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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
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February 12, 2019

TO: The Honorable Representative Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Chair
Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 50 SD1 – RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES**

Hearing: February 13, 2019, 2:45 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this bill appropriating funds to the University of Hawaii's Hawaii Nutrition Employment and Training (HINET) program available to recipients or those eligible to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

DHS is working to reduce the incidences and impact of intergenerational poverty. The one proven pathway out of poverty is through education. The HINET program provides additional financial and one-to-one support to help college students attend to their basic needs, like finding child care, and assists with job matching.

State and private funds that are invested into the HINET program may be eligible for reimbursement from the federal government up to 50 percent. The funds requested will be used to expand the program to additional community college campuses. As of January 2019, there were approximately 11,078 adults born in the years 1987 – 1996 who receive SNAP benefits in Hawaii, who are currently eligible to participate in HINET. Investing in the education

and work skills of SNAP eligible or SNAP recipients will have positive benefits for the residents and economy of Hawaii.

PURPOSE: Appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii for the Hawaii nutrition employment and training program. (SB 50 SD1)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

LATE

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Human Services
Senate Committee on Higher Education
February 13, 2019 at 2:45 p.m.

By
John Morton
Vice President for Community Colleges
University of Hawai'i System

SB 50 SD1 – RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES

Chairs Ruderman and Kim, Vice Chairs Rhoads and Kidani, and members of the committees:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports the intent of SB 50 SD1 to provide positions and funds for the Hawai'i Nutrition Employment and Training Program (HINET). HINET is an innovative interagency partnership that leverages UH Community College (UHCC) and Department of Human Services (DHS) resources to assist SNAP eligible recipients through a college career pathway leading to self-sufficiency by lowering costs.

Although Hawai'i SNAP recipients receive basic living benefits from DHS, their access to Higher Education is limited, due in part to the USDA's 20-hour work requirement. Concurrently, many Community College students struggle with paying rent and other basic living needs forcing them to either drop from college or attend only part-time. Through HINET, SNAP recipients in Hawai'i now have greater access to college and are able to receive an exemption to the USDA 20 hr. work requirement. In addition, our current students are qualifying for SNAP and receive assistance with their food, transportation, childcare, basic living needs and some educational expenses as well. UHCC HINET staff work closely with DHS to recruit SNAP recipients and help current eligible college students navigate the DHS SNAP application process. HINET staff also provide comprehensive wrap-around student support services and develop workforce employment plans to help students achieve self-sufficiency. Key to student success is the frequent monitoring and documentation of student progress allowing HINET and DHS to prescribe support resources when needed.

HINET will be able to scale its enrollment count and intervention services by bringing additional federal funds to the State through the USDA reimbursement program. USDA will provide a 50% reimbursement of any State or private funding expended by the HINET program or its students. USDA reimbursements could establish student scholarships, support the program, or provide other financial assistance to HINET students.

Though HINET is only a few years in development, the program is demonstrating an overall fall-to-fall persistence rate that is 20% higher than the Community College system average. In addition, UH has a unique responsibility to the indigenous people of Hawai'i, and early analysis is showing that 58% of HINET students are Native Hawaiian.

We support SB 50 SD1 on the condition that any requested positions or funds do not supplant any portion of the University's Biennium Budget request.

Thank you for considering this testimony in your deliberations. Aloha.

∞ CHAIR OF THE HOUSE OR SENATE COMMITTEE NAME OF THE HOUSE OR
SENATE COMMITTEE

Kevin Costello

I represent Hawaii Nutrition Employment and Training Program (HINET)

45-679 Waiawi St.

Kaneohe HI 96744

808-392-3226

Hearing Date: Wednesday 2/13/19 I support SB50 SD1 Relating to Human Services; University
of Hawaii, Hawaii Nutrition Employment and Training Program (HINET)

My Name is Kevin Costello. I am here to represent the Hawaii Nutrition Employment
and Training Program (HINET).

The measure Relating to Human services; I am in support of SB50 SD1.

The reasons why I am in support to this bill is because the HINET program made it
possible for me to achieve success academically while I was attending Windward Community
College. The HINET program provided me with reimbursement of my books and a bus pass,
which was a major relief of some financial stresses I had in the beginning of my academic
journey. The HINET program also loaned me a laptop for a couple of semesters when I could not
afford one. This program made it possible for me to achieve a sense self-worth, belonging, and
values with their vocational training. With the help I received from HINE I have been able to far
exceed my expectations as a student.

I am in full support SB50 SD1 and of the HINET program and I hope this program will
continue to help others, like it helped me, in the future with the passing of this bill.

SB-50-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 8:15:25 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/13/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Devonne Crowton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Members of The Legislature,

I am writing to you today on behalf of the HINET program who I am strongly in favor for.

Please endorse this bill as HINET has been an integral part of my continuing education. I am the first in my family to attend college and would not have been able to do so had it not been for HINET's support. If it weren't for their assistance, I truly believe I would not be in school.

Thank you very much for your time and attention and for the opportunity to speak.

Sincerely,

Devonne Crowton

devonnec@hawaii.edu

SB-50-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 10:44:28 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/13/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jill Thompson	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Please consider approving SB50 SD 1 in support of the HINET Ho'ola Ike Program. I have been in the program since October 2017 and HINET has made it possible for me to go back to school after a long time in the workforce. I was working at a job I hated and wasn't making enough money to be able to afford living in Hawaii. But HINET made it possible for me to get food stamps and additional money for books. They even paid for gas money and I was commuting from Laie, that made a huge difference. Now I can treat going to school as if it was my job. We fill out a timesheet each month showing the classes we attended and the homework we did for the month. It looks like I will be able to graduate and move on to a better job. My dream is to work in the womens prison system to give back through empowermental programs and reinstall self esteem and self worth. Please consider supporting this bill. Mahalo, Jill Kehaulani Thompson

SB-50-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 2:45:28 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/13/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathy Helfrich	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please consider supporting bill SB50 SD1 in support of the HINET program. It is cheap at twice the price. Mahalo.

From: [Dawn Wittenhagen](#)
To: [HRE Testimony](#)
Subject: SB50 SD1 TESTIMONY
Date: Tuesday, February 12, 2019 12:41:18 PM

Aloha

This program has been super beneficial to my success. It allows me to go to school and not worry about loosing my snap as well as focus on school itself as it is my job. Having a husband whom is dying at home taking care of him and going to school is a full plate as it is I would not be as successful as I am now if I had to work as well. I honestly would have to drop either school or work had I have yo do both. And if this was the case I would not be graduating in may with an hospitality and tourism degree Hinet also helps in getting me here I drive 40 miles round trip Mon thru thurs that's alot of gas to utilize in a week let alone in a month so gas allowance is extremely helpful. Please consider making this a permanent fixture as it allows people like me to be more successful. If you have any questions please feel free to email me back and I would be happy to oblige

Mahalo

Dawn wittenhagen

Spring 19 hospitality and tourism graduate

Wayne Kaahanui
57 Mango street, Wahiawa Hawaii, 96786
waynekk@hawaii.edu
808-476-5627

I am a student of the Leeward community college, Waianae Moku. I have been a recipient of the HINET Program ever since it began and depend on the resourceful and empathetic service the program offers. I have experienced struggles along the journey of my education endeavor and have been assisted by the services that are offered through the HINET Program. This program has not only offered subsistence, but also the opportunity to learn time management and how to keep track, a running log of work completed. I have also learned to write a resume, I have been reimbursed for books to ease the strain of being cashless and have been given more EBT for being a participant of this program. I am now enjoying the fruits of this program. Hinet is a program that should be continued for the sake of all the needy students that are attempting to reach their full potential.

From: [Alice](#)
To: [HMS Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 50 SD1 TESTIMONIAL
Date: Tuesday, February 12, 2019 1:51:42 PM

Aloha!

My name is Alice Ambriz and I'm in the HINET program. It has helped me tremendously in so many ways. Before going to school with the program, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life. I wasn't interested in going to school but when I heard about this opportunity, I felt like I couldn't pass it up because it was so good. I went into the classes with an open mind and a willingness to learn and with HINET, I was able to work harder towards completing the course. I'm able to make it work because HINET provides me with SNAP to get food and gas reimbursement to get to school. With the time and study sheets, I have a goal to accomplish and it's easier to study when I know it benefits me in a variety of ways. I now feel closer to having a better life and a better education and it's all thanks to HINET. My goal is to become an effective worker in community health, to better our community and it's health, and to be a better person in my community.

Thank you for your time ,

Alice

From: [Autumn-Raine Hesia](#)
To: [HMS Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for Bills SB50 SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 12, 2019 2:23:13 PM

To whom it may concern,

The HINET program at Windward Community College (WCC) ultimately saved my life. I am a full-time student at WCC and came back to school Spring of 2017. When I first started school I wasn't working and I needed a way to feed me and my family. There were some days that I exhausted all of my income and I had no left over funds to eat. Without the assistance of the HINET program, life would have been harder than what it was and I wouldn't have been able to continue my education. I believe that HINET should be a permanent entity in the UH community college system. Thank you HINET for allowing me to get through the days that I wasn't able to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Mahalo nui loa,

--

Autumn-Raine Hesia
ASUH-WCC Vice President
Hale 'Akoakoa 232
Windward Community College
45-720 Kea'ahala Rd.
Kané ohe, HI 96744



Mai ha'awi pio i kou e holomua a e ho'oko i kou moemoea.
Don't give up, persevere and fulfill your dreams.

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Charlilani Kaheaku-Malama
1020 Kakala St.
Kapolei, HI. 96707
Email: cjkm@hawaii.edu
Ph: (808) 783-9721

Aloha, my name is Charlilani Kaheaku-Malama; currently I am a non-traditional student at the University of Hawaii West Oahu, pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration with a concentration in Health care. I am a mother of four adult children; the oldest is attending Honolulu Community College pursuing a degree in Aeronautics Mechanics and a granddaughter in her senior year at Kapolei High School, with plans to further her education also. I have been an integral part of their financial stability in finding the funds, through grants, scholarship, and program participation, in order for them to continue in their educational journey. I have had the advantage, since 2/2013, to serve the Leeward Community College students and alumni, as a part-time Student Aide for Job Prep. Since the opening of the HINET program in 3/2017, it is also my privilege, as a Student Aide for HINET program. I assist students with their applications and information on how to make good use of their SNAP benefits, by shopping local at participating farms markets that double their bucks. I have also witnessed for a select few the extended assistance through tuition assistance to complete courses that they were not able to find funding. In connecting with our HINET participants, we also get them to apply for as many scholarships in order to supplement their educational funding. Personally, I have witnessed personally the help that HINET has given me to pursue my educational goals without having the burden of the extra cost for books, mileage, and food. The HINET program is enabling me to gain the education that I will need to get a job and become a contributing member of society. The HINET program allowed me to gain field experiences in volunteering for events, fairs, and internships. I believe that the HINET program will assist to better the student in their communities and allow them to grow and give back to the people of Hawaii. With all of the assistance that I have been afforded I plan to continue my education and pursue a master's degree in Public Administration, I hope to one day help others in my position with finding funding that will enable them to continue their education.

Chasity Tago
84-649 Manuku street #A
Waianae Hi, 96792
Chasityt@hawaii.edu
808-220-3361

Aloha,

My name is Chasity Tago. I am a mother of 4 boys, a full-time student at Leeward Community College, and a part-time student worker for the HINET program here at Leeward Community College. I am in my last semester before I achieve my Associates Degree in Business Management and plan to further my education to conclude my Masters in Business Management.

In 2015, I injured my back in a non-work related accident. I was a Medical Surgical float pool Nurse Aide for Kuakini Medical Center. Even after physical therapy and countless doctor appointments, I denied clearance to resume back into the work I was doing. I was devastated because as a child my goal was to become a Nurse. With the workforce being competitive and I had no other work experience in any other field besides nursing, I felt my back was against the wall. I decided the only way I could stand out against other potential candidates for a job, I would need the credentials to separate me from the rest. I decided that a college education is the best option.

I enrolled in Leeward Community College in 2016, but I became a participant in the HINET program in 2018. Because of back, I was limited to traveling and decided to utilize the on-line courses Leeward Community College has to offer. Because of this, I was unaware of HINET and the benefits that this awesome program has to offer a single mother with children like me. As I came closer to graduating, I applied for federal work study so that I could build my experience in the business field. I searched for on-campus jobs and came across the office aide position for HINET. Because I didn't know about this program, I researched it and I could not believe that there is a program that could help students gain a college education and /or technical training by not only paying for your tuition, but making it affordable by reimbursing books and mileage for going to school. I applied for the position and I got hired. I can now help inform other students about this program and the best part is promoting this program by informing non-students about this program to help motivate them to want to get a college education.

HINET is a great program and I feel that we are just barely scratching the surface. Please, help us to make a difference. We have so much more to do to help the people of Hawaii to get up, get out, get educated, get a great paying job, and get independent. Help us make Hawaii's people more educated and more self-sufficient.

From: [Cindy Sunada](#)
To: [HMS Testimony](#); [HRE Testimony](#)
Subject: SB50 SD1 testimony
Date: Tuesday, February 12, 2019 2:35:58 PM

My name is Cindy Sunada and I would like to submit testimony in **SUPPORT of SB50 SD1**.

Food insecurity carries serious consequences for student success and is an ongoing issue not only nationally, but more so locally here in Hawai'i. Supporting this bill will allow eligible students to receive food benefits as well as provide support services while they are receiving an education that will lead them to self-sufficiency.

I know many students that have benefited from this program and have now transferred to a 4 year higher educational institution or completed their degree or certificate.

Give this program the support it needs because it is a program that **WORKS** and **DELIVERS** results.

LATE

From: [Daniel Richardson](#)
To: [HMS Testimony](#); [HRE Testimony](#)
Cc: mmr3@hawaii.edu
Subject: HINET, please provide permanent funding and make program permanent.
Date: Tuesday, February 12, 2019 3:27:13 PM

HINET has been a wonderful help to our family (both myself, age 49; and daughter, age 19) in attending the 2 year Diesel program at Hawaii Community College.

This is our job for these 2 years, while in school, so we can eat (SNAP food benefits) and go to school (gas reimbursement, reimbursement for books, etc.), in order to be successful in our large engine/machine endeavors.

Without this program, both myself and my daughter would not have financially been able to attend college, and work to complete our programs.

Any questions on this, let us know.

Thank you! Dan Richardson, Madellan Richardson

From: [Ian Jenss](#)
To: [HMS Testimony](#); [Kathleen Helfrich](#)
Subject: Testimony for Hi-Net Program - Ian Jenss
Date: Tuesday, February 12, 2019 1:54:03 PM

February 12, 2019

Aloha to whom it may concern,

I would like to put in a good word for the HI-Net Program at Windward Community College.

I am a non traditional student back in school after 35 years. I am now a Junior at University of Hawaii at Manoa.

I am entering my 3rd year in hope of obtaining a Bachelors Degree in Creative Media.

The Hi-Net program did a lot for me to get me back in the groove to go back to classes. I can attribute a lot of my success so far to this program.

It has helped me with books, SNAP benefits and even money for gas for my vehicle.

I could not have gotten this far without its help.

I am extremely grateful for the assistance and highly recommend any older students returning to school to enroll in this program.

The staff and faculty that run Hi-Net are very inspirational and helpful.

Please continue the funding for this very important resource.

Sincerely,

Ian Jenss
56 Years Young
Student - University of Hawaii @ Manoa

From: [Jade Perreira](#)
To: [HMS Testimony](#)
Subject: HI NET TESTIMONY
Date: Tuesday, February 12, 2019 1:23:15 PM

In lieu of SB50 SD1, and being a recipient of HI NET myself, I 100% support the bill being approved for others to have additional help in college, because every little bit really helps.

Hawaii Community College student:
Jade Perreira

From: [Philomena Scherling](#)
To: [HMS Testimony](#); [HRE Testimony](#)
Subject: HINET
Date: Tuesday, February 12, 2019 2:09:44 PM

To whom it may concern,

I would like to speak in favor of bill SB50 SD1.

Before joining HINET I had started a small business doing bookkeeping and medical billing for acupuncturist on the Big Island. I needed to learn more about accounting to do a better job for my clients and this is when I decided to go to school and get my accounting degree.

After a year of struggling my way through working and going to school, I heard about the HINET program at Hilo Community College. In 2016 I joined the program and I was able to get all the money I spent on my books refunded to me so that I could use that money for gas to get to class in Hilo from Puna. The amount of relief this provided me is immeasurable, I was so stressed about how I was going to afford gas and food on a regular basis. I had to give up time working with my clients to make time for my schoolwork and I was not making the money I needed to cover things like food.

I am now taking three classes and working full time and in a position to support myself and get all my needs taken care of on my own. Moving into my last year of school now and having bettered myself in the process, I would not be where I am today if I had not had the support of this program. I am eternally grateful to HINET and their staff for everything they have repaid and provided for me throughout my time in school. I know many others that are extremely grateful for the relief this program offers.

Please accept my testimony as support of this program.

Mahalo nui loa,

Philomena Scherling

From: [Jayvee Marie Austria](#)
To: [HMS Testimony](#); [HRE Testimony](#)
Cc: [Kathleen Helfrich](#)
Subject: Bill: SB50 SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 12, 2019 11:53:33 AM

Aloha Senate HS & Higher Education Committee,

Before becoming a student and a part of HINET, I was a full time employee and a mother to a beautiful girl. After having my daughter, I've always wanted to come back to college and finish my degree, but with all the financial issues I've had at home I had to continue working full time.

I've decided to come to school part time because I'm not getting any older. I want my daughter to graduate college and get a degree. I want to be role model for her. I've went through a lot and still manage to continue so there should be no excuses for her. It may take me a long time but still I know I'm going to finish and get my degree. HINET, have helped me in programs to get reimbursement with my mileage. I travel far from Kahala to where my daughter goes to school then to Windward where I take my economics classes. Getting mileage reimbursements helps me with being able to put gas in my vehicle is a necessity to me especially now that I have gone from full time job to part time to be able to attend my classes. HINET also helps me in thinking that my school work is my job. I have a set time that I study for my school and classes which I have to clock in and out of from my timesheet. I get emails from HINET when there is an opportunity for me to apply for a scholarship. They help me in reviewing my essay letter and even with my resume. All these things help me in pursuing my goal and to become a better student. Please continue funding HINET as it helps me and many other students in a similar situation as me to be able to pursue their educational goals.

Sincerely,
Jayvee Austria
Windward Community College Student

To whom this might concern.

Hello my name is Donniesha White and before I came to I was in Hawaii Job Corps. I've been wanting to come to school since I graduated from high school back in 2013, but never did because I ended up working and helping my family pay for bills. At age 21 I enrolled into Hawaii Job Corps and finished the program within 10 months and got accepted into their college program. This is my second semester at Windward Community College and even though it doesn't really have the programs I want I do enjoy coming to school. HINET helped me start saving money for after Windward Community College I do plan on moving to the mainland to go to an all art school so I can start pursuing my dream job as a movie director and photographer and thanks to HINET helping me get SNAP I can easily save up money for my move also with the help of HINET I now can eat lunch during school. Honestly if it wasn't for HINET I would probably be lost they also helped me figure out what types of classes I could go into while in Community College. HINET is a big help in my journey through school.

Mahalo,

Donniesha White

February 12, 2019

Aloha, **Senate HS Committee and Higher Education Committee, on behalf of HI-NET.**

I was sitting on the end of my bed with a knife to my wrist because I thought it was my only way out since I was diagnosed with MS and P.T.S.D. I was a manicurist with a thriving business until I got sick and was unable to perform my job duties. This caused me to lose most of my clients. In that moment with the knife, I had a revelation “go back to school, learn another trade, life doesn't have to end. I called Windward Community College and told them my needs and they directed me to the **Hi-Net Program**. My name is Carlyne and I am an active participant of **Hi-Net** at Windward Community College. This is my fifth semester, thanks to **Hi-Net**.

These are ways the **Hi-Net Program** have/is helping me to achieve education to a new career in Teaching English as Second Language.

- Helped me to be able to concentrate on my schoolwork because my schoolwork is my job when you are in **HI-NET** and you have to fill out a timesheet.
- Helps me keep my SNAP food stamps so I can get enough to eat while in school because I don't have a lot of income with my minimal ability to work. SNAP helps.
- Helped me apply for scholarships that can help me to pay for additional schooling.
- Lent me a computer when I did not have one for use, that really helped me to succeed in school/classes.
- Provides a place to come and print, study, use computers, tutoring, and get help with any crises.

Thanks to **HI-NET** and their uplifting support to help me reach my school goals, this is my fifth semester and I am doing very well. I made the Dean's list last semester and I have had many proud moments of self-confidence and accomplishments. It is an incredible feeling to have the support from the **HI-NET Program** at Windward Community College, under the direction of Kathy Helfrich and staff, especially because I have no family or real support. I am so grateful for **HI-NET** and for attending college because I feel that my life is saved and I can start to give back by helping others as **HI-NET** is a great role model.

Sincerely,
Carlyne McGuire

From: [Kawohi Kukahi Kahale](#)
To: [HMS Testimony](#)
Subject: Hinet
Date: Tuesday, February 12, 2019 12:47:33 PM

Aloha,

Hinet has been the most useful and helpful resource I've discovered at WCC. A program that take care of their clients. Without Hinet I wouldn't be able to afford the necessities needed for school. Thank you Hinet.

Sincerely,

Kawohikukahi Kahale

Trey Lima

1/31/19

Howzit I'm Trey. To some, I'm a friend, others, a cousin, or a son, brother, ex-lover, or what may have you; I'm 22 years old and by now I've built up a lot of relationships. At this moment in time, I'm a conservationist, a soldier of the land and the only reason I was able to find out I have a passion in taking care of the 'āina (land) and meet all of my friends who share the same passion is because of school. The reason I can afford school is because of Hinet. They provide me with money for anything school related when I need it so I can gain crucial knowledge that I can later apply to protecting the land. Last year they paid for all of my textbooks and course needs which kept me interested knowing that even if a class requires me to pay more on top of tuition, hinet has my back and I can count on them to take care of me and my education. Being honest, the cost of textbooks to most is little to nothing for undergraduate levels especially if you're taking less classes like me. But I have been living on my own since I was 17 and every cent counts. So before I knew about hinet. I would likely drop the class and opt for another class if it required I have extra materials. You might think to yourself that since I'm alone then I should be applicable for a pel grant through financial aid. You're not wrong in thinking that, except for the fact that since my parents have a substantial income, I am not eligible unless I get a girl pregnant, marry someone off the street, or turn 24. Hinet is awesome for me because even though financial aid has turned its back on me because of its regulations and rules, hinet has workers that talk to me about my life and understand my situation and I can trust that they'll help me get a degree. This is a good program that has really helped me a lot and I honestly think I would have stopped school if I hadn't figured out about them. I am in debt to them and thank them for keeping me on track to be a leader of this positive movement of protecting the 'āina we tread upon every day.