



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

LATE

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committees on Higher Education and Ways and Means
Thursday, February 15, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

By
Robert McLaren
Interim Director, Institute for Astronomy
And
Michael Bruno, Vice Chancellor for Research
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2865 – RELATING TO THE INSTITUTE FOR ASTRONOMY

Chairs Kahele and Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs Kim and Keith-Agaran, and members of the committees:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2865, which would transfer the Institute for Astronomy (IfA) from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) to the University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UHH). The university appreciates the intent of this bill to further enhance IfA's connection to the Hawai'i Island community and its contribution to the Hawai'i Island economy. However, we are concerned about certain unintended consequences of pursuing that goal to the degree and at the rate implied by this bill. The university therefore **opposes** SB 2865 in its current form.

IfA has significant operations on three islands. It has office, classroom, laboratory, and machine shop facilities in Mānoa, O'ahu (approximately 51,000 square feet), Pukalani, Maui (approximately 15,000 square feet), and Hilo, Hawai'i (approximately 36,000 square feet). There are approximately 100 IfA faculty, staff, and graduate student employees on O'ahu, 30 on Maui, and 50 on Hawai'i Island. The university, through IfA, owns and operates observatories on Haleakalā, Maunakea, and Maunaloa, and has additional observing time and research collaborations in observatories operated by other parties, including the soon-to-be-completed Daniel K. Inouye Solar Telescope and other telescopes on Haleakalā as well the Maunakea observatories. IfA faculty teach undergraduate and graduate classes on both the Mānoa and Hilo campuses and advise graduate students resident on both islands. Faculty and graduate students conduct outreach programs to K-12 students and the general public on O'ahu, Maui, and Hawai'i Island, and to a lesser extent statewide.

IfA greatly values its connection to the Hawai'i Island community. There is a significant faculty presence in Hilo, with a particular focus in research and development of highly sophisticated astronomical instrumentation, and a number of our graduate students choose to pursue their research there. Through an MOU between IfA and UHH, IfA faculty fulfill a portion of their teaching commitment in UHH's undergraduate astronomy

program. IfA collaborates closely with colleagues at UHH in teaching and outreach and is working to enhance collaboration in the operation of telescopes. IfA's significant growth in Hilo and on Maui over the past 20 years has been good for those communities and good for the IfA.

However, IfA, UH and the state also derive important benefits from IfA's position as a unit of UHM, the state's flagship research university. IfA faculty and graduate students provide most of the instruction in UHM's successful undergraduate degree programs in astronomy and astrophysics, which have been developed in coordination with UHH, so as to minimize programmatic duplication. Currently there are approximately 54 majors. Many more Mānoa students – approximately 350 per year, some of whom take more than one course – enroll in astronomy courses as electives or to meet distribution requirements. Being part of the flagship research university also enhances opportunities for IfA faculty to collaborate with colleagues in other disciplines, such as physics, chemistry, biology (IfA successfully operated a NASA-funded Astrobiology Institute for many years), and computer and data sciences. IfA's Pan-STARRS telescopes are the largest user of server space in UH's Information Technology Center, and IfA faculty expertise is an important contributor to UH's efforts in this high-priority area and the startup of advanced programming in data sciences.

In addition to the programmatic aspects discussed above, we do have some serious concerns about certain practical aspects. Many IfA faculty and staff are not in a position to relocate from O'ahu or Maui to Hawai'i Island for a wide range of personal and professional reasons, including spouses' employment, school enrollment, home ownership, and other family commitments and factors. In addition, IfA's current facilities in Hilo could accommodate only a small fraction of the faculty, staff, shops, and labs that are currently in Mānoa and Pukalani. It is unclear how the approximately 66,000 square feet of space that IfA currently occupies in Mānoa and Pukalani could be replaced and at what costs – which would come at the expense of other university facility needs.

While UH does not believe that it is viable to move all of IfA to Hilo, IfA is committed to working together with our colleagues at UH Hilo to provide opportunities for UH Hilo students and faculty. We welcome new opportunities to collaborate through the development of a strategic plan to promote and strengthen academic, economic and workforce development in astronomy and astronomy-related jobs for residents of Hawai'i Island.

In conclusion, IfA is committed to Hawai'i Island and continued development of research, teaching, and service there. However, this would be best accomplished over time and in balance with opportunities and commitments on O'ahu and Maui. We therefore respectfully **oppose** SB 2865 in its current form.



The House Committee on Higher Education and
Ways and Means
Thursday, February 15, 2018
10:00 AM, Room 211

RE: SB 2865 Relating to the Institute for Astronomy

Attention: Chairs Kai Kahele and Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs, Donna Mercado Kim and Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Members of the respective Committees

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) **opposes SB 2865**, that transfers administrative authority, personnel, and all facilities for the Institute for Astronomy at UH Mānoa to UH Hilo.

UHPA believes that this is a significant legislative breach by elected officials that undermines the autonomy of the University of Hawai'i and harms the academic standing of the program and its' faculty members. The proposal which provides for implementation on June 30, 2018 is an attack on faculty members contractual and academic rights with the Legislature improperly substituting their judgement for that of UH Mānoa officials and Institute for Astronomy faculty members.

IfA is a world renowned program with both undergraduate and graduate programs. A shift to UH Hilo may well negatively impact student recruitment and faculty retention. UH Mānoa provides significant resources for discovery and learning that are not easily transferred nor replicated at UH Hilo.

Many employees have made decisions to live in Hawai'i based on an O'ahu location. To assume employees will follow this legislative dictate and relocate is probably a misperception.

Efforts to expand education opportunities at UH Hilo have already begun but these do not require the transplanting of the totality of IfA to that physical location. While the Big Island needs more jobs this is not the manner in which to engage in economic expansion by undermining a successful academic endeavor.

UHPA opposes SB 2865.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristeen Hanselman
Executive Director

SB-2865

Submitted on: 2/11/2018 2:18:33 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jacqui Hoover	Testifying on behalf of Hawaii Leeward Planning Conference	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony Presented Before the Senate Committee on Higher Education-Chair Senator Kai Kahele
and Senate Ways and Means Committee-Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz

By

Gerald De Mello-Hilo, Hawaii

Senate Bill 2865-Relating to the Institute for Astronomy (IFA)-Hearing-February 15, 2015 at 10:00 am
Chair Kahele and Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Committee

I am writing to support SB 2865. I appreciate this opportunity to provide support for this Bill that would further increase the presence of the Institute of Astronomy (IFA) and likewise Astronomy's connection to the Hawaii Island Community and its contribution in terms of a long term vision for education, science, cultural sensibility and economy. It is a Bill that leads to action that is timely and further unfolds a vision for Hawaii's present and future. We on Hawaii Island greatly value astronomy connection to Hawaii Island and prominence of Mauna Kea as a world class viewing site. Currently, the Hilo based IFA facility supports the Institutes telescope and research on Mauna Kea. Further, the transfer of IFA headquarters is a timely step given the ongoing discussions regarding astronomy, science, community, environmental and cultural sensibility and a need for more community based management for astronomy on Hawaii Island. The full presence of IFA headquarters on Hawaii Island would help to address the University's present and future commitment to science, education, community and excellence.

In 1998 (circa) the Hawaii State Legislature envisioned an IFA facility in Hilo and discussions led to an appropriation to build this facility. Leadership by Senate President Norman Mizuguchi, State Senator Wayne Metcalf, who then was the Chair of Commerce and Technology along with the collective effort of our Hawaii Island delegation of Legislators were pivotal to funding. They advocated for a building for IFA to have a presence on Hawaii Island. Their rationale was based on the reality that Mauna Kea is one of the most productive astronomy viewing sites in the world. This premise resulted in the appropriation of 11 million dollars for a 35,000 square-foot-split level building in UH Hilo's Science and Technology Park. We at UH Hilo collaborated and supported the IFA effort to seek funding for this building. Currently, the building accommodates astronomers, technicians, engineers, administration, management, grounds staff, the Office of Mauna Kea Management and other science related programs.

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Since the year 2000 there has been much growth in astronomy facilities in the UH Hilo Science Park. To date, there are 6 facilities along with the Imiloa Astronomy Center located in the UH Hilo's Science and Technology Park. This is significant, in effect; when visioning the long term sensibility and future of astronomy in Hawaii it is practical to transfer the administrative authority and key personnel to the IFA facility in Hilo. It is a statement that recognizes distinction with a headquarters, metaphorically speaking, at the geographic foot of Mauna Kea, also it is a commitment to community based management as well as UH's commitment to grow astronomy's world class future for the State where the resource is located.

Today with current technology, fiber optics and video links it makes it possible to connect Hilo, Manoa and Maui and other research universities, other observatories and institutes throughout the world.

One thought is for the Director of the Institute of Astronomy and Chancellor at UH Hilo be assigned by the university to develop a strategic plan and timeline to phase in administrative functions to Hilo. Begin here. A plan to phase in the transfer is reasonable given the reality that there are IFA personnel who are not in a position to relocate; they may have home ownership, children in schools, spouses employed and other personal or professional factors. At the same time others along with new hires may welcome the opportunity for professional growth in education, research and life style options. Is there enough space for a facilities transfer? Yes, in my view, the current 35,000 square feet could serve as a "start up" to begin phasing in new administrative hires. Notably, unlike the Manoa campus there is much land for facility expansion at Hilo. Finally, with the search for hiring a new Director for IFA this is an opportune time to begin a plan for phasing.

The focus of my testimony is on administrative transfer. The issues regarding academic programming are more problematic and complex and are aspects that need more in-depth discussion, collaboration, governance and planning. Clearly, the expansion of opportunities in the sciences at UH Hilo has tremendous potential. Astronomy for the past 50 years has been established on Hawaii Island and is a potential with unbounded opportunity for excellence and likewise an opportunity for other sciences (geology, volcano studies, energy, hydrology, anthropology, computer sciences etc.), in effect, other technical studies to grow on Hawaii Island and reflect a more defined science and technology future for the State of Hawaii.

I support this Bill. I think we need a thoughtful pathway to segue into a plan to phase administrative operations to Hilo. Further, in my view, it is beyond the stimulated growth of economics and jobs on Hawaii Island. This Bill with planning and implementation will transfer of administrative authority to Hawaii Island that embarks on steps that further the excellence and reputation of IFA and with the transfer of IFA on Hawaii Island astronomy becomes an even greater science center of excellence for the State of Hawaii and the World.

Thank you very kindly for this opportunity to share...

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized 'J' or similar character, located at the end of the text.

SB-2865

Submitted on: 2/11/2018 3:36:51 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James McCully		Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Dela Cruz and Kahele,

The transfer of certain departments and institutes within the University of Hawaii system that are currently located on Oahu to the University of Hawaii, Hilo is long overdue. The campus and community at UHH are ideal for astronomy, tropical agriculture, mariculture and aquaculture, as well as business and social programs that focus on rural island cultures. While aviation and pharmacy are areas that have been recently addressed for the most part the creation of unique areas of interest or specialization for UHH have been given short shrift.

With this bill as a model I would hope the successful transfer of these schools to UHH will be proven to be not just a transfer or reallocation of resources but more importantly a way to make these schools more relevant to their stated purpose. The schools and institutes should reflect the resources available, and as they develop students and expertise they will enhance their own reputations and the worlds recognition of our unique resources on the Island of Hawaii.

Mahalo and please Support SB2865

Jim McCully

SB-2865

Submitted on: 2/11/2018 2:17:15 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jacqui Hoover	Hawaii Island Economic Development Board	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Higher Education and Ways and Means

Senate Bill 2865 – Related to Astronomy

Sen. Kaialii Kahele, Chair for Higher Education

Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair for Ways and Means

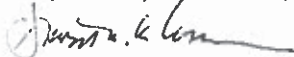
Aloha Sen. Kahele and Sen. Dela Cruz,

The transfer of certain departments and institutes within the University of Hawaii system that are currently located on Oahu to the University of Hawaii, Hilo is long overdue. The campus and community at UHH are ideal for astronomy, tropical agriculture, mariculture and aquaculture, as well as business and social programs that focus on rural island cultures. While aviation and pharmacy are areas that have been recently addressed for the most part the creation of unique areas of interest or specialization for UHH have been given short shrift.

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Mahalo and please Support SB2865

Respectfully Sybmitted,



David Kurohara
Hilo Resident

SB-2865

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 9:21:35 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dr. William H. Wilson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

I strongly support SB2865. I believe that because the primary work of the IFA involves the facilities on Maunakea, the IFA itself should be located here. Having the IFA away from the community hosting the facilities that the IFA uses has contributed to a lack of familiarity and therefore trust and communication between the IFA and the local Hawai'i Island community producing negative outcomes for both and for the state as a whole. Earlier efforts to transfer the IFA to Hilo and a building prepared for the IFA on the UH Hilo campus were resisted by the IFA, creating further feelings on the island that the IFA did not care for the community here. SB2865 is a major contribution to correcting past mistakes relative to locating the IFA away from the community most impacted by its work with Maunakea.

SB-2865

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 9:56:52 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Keiki Kawaiaea	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support the transference of the administrative authority for the Institute for Astronomy to the University of Hawaii at Hilo.

SB-2865

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 10:01:35 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Dela Cruz and Kahele,

The transfer of certain departments and institutes within the University of Hawaii system that are currently located on Oahu to the University of Hawaii, Hilo is long overdue. The campus and community at UHH are ideal for astronomy, tropical agriculture, mariculture and aquaculture, as well as business and social programs that focus on rural island cultures. While aviation and pharmacy are areas that have been recently addressed for the most part the creation of unique areas of interest or specialization for UHH have been given short shrift.

With this bill as a model I would hope the successful transfer of these schools to UHH will be proven to be not just a transfer or reallocation of resources but more importantly a way to make these schools more relevant to their stated purpose. The schools and institutes should reflect the resources available, and as they develop students and expertise they will enhance their own reputations and the worlds recognition of our unique resources on the Island of Hawaii.

Mahalo and please Support SB2865

Glen Kagamida, Hilo, retired

SB-2865

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 10:20:33 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Urasaki	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

SB-2865

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 11:59:33 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stephen Ueda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To: Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair, Committee on Higher Education

From: Christoph Baranec of Hilo, Hawai'i

Thursday, 15 February 2018

I oppose measure SB2865.

I am a faculty engineer/astronomer at the Hilo branch of UH Manoa's Institute for Astronomy. I live and work in Hilo. I develop new technologies for astronomical telescopes, teach classes in engineering and research skills at both UH Hilo and UH Manoa, engage in outreach, mentor local students in high-tech skills and volunteer in my community.

I am writing in opposition SB2865, the alleged purpose of which is to stimulate economic growth in Hawaii County. While I certainly agree with the bills' aim, there does not exist any evidence that the proposed method of transferring the IfA, an organized research unit (ORU) centered at UH Manoa, will accomplish this goal. I would encourage the legislature to contact the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization (responsible for 'The Economic Impact of Astronomy in Hawai'i', Aug 28, 2014 report) and commission a study whether the proposed set of bills will actually make an economic impact in Hilo. A large concern is the disruptive effect of moving an entire ORU from one island to another. Is there enough space or facilities for the transfer? Will new appropriations need to be made for relocation and new facilities that could be better used in other ways to stimulate economic growth in Hawaii County? How will the facilities and personnel at the IfA Maui facility be affected?

Personally I find it disturbing to for the Legislature to micromanage University activities (individual departments or ORUs) that are better handled at the system level. As it stands, I oppose the implementation of these bills, even if I agree with the stated aim.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss how the IfA is already making a positive impact on the economy and the people of the Big Island.

Mahalo no kou manawa,

Christoph Baranec

SB-2865

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 7:37:49 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stewart Hunter	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose transferring IfA to Hilo. IfA has facilities and work on three islands! Additionally, the majority of college students are in Oahu.

SB-2865

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 9:13:31 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gordon Takaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I **supports SB2865** regarding the transfer of the Institute of Astronomy from UH-Mānoa, to UH-Hilo.

UH-Hilo is also a significant economic driver on our island, and our aim is to support UH-Hilo to further advance their role in workforce development, higher education opportunities, as well as research offered on Hawai'i Island. We recognize that the Institute for Astronomy (IFA) has established Hawai'i as the premier site in the world for astronomical research and observation. Being headquartered on O'ahu however presents numerous challenges for the continued existence of astronomy on Maunakea. We believe that by relocating the IFA to Hawai'i Island, we can further build upon its success by ensuring local community involvement, and public support, in establishing UH-Hilo as the premier campus to study astronomy – from the undergraduate to the graduate degree programs.

Maunakea, and the majority of astronomical investment, is located on Hawai'i Island. Therefore, we seek your support in passing SB2865.

SB-2865

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 7:40:42 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Yumi Nagayoshi	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

From: [Larry Kimura](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#); [HRE Testimony](#)
Subject: In support of SB2865
Date: Monday, February 12, 2018 3:56:41 PM

Committee Chairs and Members the Committees On Higher Education & Ways and Means

Aloha,

In 1998 - 2000, my colleague Dr. William Wison and I of the College of Hawaiian Language UH Hilo served as Cochairs of the University of Hawai'i's 24 member committee to develop and draft a new management plan for the University's use of Maunakea. It became very apparent from members of the Committee and the Hawai'i island community at large some 18 years ago, that the Institute for Astronomy should be located, along with the management of Maunakea, here in Hilo on Hawai'i island where the world's leading astronomy work takes place from Hawai'i island's mountain of Maunakea. This action will not only help to sustain the island's economy, but more importantly such a decision will demonstrate proper respect for the mountain and advance trust for the management of the science precinct on Maunakea.

Mahalo for your kokua.

Larry L. Kimura