



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committees on Higher Education and Hawaiian Affairs  
Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 1:15 p.m.

By  
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School of Hawaiian Knowledge  
And  
Michael Bruno, PhD  
Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### SB 938 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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

Aloha mai Kākou

I testify in support of SB 938 provided it does not adversely affect UH priorities as set in our budget request. This measure would provide \$1,002,000 in each of the next two years in support of Native Hawaiian Student Services (NHSS) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. As the dean of Hawai'i inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge (HSHK), in which NHSS is located, I can attest to the efficiency and the efficacy of this department. As an alumnus and professor of twenty-six years in Hawaiian Studies at Mānoa, I can attest to the need for student service programs targeting Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) who wish to obtain four year and graduate degrees at Mānoa.

In 1986, the year that I graduated from UH Mānoa, 4.9% of the students on my campus identified as Hawaiians. System-wide, 8% of students identified as Native Hawaiians. UH Hilo, in which faculty and staff created vigorous new programs aimed at recruiting and preparing Hawaiians for college enjoyed the highest percentage of 15.6%. The 1986 Ka'ū Task Force Report which collected this data concluded that the "University does not have a comprehensive plan to provide the services and support that are needed to improve access and persistence of Hawaiian students in higher education."<sup>1</sup>

In Fall 2017, UHM admitted its largest co-hort of more than 600 incoming Native Hawaiians, bringing our numbers up to 2,584, 14.6% of the Mānoa student body. The fairly steady rise of Kanaka Maoli representation at Mānoa has coincided with creation of Native Hawaiian Student Services, its successful Title III grant applications and its creative and effective use of this funding. NHSS' success in obtaining federal grants

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<sup>1</sup> Ka'ū: University of Hawai'i Hawaiian Studies Task Force Report, December 1986. P. 19

and a large commitment of scholarship funds from the Kamehameha Schools has allowed this department to thrive and has been decisive in the vast improvement of a Kanaka Maoli presence on the campus.

Through its federal grants NHSS has also been able to support undergraduate research at UH Mānoa, hosting conferences for young scholars doing research in Hawaiian knowledge, even as UHM has begun to recognize the importance of undergraduate research in its emerging strategic plan. While comparatively small, the UH commitment to NHSS has been decisive and effective because of the federal grants and the Kamehameha partnership. As these grants begin to expire we ask that the legislature provide the support that will allow us to bridge the end of federal support and a gradual enlargement of the university's commitment.

As the school's dean these past two years, I recognize the difficulties facing the University of Hawai'i system and the Mānoa campus during a prolonged period of enrollment decline. Now that this decline seems to have ended with the first semester of enrollment increase since 2014, an increase to which we believe NHSS has contributed, we are certain that the university will see the wisdom of making incremental increases to our budget on behalf of NHSS. Senate Bill 938 will maintain the progress we have made as Mānoa moves to institutionalize support for Native Hawaiians.

As our NHSS director has testified, we are funding a diverse array of programs addressing historic disparities suffered by Kānaka Maoli with regard to higher education, economic opportunities, health and general well-being. As we continue to seek new federal funding and renewed partnerships with Kamehameha and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs in the future, it will be to expand our programs and our outreach, and we are better poised to do this as we move into a much larger and better equipped space later this spring. But without immediate support we do not know how we can continue the success of the past few years, and we have a real concern about what a termination of those programs would bring.

The framers of our state constitution mandating that Hawaiian culture and language be taught in Hawai'i's schools recognized the precarious position of our culture, language, indeed, of our existence as a people. But it is a fact that most of the gains we have made since 1978 have come through our organizing efforts in the communities and in the schools, helped from time to time, by strategic and necessary funding from the legislature. This is why we are making a separate ask from the legislature, knowing that the university administration has made their own commitments, and believing that their biennium budget has been framed intelligently and in good faith. Please support this bill and help Native Hawaiians continue our progress in higher education.

We believe that increasing a Native Hawaiian presence in the University of Hawai'i has been good for UH, good for our people and good for all of Hawai'i. Thank you for receiving our testimony.

To: Distinguished Senators

From: Willy Kauai  
Director, Native Hawaiian Student Services

Re: Support for SB 938

Aloha,

I testify in support of SB 938, which provides temporary positions and funding to Native Hawaiian Student Services (NHSS) to continue current programs being operated at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa (UH Mānoa). UH Mānoa is home to the largest number of Native Hawaiians in Higher Education than any other institution in the world. The approximately 2600 Native Hawaiian students that currently attend Hawaii's only Research intensive university—Mānoa—make up nearly 15% of the overall population and are spread throughout nearly every academic discipline. In Fall 2018, Hawaiian students accounted for 1,921 undergraduates, 350 Masters, 137 Doctoral level, and 127 in professional school—Law, Medicine, Business.

Housed in the academic college of Hawai'i nui ākea at UH Mānoa, NHSS is charged with providing academic support to all Hawaiian students. Since its inception in 2007, NHSS programming has played a central part in the recruitment, retention and overall success of Hawaiian students at UH Manoa. Along with providing direct student support, NHSS, through its many partnerships and strategic collaborations, has also significantly contributed to helping the University fulfill its strategic initiative to become a Hawaiian Place of Learning and "support Hawaiian student success."

NHSS has been very successful at securing extramural funding through the department of education as well as other institutions such as Kamehameha Schools and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Since 2007, the unit has been at the forefront of innovative student programming and has worked diligently to fund its operation. In its relatively short existence, NHSS has secured nearly \$12 million in extramural grants, which is a testament to the Units efficacy and work prodcut. This has resulted in direct student support as well as institutional transformation and capacity building via stratgic partnerships and collaborations at UH Mānoa. Currently, NHSS operates nearly 20 different research and co-curricular programs throughout the academic year. These include: New student Orientation, Faculty Research Mentorship, Research Conference, Student Scholar Center, Residential Learning Community, Student Research Journal, Summer Bridge, Internships, Financial Aid Services, Study Abroad, Field Schools, and summer school offerings.

In relation to the general population, Hawaiian student enrollment has steadily increased over the last 10 years. While these increases are credited to the work of multiple people and programs at UH Manoa including NHSS, it is also reflective of the greater Hawaiian educational pipeline that now extends from Punana Leo to PhD. It is the result of seminal policy such as the

Ka'ū Task Force Report, which in 1986 illuminated the need to improve “access and persistence...in higher education” for Hawaiian students. Recently, UH Mānoa welcomed the largest incoming class of Hawaiian students to UH Manoa, a significant mark especially considering the wide array of institutional barriers that restricted access to this historically disenfranchised group. While we should celebrate these significant gains we must be diligent to ensure their continuation.

At UH Mānoa, NHSS programming contributes significantly to the recruitment and retention of Hawaiian students and serves and in many ways as a central hub for Hawaiian student success. Support for SB 938 is a tremendous step on the part of the State of Hawaii and the University to ensure that programs such as NHSS that bolster Hawaiian student enrollment and degree attainment at UH Mānoa continue.

**SB-938**

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 12:48:46 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2019 1:15:00 PM

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

Comments:

**SB-938**

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 3:06:45 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kamakana Aquino	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB 938 as this bill supports UHM in becoming an Indigenous serving institution and a Hawaiian Place of Learning. These positions are vital to the success of Native Hawaiian students providing positive impact and experiences. These positions will also support UHM in implementing the many recommendations of the Native Hawaiian reports from the Ka'u Task Force Report of 1986 to Ka Ho'oko Kuleana 2016 .

**SB-938**

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 3:17:07 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Hali Kanoelani Pacheco	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha!

My name is Hali Kanoelani Pacheco, and I strongly support HB 938, which appropriates funds for 2 years for positions and program support for Native Hawaiian Student Services at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

I am an undergraduate/graduate student in the Major program. I have participated in the NHSS program name program in year. I believe the work of NHSS is critical in supporting Hawaiian student access and success on our campus. As a program student, I have personally experienced the impact of NHSS' research programs to encourage student access and success.

Being a native Hawaiian transfer student from the island of Maui, NHSS has provided me with the necessary resources to aid in a smooth transition from a community college to a 4 year university. The programs they offer, have prepared me, and continue to serve me in achieving higher education. The support I receive from NHSS, has allowed me to grow and push past my comfort zones. There is no other student service entity at UH Mānoa that successfully serves the 2,700 native Hawaiian student population that attend the college.

I support the funding of NHSS positions and programming, as their work is critical to fulfilling the mission of our university and supporting students like myself. Therefore, I humbly request SB 938 be passed by this committee.

Ke aloha,

Kanoelani



**SB-938**

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 6:08:25 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Eomailani Kukahiko	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha!

My name is E-mailani Kukahiko and I strongly support SB 938, which appropriates funds for 2 years for positions and program support for Native Hawaiian Student Services at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

As a Native Hawaiian faculty member, I have seen first-hand the institutional benefit that having this office devoted to Native Hawaiian student support. I have personally partnered with NHSS as a faculty mentor, and collaborator on the many of their projects. Most recently in February, mahina 'Ālelelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language month), we collaborated on a panel honoring Ruth Ke'elikōlani, a staunch advocate of Hawaiian language and culture. Like Ke'elikōlani, NHSS seeks to normalize Hawaiian ways of knowing and excelling.

I believe their work is critical in supporting Hawaiian student access and success at the UH systems only research-intensive institution. As the higher education continues to see decreases in student enrollment, NHSS programming has greatly contributed to the recruitment and retention of Hawaiian students. I have seen first-hand the impact of NHSS' programs for students that contribute to our collective work of transforming our research campus into be a better institution not just for Hawaiian students, but for Hawai'i. While this service program started as an extramural grant this kind of institutional funding of NHSS will support Hawaiians in many different departments but really the whole of Hawai'i by raising the educational attainment level for Hawaiians but also by Hawai'i's citizenry

I support the funding of NHSS positions and programming, as their work is critical to fulfilling the mission of our university. Therefore, I humbly request SB 938 be passed by this committee.

Mahalo,

Eomailani Kukahiko, PhD

UH Mānoa, College of Education

**SB-938**

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 6:16:22 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Nanea Lo and I strongly support SB 938, which appropriates funds for 2 years for positions and program support for Native Hawaiian Student Services at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I am born and raised in Hawai'i and a current resident of Kaimukā as well as a masters student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

I have partnered with NHSS as student, participant, and collaborator on multiple programs like

- 'Āiwi Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program 2019
- Lāhui Hawai'i Research Center student conference 2017-2018
- Summer Institutes from 2016-2018
- Hawaiian New Student Orientation 2018
- Summer Bridge Program 2012
- Kekaulike Internship Program 2018

.I believe their work is critical in supporting Hawaiian student access and success at the UH systems only research intensive institution. NHSS has personally been transformational for me as an academic and budding young professional. NHSS programming has greatly contributed to the recruitment and retention of Hawaiian students. I have seen first-hand the impact of NHSS' programs for students that contribute to our collective work of transforming our research campus into be a better institution not just for Hawaiian students, but for Hawai'i.

I support the funding of NHSS positions and programming, as their work is critical to fulfilling the mission of our university. Therefore, I humbly request SB 938 be passed by this committee.

Thank you,

Nanea Lo

Aloha Kākou,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my unwavering support of SB 938, funding Native Hawaiian Student Services (NHSS) at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UHM). As a veteran student affairs professional and scholar of higher education, NHSS is critical to supporting the successful educational journeys of Native Hawaiian students in higher education.

Currently, I serve as an assistant professor of Educational Administration at the College of Education at UHM. However, I also served as the founding director of NHSS between 2008-2014. In these first five years, NHSS earned over \$8 million in extramural funding to provide support services to Native Hawaiian students at UHM and those aspiring to enroll at UHM. NHSS built a solid reputation for providing high quality, innovative services for Native Hawaiian students and contributing critical leadership in working collaboratively with partners at UHM and across the UH System to improve the educational environment for all students. Even as a young program, the work of NHSS was recognized by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) during its accreditation visit to UHM by recommending that NHSS become institutionalized as well as awarded Innovative Program of the Year by Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education (NASPA), the largest and oldest student affairs professional association.

A decade later, NHSS has expanded its scope of services and reach yet still receives little to no resource support from UHM/State of Hawai‘i. NHSS has continued to rely on its entrepreneurship to sustain and grow its services to support the important work of UHM and Hawai‘i in supporting Native Hawaiians in higher education. The services NHSS provides to Native Hawaiian students positively impacts their educational outcomes (e.g., graduation, retention) in ways that are culturally-responsive and data-driven. Supporting NHSS is imperative to supporting Native Hawaiian student success and the future of Hawai‘i. After all, investing in higher education for Hawai‘i's Indigenous People is directly related to the future of our collective well-being.

Again, I support SB 938 to provide a stable base of support for NHSS to, in turn, support Native Hawaiians in higher education. NHSS has demonstrated their programmatic success through its decade worth of student data as well as with its millions of dollars earned through its grant writing initiatives. It's time for UHM and the State of Hawai‘i to contribute to this critical work.

Me ke aloha, Erin Kahunawaika‘ala Wright, PhD

Constituent of Senate District 14

**SB-938**

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 8:06:41 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jamaica Osorio	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha!

My name is Dr. Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio and I strongly support SB 938, which appropriates funds for 2 years for positions and program support for Native Hawaiian Student Services at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Before being hired into a permanent position in the Political Science Department this fall i worked as a faculty Specialist for Native Hawaiian Student Services on their Kekaulike Grant between 2016 and 2018. It goes without saying that i strongly believe in their work and impact in our Hawai'i Community. During my two years working for NHSS i helped to coordinate multiple programs that directly impacted hundreds of Native Hawaiian students and the greater UH Manoa community. There is not another on campus unit or organization that has taken up the issue of UH becoming a Hawaiian Place of learning as seriously and impactfully as Native Hawaiian Student Services has and therefore their Unit is instrumental in the overall ability of the university to meet its strategic vision and goals. NHSS has also supported other departments and units financially with the use of soft moneys brought into the program through the diligent work of its faculty and staff. Suffice it to say, they have been one of the most significant financial supporters on campus for Native Hawaiian programs and initiatives.

In addition to transforming the UH campus to reckon with the distinctive needs of our diverse student populations NHSS programming has greatly contributed to the recruitment and retention of Hawaiian students. I have seen first-hand the impact of NHSS' programs for students that contribute to our collective work of transforming our research campus into be a better institution not just for Hawaiian students, but for Hawai'i.

Most impressive is the way NHSS has done this all with next to zero institutional funding and only one permanent faculty position. Soft money from the Feds is not enough to transform our institution and support the greater needs of our Hawai'i community. It is time for the University and the State of Hawai'i to step up financially to meet the needs of Native Hawaiian students and the University if it ever hopes to live up to the charge of being a Hawaiian place of learning.

I support the funding of NHSS positions and programming, as their work is critical to fulfilling the mission of our university. Therefore, I humbly request SB 938 be passed by this committee.

Mahalo,

Heoli

**SB-938**

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 6:47:24 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Katrina Oliveira	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou!

I am writing to offer my strongest support of SB 938 that appropriates funds for 2 years for positions and program support for Native Hawaiian Student Services (NHSS) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

I have partnered with NHSS as a faculty mentor since the inception of the program in 2007 working on a variety of initiatives. For the past 11 years, I have co-organized the summer Hawaiian immersion field school, Mauiakama. NHSS was able to secure a federal grant that has been a blessing to our program. Our program immerses our participants solely in Hawaiian for one week. Students, Hawaiian immersion teachers, community members, and faculty engage in Hawaiian cultural activities alongside expert Hawaiian cultural practitioners. Through our partnership, we have not only increased the Hawaiian language proficiency of our participants, but we have also facilitated in the transfer of numerous students from the University of Hawaii at Maui College to the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Our students have transferred to UH Manoa to receive BAs, MAs, and PhDs. I have seen first-hand the impact of NHSS' programs for students that contribute to our collective work of transforming our research campus into be a better institution not just for Hawaiian students, but for Hawai'i. Mauiakama has served more than 420 participants to date.

I fully support the funding of NHSS positions and programming as their work is critical to fulfilling the mission of our university. Therefore, I humbly request SB 938 be passed by this committee.

Mahalo,

Katrina-Ann KapÄ• Oliveira



**SB-938**

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 11:47:28 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ho'oleia Ka'eo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senators of the Committee on Higher Education and the Committee on Hawaiian Affairs,

'O au no 'o Ho'oleia Ka'eo. I am an undergraduate senior at the University of Hawaii at Manoa in Biology and Hawaiian Language and I strongly support SB 938, which appropriates funds for 2 years for positions and program support for Native Hawaiian Student Services at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

I fully support this measure because I have participated in numerous NHSS programs over the years, including Lahui Hawaii Research Conference, Faculty-Student Research mentorship program, Hawaiian Youths Abroad, Ea Field School, Mauiakama and the many support workshops that they hold throughout the school year including La Kuokoa, scholarship workshops, welcome back programs and much more. I know that the work of NHSS is critical in supporting Hawaiian student access and success on our campus. As a program student, I have personally experienced the impact of NHSS' research programs to encourage student access and success.

They have created a space for hawaiians on this campus to be supported both academically and personally as well as challenged to kulia i ka nuu (strive for the summit). In addition, the programs and events have brought students, graduate students, and faculty from different disciplines together to engage in different capacities all while bringing Hawaiian knowledge, kuleana, and a sense of lahui to the academy.

I support the funding of NHSS positions and programming, as their work is critical to fulfilling the mission of our university and supporting students like myself. Therefore, I humbly request SB 938 be passed by this committee.

Me ka 'oia'i'o,

Ho'oleia Ka'eo

**SB-938**

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 12:01:16 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Tammy Hailiopua Baker	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I'm Aloha kākou,

My name is Tammy Hailiopua Baker and I strongly support SB 938, which appropriates funds for 2 years for positions and program support for Native Hawaiian Student Services at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

I have partnered with NHSS as a faculty mentor and collaborator on the new student orientation program. I believe their work is critical in supporting Hawaiian student access and success at the UH systems only research intensive institution. NHSS programming has greatly contributed to the recruitment and retention of Hawaiian students. I have seen first-hand the impact of NHSS' programs for students that contribute to our collective work of transforming our research campus into be a better institution not just for Hawaiian students, but for Hawai'i.

The kinds of services that NHSS provides for the UHM community is not available elsewhere and is a critical component to a successful educational experience for Native Hawaiian students and faculty.

I support the funding of NHSS positions and programming, as their work is critical to fulfilling the mission of our university. Therefore, I humbly request SB 938 be passed by this committee.

Me ke aloha,

Tammy Haili'Ā• pua Baker

Associate Professor/Kumu

Hawaiian Theatre & Playwriting

Department of Theatre & Dance

University of Hawai'i at MĀ• noa

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**LATE**

**SB-938**

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 4:32:14 PM  
Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2019 1:15:00 PM

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

Comments: