



UNIVERSITY  
of HAWAII®  
SYSTEM

**Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Thursday, February 2, 2023, 3:00 p.m.**

**Testimony by:**

**Jamie Go, Interim Executive Administrator and Secretary of the Board of Regents**

**S.B. No. 960 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII BOARD OF REGENTS  
CANDIDATE ADVISORY COUNCIL.**

**S.B. No. 631 – PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE X, SECTION 6, OF THE  
HAWAII STATE CONSTITUTION TO MODIFY THE APPOINTMENT  
PROCESS FOR THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY  
OF HAWAII.**

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee:

These comments on S.B. No. 960 and S.B. No. 631 are offered in my capacity as the Interim Executive Administrator and Secretary of the Board of Regents.

The Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i (Board) has not yet had the opportunity to discuss these measures. Discussion is expected to occur at the Board's next meeting on February 16, 2023.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on S.B. No. 960 and S.B. No. 631.

Committee on Higher Education  
The Hawaii State Senate  
415 S Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: OPPOSE SB 960 & 631

January 31, 2023

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and esteemed members of the Higher Education Committee,

I am writing to ask that you OPPOSE BILLS [SB 960](#) and [SB 631](#), which seek repeal and eliminate the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents (BOR) Candidate Advisory Council.

As an educator in higher education that is impacted by all choices the Board of Regents makes, I find it of extreme importance that we choose BOR members that are qualified and non-biased, support the mission of our State University system, and are not unduly influenced by politics.

Allowing legislative interference to the degree this bill suggests would threaten the UH-System institutions' accreditation status. Both the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) accreditation are reliant on institutions of higher education being protected from undue influence or political pressure. The [WASC Standard on Integrity and Transparency Criteria for Review \(CFR\) 1.5](#) states:

Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, or religious organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose and operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

Guidelines: The institution does not experience interference in substantive decisions or educational functions by governmental, religious, corporate, or other external bodies that have a relationship to the institution.

And the [ACCJC Standard IV.C.4](#) states:

The governing board is an independent, policy-making body that reflects the public interest in the institution's educational quality. It advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue influence or political pressure.

For all these reasons and more, I strongly support OPPOSING BILLS [SB 960](#) and [SB 631](#) and help secure the quality of higher education on our islands for years to come. Mahalo nui!

Sincerely,



Erika Molyneux  
Instructor, New Media Arts  
Leeward Community College

**SB-631**

Submitted on: 1/31/2023 7:04:00 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/2/2023 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Stan Fichtman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference  
Thursday, February 2, 2023  
3:00 PM  
by Brandon Marc Higa

**Testimony in Opposition of Senate Bills 960 & 631  
Re: Proposing An Amendment to Article X, Section 6, of the Hawai'i Constitution  
to Repeal the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents Candidate Advisory Council**

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee on Higher Education Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in response to Senate Bill 960, Relating to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents Candidate Advisory Council and Senate Bill 631, Proposing An Amendment to Article X, Section 6, of the Hawai'i Constitution to Repeal the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents Candidate Advisory Council. I am submitting my testimony **in opposition to B. 960 and S.B. 631** in my personal capacity and not in an official capacity as a member of the Candidate Advisory Council.

The Candidate Advisory Council (CAC) was created following public support of a constitutional amendment in 2006 to facilitate a transparent and comprehensive vetting process for qualified candidates to serve on the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents. The volunteers appointed to the CAC are intended to represent various communities and professions to provide perspective in recruiting and recommending candidates that have the right qualifications, *and more importantly, motivation, temperament, and fit* to serve as Regents. The eight CAC members will represent a broader, more diverse cross section of community supporters of the University than a single elected official, if the Governor is provided with the sole appointing authority.

Given the University of Hawai'i's commitment to shared governance with its faculty, students, and other stakeholders, the CAC has made efforts to engage with internal governance organizations in support of transparency and inclusion. In particular, I have prioritized my engagement with the UH Student Caucus in encouraging student leaders to consider serving as the Student Regent and have nominated individuals who would otherwise not have had a direct conduit to the Governor's Office for consideration for appointment. By eliminating the CAC, the progress toward inclusion of the University's shared governance organizations will be undone.

I respectfully ask the Committee vote "no" to S.B. 960 and S.B. 631 to refrain from eliminating the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents Candidate Advisory Council.

Respectfully submitted,  
s/Brandon Marc Higa  
Regent Emeritus ('19)