importantly, it was a valuable resource within the community.
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general student population. Students also identified that a strong desire to live close to family and participate in family activities and cultural pressures as factors that contributed to non-completion.

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Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted by,
Chessa Harris, MBA

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION	
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Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair	
COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS	
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Chair	
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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2320
 RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY

Honorable Chairs Kahele and Shimabukuro, Vice-Chairs Kim and Galuteria and members of the committee, I am Regina Cummings, MBA, a Native Hawaiian and first generation college graduate. I am also a staff member of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's John A. Burns School of Medicine's Department of Native Hawaiian Health. I wish to submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2320. This bill would develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system, in cooperation with relevant educational institutions, to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students and first generation college attendees. This bill would also appropriate monies out of the general revenues of the State of Hawai'i for twenty permanent faculty and staff positions to establish and implement an undergraduate health sciences academy at the University of Hawai'i.

Our department co-chaired the Native Hawaiian Health Task Force which was created during the 2014 legislative session with the goals of articulating priority areas that will help advance health equity for Native Hawaiians, and in turn, the health of Hawai'i's entire population. The task force presented its findings as well as 16 specific recommendations to improve the health of Native Hawaiians. One of these 16 recommendations was to develop an undergraduate health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian students.

I support this bill for numerous reasons:

- Traditional Hawaiian culture encouraged the concept of life-long learning. Education encompassed all aspects of their life and was central to Hawaiian philosophy. Education gave people the ability and expertise they needed to support their families, but most importantly, it was a valuable resource within the community.
- Many studies, including those done in Hawai'i, find that a person's income is strongly associated with his or her longevity, and income is also strongly tied to a person's educational qualifications. Native Hawaiians who have lower educational attainment and income are more likely to engage in substance abuse and are at greater risk for behavioral health problems and chronic diseases.
- Current data suggest that Native Hawaiians are less likely to attend college than other ethnic groups partly due to low levels of preparation and inadequate finances. For those Native Hawaiian students who do attend college, graduation and retention rates are consistently lower than the general student population. Students also identified that a strong desire to live close to family and participate in family activities and cultural pressures as factors that contributed to non-completion.
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- Health care sector jobs are projected to increase by more than 160% by 2040 and wages are typically more in line with a livable wage for the State of Hawai'i. However, these jobs typically require a Bachelor's degree at minimum, and currently, only about 15% of Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders hold bachelor's degrees.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted by, Regina Cummings