



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
February 28, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.

By

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HB 258 HD1 – RELATING TO THE ACQUISITION OF THE SAINT FRANCIS SCHOOL CAMPUS FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today. The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports House Bill (HB) No. 258 HD1, Relating to the Acquisition of the St. Francis School campus for UH Mānoa. The St. Francis School campus is located at 2707 Pamoia Road and identified as Tax Map Key No.: (1) 2-9-004: 001 ("Property"). The Property is approximately 11.120 acres in size and is owned by the Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities, a New York nonprofit corporation ("Owner"). The Property is adjacent to the UH Mānoa campus, and the St. Francis School used the Property until it ceased school operations in May 2019.

The Property has been advertised for sale since early 2020. The UH has previously submitted an offer to acquire the Property – and, was even provided with a Legislative authorization/appropriation in the FY2020 and FY2021 biennium budget to acquire the property. To be clear, the property is private property, being offered for sale by the landowner, who is accepting offers as part of its private sale. This bill does not grant any special powers or authorities to the University to acquire the property, other than to provide an appropriation to which the UH could pursue negotiations with the landowner.

Via recent inquiry with the landowner's representative, the UH is of the understanding that the Property is currently under contract (in escrow) between the landowner and a private party to purchase the Property. The Property has been in escrow before, so this bill would allow the UH and the State to be situated and prepared should the current transaction also fall out of escrow, or not close. UH would then pursue the opportunity to purchase the fee-simple interest in the Property via a private sale route. The UH is interested in this Property because of its close proximity to the UH Mānoa campus and the potential integration into its long-range development plan.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.