



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Written Testimony Presented to the  
House Committee on Lower and Higher Education  
Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 2:30 p.m.

by  
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Vice President for Research and Innovation  
University of Hawai'i System

SB 3059 SD1 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports this bill that would remove the sunset provision of Act 39, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2017, and thereby allow UH to sustain its Innovation and Commercialization Program by providing it with the express statutory authority to sponsor and directly participate in the transformation of innovations created by UH researchers into viable commercial enterprises.

Commercial innovation is inherently risky and takes time to develop. The path leading from an idea, through its development and refinement, through protection of intellectual property, through formally organizing a corporate structure and hiring managers and staff, through locating a facility to physically incubate the venture, through obtaining external financing, and ultimately leading to a successful and sustainable commercial operation is fraught with uncertainty. Act 39 recognizes that UH is uniquely positioned to assist a home-grown fledgling venture navigate these uncertainties.

Universities across the country increasingly recognize that they can play an active role to support the transformation of inventions and discoveries generated on their campuses and to transfer these technologies to the commercial realm. The University of Hawai'i needs to match its peers to remain competitive to attract sponsored research, enterprising faculty and talented students.

To sustain and grow its Innovation and Commercialization Program, the University of Hawai'i respectfully requests that the sunset provision of Act 39, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2017, be deleted.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Written Statement of  
**Len Higashi**  
Acting Executive Director  
Hawaii Technology Development Corporation  
before the  
**House Committee on Lower & Higher Education**  
Wednesday, March 11, 2020  
2:30 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 309

In consideration of  
**SB3059, SD1**  
**RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.**

Chair Woodson, Vice Chairs Hashem and Quinlan, and Members of the Committee.

The Hawaii Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) **supports** SB3059, SD1 that repeals the sunset provision in Act 39, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017.

As part of HTDC's vision to create 80,000 new innovation jobs in Hawaii earning \$80,000 or more by 2030, HTDC supports initiatives aimed at growing tech and innovation jobs. The University of Hawaii has done an outstanding job establishing a suite of programs that nurture the talent and startup business pipeline out of the University and has been working with HTDC to align these programs with all of the resources in the State. HTDC believes that these type of programs play an important role for Hawaii and supports the continuation of these programs. HTDC requests correction of the defective effective date and defers to the University on the specifics of the measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.