



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
2759 South King Street
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

February 6, 2020

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair
Representative Mark J. Hashem, Vice-Chair
Representative Sean Quinlan, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Lower & Higher Education

FROM: Lauren Moriguchi, Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: Measure: H.B. No. 2250 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
PROMISE PROGRAM PLUS
Hearing Date: February 7, 2020
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Location: Room 309

Bill Description: Establishes the University of Hawaii Promise Program Plus to provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of qualified students enrolled in bachelor's degree programs in teaching, health care, social work, or engineering at the University of Hawaii who commit to work for at least three years in Hawaii. Appropriates funds to establish, implement, and manage the program.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Comments

Good afternoon. I am Lauren Moriguchi, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL appreciates the opportunity to offer comments on H.B. 2250.

EOEL is statutorily responsible for the development of the State's early childhood system that shall ensure a spectrum of high-quality development and learning opportunities for children throughout the state, from prenatal care until the time they enter kindergarten, with priority given to underserved or at-risk children.

If this measure is enacted, we respectfully request that early childhood education be included among the degrees covered by the scholarships. Early childhood education is one of the fields in Hawaii that are sorely lacking a pool of qualified workforce candidates.

It is precisely during the earliest years before brain development is largely complete (before kindergarten), and particularly for those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds – the priority population for the EOEL Public Pre-K Program – that our children need the best educators. We do not want to promote inequity.

As we work to increase access to qualified early learning opportunities for our keiki, we must focus on addressing the severely limited workforce of qualified early childhood educators (i.e., those with coursework and background in early childhood, and supported with ongoing professional development, who research shows are most effective). Even as the EOEL Public Pre-K Program stands now with just over 40 classrooms across the state, we have difficulty recruiting and turnover is high. This can be attributed in part to the fact that over half of the teaching staff in the EOEL Public Pre-K Program have not completed coursework in early childhood education and assumptions about pre-K teaching that are inconsistent with the knowledge and competencies required of teaching staff in settings for preschool-aged children.

Unqualified teaching staff do not have the requisite understanding to support preschoolers and families living in difficult circumstances. When vulnerable children encounter teachers who are unprepared to support their developmental needs, what may result are increased instances of stress-induced behavior problems, inappropriate referrals to special education, and suspensions or expulsions.

Given the severely limited workforce of qualified early childhood educators in the state, we believe that incentives such as that proposed in this bill would be mutually beneficial for both the community and our students who are interested in entering the field of early childhood education.

Thank you for your consideration.



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

Date: 02/07/2020

Time: 02:20 PM

Location: 309

Committee: House Lower & Higher
Education

Department: Education

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

Title of Bill: HB 2250 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PROGRAM PLUS.

Purpose of Bill: Establishes the University of Hawaii Promise Program Plus to provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of qualified students enrolled in bachelor's degree programs in teaching, health care, social work, or engineering at the University of Hawaii who commit to work for at least three years in Hawaii. Appropriates funds to establish, implement, and manage the program.

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) supports HB 2250, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Department's 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. We appreciate the legislature's inclusion of a three-year commitment to working in Hawaii in order to take advantage of this program. It is the Department's hope that this requirement will encourage program participants to elect teaching as their designated choice of employment. Programs such as this support the Department's on-going efforts in teacher recruitment and retention.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 2250.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. 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.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

House Committee on Lower & Higher Education

Time: 2:20 p.m.

Date: February 7, 2020

Where: State Capitol Room 309

TESTIMONY

By Ka'ano'i Walk

RE: HB 2250, Relating to the University of Hawai'i Promise Program Plus

E ka Luna Ho'omalū Woodson, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalū Hashem, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalū Quinlan, 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.

Kamehameha Schools is in **support** of HB 2250, which establishes the University of Hawai'i Promise Program Plus to provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of qualified students enrolled in bachelor's degree programs in teaching, health care, social work, or engineering at the University of Hawai'i who commit to work for at least three years in Hawai'i. This measure also appropriates funds to establish, implement, and manage the program.

We commend the legislature for funding, and the University of Hawai'i for administering, this program in the community colleges, which covered the unmet need costs for over 1,400 students and increased the retention rate. We support the expansion of the program to serve more of Hawai'i's college students in need, especially Native Hawaiians.

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! **Please advance this measure.**



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February 7, 2020

**Testimony Presented Before the House Committee on Lower and Higher Education
Friday, February 7, 2020, 2:20 p.m.**

HB 2250, RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I PROMISE PROGRAM PLUS

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Quinlan and Committee members;

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2250 Relating to the University of Hawaii Promise Program Plus. My name is Jill Hasegawa, a proud alumna of the University of Hawaii'i (UH) and Board President of the University of Hawaii'i Alumni Association (UHAA). UHAA represents the more than 300,000 alumni graduating from all UH campuses statewide. The education and experiences gained at UH are integral to our success, and for many of us, attending UH is a family tradition.

UHAA acknowledges and thanks the legislature for providing funding to support the Hawaii Promise Program at the community colleges. Due to its great success, we support this bill that proposes to establish the University of Hawaii Promise Program Plus to provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of qualified students enrolled in bachelor's degree programs in teaching, health care, social work, or engineering at the University of Hawaii who commit to work for at least three years in Hawaii.

We ask for your support as well. It would be a great source of pride for both UH alumni and the community as a whole, to be able to provide our students with this assistance.

We all know that the key to Hawaii's economic well-being relies heavily on an educated workforce, and providing access and affordability to our state's only public higher education institutions are a necessary first step.

We urge you to support HB 2250. Mahalo.

Jill M. Hasegawa, JD '04
President

HB-2250

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 7:33:43 AM

Testimony for LHE on 2/7/2020 2:20:00 PM

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

Comments:



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

LATE

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Lower and Higher Education
Friday, February 7, 2020 at 2:20 p.m.

by

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

HB 2250 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PROGRAM PLUS

Chair Woodson, Vice Chairs Hashem and Quinlan, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding HB 2250 – Relating to the University of Hawaii Promise Program Plus.

The University of Hawai'i (University) supports the intent of this bill, as expanding the Hawai'i Promise Program to qualified students in four-year degree programs at the University is the highest priority in the Board of Regent's budget request for the University this year. The intent of HB 2250 is understandable as the University recognizes that there are current and projected job shortages in the fields of teaching, health care, social work and engineering.

The University would welcome the opportunity to assist students pursuing future employment in these fields. There would be some difficulties administering such a program. For example, providing aid as a scholarship that ends up having to be repaid when students do not complete the program or do not spend three years working in the field in Hawai'i. These conditions effectively turn the scholarship into a loan program. Another difficulty is in the field of teaching, in particular preparation for secondary teaching. Students are accepted into the program after the completion of their General Education Core and after completing the majority of their academic major content courses, which then limits the student's eligibility for the Hawai'i Promise Program Plus. While the University is willing to find ways to undertake and overcome such challenges for the benefit of having this program, managing such a program would place an administrative burden on the University to collect monies from students who do not finish their program or work for three years in the State. Therefore, there are processes that must be adequately resourced.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



ASUH
Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i
YOUR STUDENT GOVERNMENT

LATE

House Committee on Lower and Higher Education
Representative Justin Woodson, Chair
Representative Sean Quinlan, Vice Chair

Friday, February 7, 2020, 2:20 PM

Re: COMMENTS FOR HB 2250: RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PROGRAM PLUS

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice-Chair Quinlan and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

My name is Landon Li, and I am the President of the Associated Students of the University of Hawaii (ASUH), the undergraduate student government at UH Mānoa. We represent the voices of over 10,000 full-time classified undergraduate students on the UHM campus. The ASUH would like to offer **comments** on **H.B. 2250: RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PROGRAM PLUS**.

The ASUH appreciates the intent of this bill, which is to provide Promise Program funding to four-year institutions. However, we have concerns regarding some of the requirements it places upon students. Targeted scholarship funds for students who need financial aid incentivizes selecting majors and degrees that may not be best suited for them. This results in prolonged graduation rates, as students switch majors realizing their current path does not fit them, or even worse, they drop out. By dictating which fields of study are more valuable, this measure presents financially-needy students with an ultimatum between pursuing a major that does not fit them and forgoing college altogether.

The ASUH also has concerns regarding how the three-year work commitment would be overseen and implemented. Graduating students may wish to attend graduate school or other professional schools. Would they then be incentivized to not pursue higher levels of education? If exceptions are made for students who wish to pursue a post-undergraduate degree, how would that be enforced?

While the ASUH understands Hawaii is suffering from a “brain drain” in specific industries, targeting undergraduate fields of study would not directly address the underlying causes. Many educators, such as those teaching history, English, and computer science, for example, do not have education degrees. Rather, they specialize in their area of expertise and later go on to become educators. Pursuing a non-targeted field does not diminish a student’s potential contribution to Hawaii.

On behalf of the 10,000 full-time classified, undergraduate students on the UH Mānoa campus, the ASUH appreciates your intent to provide support for students needing financial aid.

Thank you very much for your time.

Landon Li, President
Associated Students of the University of Hawaii at Mānoa
landonli@hawaii.edu



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

**Testimony to the House Committee on Lower and Higher Education
Friday, February 7, 2020 at 2:20 P.M.
Conference Room 309, State Capitol**

**RE: HB 2250, RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PLUS
PROGRAM**

Chair Woodson, Vice Chairs Hashem and Quinlan, and Members of the Committees:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **offers the following comments on** HB 2250, which would establish the University of Hawaii (UH) Promise Program Plus to provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of qualified students enrolled in bachelor's degree programs in teaching, health care, social work, or engineering at the University of Hawaii who commit to work for at least three years in Hawaii. This bill would also appropriate funds to establish, implement, and manage the program.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

Established in 2017, the Hawaii Promise program currently provides financial aid for any qualified student at UH Community Colleges. This program provides students aid for any financial needs not met by other forms of financial aid such as federal grants and benefits, and scholarships from UH or other sources.

While the Chamber supports the intent of HB 2250, we would note concerns around administrative costs related to the provision that requires the University of Hawaii to recoup scholarships if graduates leave Hawaii within three years of graduation and how they would be tracked after leaving.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.