



The Committee on Ways and Means  
Friday, February 18, 2022  
10:10 AM  
Conference Room 211, Videoconference

RE: **SB 3355 SD1 Relating to The University of Hawaii Community Colleges**

Attention: Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) **opposes the intent and purpose of SB 3355 SD1**. This revised version is another attempt by the Legislature to gain full control and authority over the University of Hawai'i and diminish the role of the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents.

This bill upends existing law and reporting relationships within the University of Hawai'i system by proposing to solidify in statute the ability for the Legislature to mandate the Board of Regents to establish a **standing committee on community colleges** and to determine **WHO** will report to that standing committee.

This is a flagrant violation of the State of Hawaii Constitutional language that provides the Regents with the "exclusive jurisdiction over the internal organization and management of the university."

UHPA strongly urges the committee to **defer SB 3355 SD1 indefinitely**.

Respectfully submitted,

Christian L. Fern  
Executive Director  
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

**LATE**

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
February 23, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

by  
David Lassner  
President  
and  
Erika Lacro  
Vice President for Community Colleges  
University of Hawai'i

### SB 3355 SD1 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) respectfully and strongly opposes SB 3355 SD1, which requires the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii to establish a Standing Committee on Community Colleges that would directly supervise the UH Vice President of Community Colleges.

As a system of campuses with distinct missions -- research, regional comprehensive and community colleges -- UH provides a rich array of opportunities to the students of Hawai'i. This distinctive and effective structure as a fully integrated system of public higher education is defined in our Constitution, which provides for a single executive officer for UH: "The board shall have the power to formulate policy, and to exercise control over the university through its executive officer, the president of the university, who shall be appointed by the board. The board shall also have exclusive jurisdiction over the internal structure, management, and operation of the university." (Article 10, Section 6).

UH policies, practices and systems enable students to benefit from the synergies presented by this highly integrated system. UH provides multiple entrance and exit points for students to complete their degrees. Students may choose to start their education at a UH community college where they may benefit from open admissions and lower tuition or they can begin at a UH university to pursue a four-year degree. UH has multiple curricular pathways for students who start at a community college to move to a university to complete a bachelor's degree. As a result, more than half of UH four-year students begin their college education at a community college. Changing the reporting structure of the community colleges would disrupt the synergy and management structure of the integrated system which provides UH students with access and support to opportunities across the ten campuses.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony in strong opposition to this disruption in the highly effective and fully integrated governance structure of Hawai'i's public higher education system that is enshrined in our Constitution.