



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

March 28, 2019

TO: The Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 50 SD2 – RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES**

Hearing: March 29, 2019, 2:30 p.m.
Conference Room 308, 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 requests two amendments:

- That the appropriation amount of \$520,000 be reinserted for each fiscal year of the biennium; and
- That the effective date be effective on July 1, 2019.

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, and who are potentially 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. The Senate Committee on Ways and Means changed the appropriation amount to an unspecified sum, defected the effective date, and made technical changes.

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



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
March 29, 2019 at 2:30 p.m.

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

SB 50 SD2 – RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports the intent of SB 50 SD2 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 SD2 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.

LATE

Jasmyn Lave
PO BOX 1017
Waianae, Hi. 96792

RE: Bill SB50 SD1

My name is Jasmyn Lave and I would like to express my whole hearted support for Bill SB50 SD1 relating to Human Services requesting support to UH Community College students enrolled in the HINET program across the state.

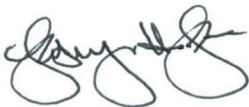
I am one of 540 Community College students who have benefited significantly from the HINET program. I am currently enrolled at Leeward Community College studying to become an Elementary Education to be Teacher on the Waianae coast I qualify for SNAP benefits from the Hawaii Department of Human Services.

I am a mother who is a non-traditional student returning to school after being out of school for 10 years. I lost my job in 2016 and had the opportunity to return to school to better myself and make a better life for my children.

Being a participant of the HINET program has really helped me during my time in school. Working part time and attending school full time and having a family has not been the easiest road to take. I am grateful to have a program like HINET that gives support for books and mileage reimbursement. This has been a huge help and has taken some stress off my shoulders. I was really surprised to learn that this program existed and I told everyone I knew to participate in this program. I would hope that this program can permanently continue to help more students across the state.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer my personal experience with HINET and for supporting this measure.

Sincerely,



Jasmyn Lave

LATE

Aloha, I am in support of bill SB50 SD2.

I was a non-traditional student at Windward Community College and participated in the HINET program. The support I received from HINET including food benefits, financial assistance with school expenses, and the guidance towards a career path helped me to pursue my bachelor's degree in Public Healthcare Administration, which I received in December of 2018. I worked as a student aid in HINET while I was in school, and I since obtaining my BA degree, I now work as a program assistant at the HINET office at Windward Community College. My experience and the achievement I have made with HINET assistance shows that the program works.

Continued funding of HINET will help many get an education towards a career or job to gain independence and be able to earn a living wage.

Mahalo, Akimi El-Gould

finance1 - Sean

From: Danlynnjo Vierra <danlynnj@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Thursday, March 28, 2019 11:20 PM
To: FINtestimony
Subject: SB50 SD1 Related to Human Services



HINET needs a permanent fixture in the community colleges. They helped me out a lot. With out the HINET program I would not be in college today. They helped me with foodstamps, supplies and and transportation. They make the program easy to understand and they are super friendly. I am going to school full time and working almost 30 hours a week. I have 2 kids and need all the help I can get in order to succeed in this world. I'm hoping in 4 years I will graduate and start my new career. I didnt think it was possible for someone like me to get ahead. But the help HINET provides to people like me will better this world.

DanlynnJo Vierra

finance1 - Sean

From: Sonya Giron <giron7@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Friday, March 29, 2019 12:44 PM
To: FINtestimony
Subject: Attn: Chair, Luke Support for Bill SB5o SD1



March 29,2019

Sonya Giron
94-1041 Lumipolu St
Waipahu, Hawaii 96797

RE: Bill SB50 SD1

Aloha,

My name is Sonya Giron and I am currently a HINET program participant at Leeward Community College. I would like to take this time to express my support for Bill SB50 SD1. Being a participant in the HINET program truly has made the difference as to whether or not I was able to attend school, without the program I would have had to choose between settling for a minimum wage job (since I have no job ready skills) or struggling financially while coming to school and working towards a professional career that will allow me to provide for my family and future.

The HINET program has kept me eligible to receive food stamps as well as provided funds for books (quite honestly a lifesaver since my career of choice has several textbooks that cost me almost \$500 this semester alone) not to mention the mileage reimbursement that helps to cover my transportation cost. I can honestly say that without HINET I don't know if I would be able to come to school and achieve the honors distinction I have because HINET has allowed me to meet my DHS work requirement which in turn allows me to concentrate on school. In my opinion the HINET program is necessary to help bridge the gap many low income or struggling households encounter when trying to strive for higher education and opportunities. Expanding it to all & community colleges will expand the reach and consequently the success of many more students/potential students.

Thank you for allowing me to share my personal experience as a HINET participant and I fervently ask for your support and passage of BILL SB50 SD1

Sincerely,
Sonya Giron