



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Lower & Higher Education  
Friday, February 1, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Donald O. Straney, Vice President for Academic Planning and Policy  
University of Hawai'i System

### HB 1277 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PROGRAM

Chair Woodson, Vice Chairs Hashem and Perruso, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB 1277, which would provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of qualified students at any four-year University of Hawai'i campus. Importantly, it would amend Section 304A-506 to expand the Hawai'i Promise program to qualified Hawai'i resident attending 4-year programs at the University of Hawai'i. The Hawai'i Promise program provides financial assistance to students with financial need (as determined based on their Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to meet the cost of tuition, fees, books and transportation. It would be awarded only to students to meet need remaining after federal and other need-based aid is awarded.

Expanding the Hawai'i Promise program to qualified students in 4-year degree programs at the University of Hawai'i is the highest priority in the Board of Regent's budget request for the university this year. Expanding this program to all university undergraduate programs will significantly enhance the number of economically disadvantaged students who can attend—and graduate from—the state's public university. It will be a significant step forward in expanding access to economic opportunity for Hawai'i's students and preparing the educated workforce the state will need to grow in the coming decades.

The program is effective for students in the community colleges, where participation in Hawai'i Promise has led to increase student success in their programs. Many of these successful students will be ready to transfer to a 4-year UH degree program. A 4-year version of Hawai'i Promise will help these students afford the continuation of their education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 02/01/2019

**Time:** 02:00 PM

**Location:** 309

**Committee:** House Lower & Higher  
Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 1277 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PROGRAM.

**Purpose of Bill:** Provides scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of qualified students at any four-year University of Hawaii campus who meet certain eligibility criteria.

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of HB 1277, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Board of Education approved budget. The Department supports opportunities for all public school graduates to have affordable access to quality higher education opportunities at any University of Hawaii campus.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 1277.

The Hawaii State Department of Education seeks to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan which is focused on student success, staff success, and successful systems of support. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at [www.hawaiipublicschools.org](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org).



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**Testimony Presented Before the  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
February 1, 2019 at 2pm  
Helen M. Hasegawa, Ph.D., President  
University of Hawaii at Manoa, College of Education Alumni Association**

**HB 813 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PROGRAM PLUS  
HB 1277 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PROGRAM**

**Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso and members of the committee:**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 13 and HB 1277 which provide "last dollar" scholarships for the unmet need of qualified students at any campus of the University of Hawai'i system who meet certain criteria.

I strongly support the expansion of the Promise Program. As a UH Alumna, I am proud of the education I received at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and recognize the critical role UH plays in educating our citizenry for Hawai'i's multi-faceted workforce.

Currently, I am the President of the UHM College of Education Alumni Association. The officers and directors of our Board and our membership are in full support of the expansion of the Hawaii Promise Program to the four-year campuses. At a time, when the Hawaii Department of Education is experiencing a shortage of teachers, the Promise Program will be instrumental in recruiting possible candidates into the University of Hawaii at Manoa's teacher preparation baccalaureate programs from the rural and disadvantaged areas of the state, especially those who demonstrate financial need. Research and studies have shown that communities that "grow their own" experience less attrition. To this end, if these potential candidates are provided with financial assistance so they can attain a baccalaureate degree and then pursue a career in teaching in their communities, it would be a "win-win" situation for the state, especially when Hawaii is experiencing a shortage of qualified teachers.

Since the Promise Program's inception, the UH Community Colleges were able to assist 1,500 students through this program. These students and their families are now facing a more stable and prosperous future thanks to the direct support our state leaders provided to this innovative program.

By expanding the University of Hawai'i Promise Program we can remove cost as a barrier to higher education for UH students statewide facing prohibitive financial challenges. This will ensure that promising, ambitious students have the resources they need to focus on their studies, prepare to join our workforce, especially teaching, and make positive contributions to our state. Their future success impacts us all.

By expanding the University of Hawai'i Promise Program we can help our state's educational leaders meet the goal of having 55% of working-age adults hold a two- or four-year degree by the year 2025. Achieving this goal is critical to Hawai'i's future economic health, and our community's wellbeing.

More Hawai'i residents with college degrees are needed to fill workforce demands of the future. And these include those residents who are seeking a baccalaureate degree in teacher education.

With your support, we can ensure our state has the qualified workforce and expertise we need for balanced economic and social well-being. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

**HB-1277**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 1:57:42 PM

Testimony for LHE on 2/1/2019 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-1277**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 1:22:18 AM

Testimony for LHE on 2/1/2019 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alan Urasaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



**LATE**

## KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

House Committee on Lower & Higher Education

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Date: February 1, 2019

Where: State Capitol Room 309

### TESTIMONY

By Ka'ano'i Walk

**RE: HB 1277, Relating to the University of Hawai'i Promise Program**

E ka Luna Ho'omalū Woodson, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalū Hashem, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalū Perruso, a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike Ho'ona'auao Ha'aha'a, Ki'eki'e, a me ke Kulanui o ka Hale o nā Lunamaka'āinana, aloha! My name is Ka'ano'i Walk, the Senior Policy Analyst for Kamehameha Schools.

We are writing in **support** of HB 1277, which provides scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of qualified students at any four-year University of Hawai'i campus who meet certain eligibility criteria.

Post-secondary success of Native Hawaiian students is a significant objective of Kamehameha Schools and we believe that the Promise Program is an important step toward making college accessible for all students. We also commend the University of Hawai'i in administering this program and covering the unmet needs for over 1,400 students and increasing the retention rate. **Please advance this measure.**

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an educational organization striving to restore our people through education and advance a thriving Lāhui where all Native Hawaiians are successful, grounded in traditional values, and leading in the local and global communities. We believe that community success is individual success, Hawaiian culture-based education leads to academic success and local leadership drives global leadership.

‘A‘ohe hana nui ke alu ‘ia. No task is too large when we all work together! Mahalo nui.