



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 1502
Relating to the University of Hawaii**

Committee on Higher Education
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at 3:10 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
415 South Beretania Street

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

The Hawaii Military Affairs Council ("MAC") supports SB 1502 which appropriates funds for the establishment of faculty positions, student programs, and facilities in the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and the University of Hawaii West Oahu for workforce development in the defense sector of the State's economy.

The MAC was established in 1985 when the Chamber was appointed by the State to serve as the liaison to the military. The MAC advocates on behalf of Hawaii's military, and is comprised of business leaders, academic institutions, State and County officials, members of the CODEL, community leaders, labor unions and organizations and retired U.S. flag and general officers. The MAC works to support Hawaii's location as a strategic U.S. headquarters in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region which is crucial for U.S. national and homeland security.

The defense industry is a critical economic driver for Hawaii, ranking as the second largest industry segment after tourism. Developing a local workforce to meet the growing demand in defense-related personnel is crucial for Hawaii's economic diversification and long-term prosperity. Defense continues to play a significant investment in Hawaii and has created thousands of high-quality jobs in fields like information technology, cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science, providing vital economic opportunities for our residents.

SB 1502 will help develop a skilled local workforce to meet the growing demand in these critical fields, and will serve as a pipeline and be a catalyst for talented graduates ready to contribute to Hawaii's defense sector.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at 3:10 p.m.

By

Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

And

Maenette Benham, EdD, Chancellor
University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu

SB 1502 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 1502. This bill seeks to establish faculty positions, student programs, and facilities within the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu. Its goal is to develop a skilled workforce for the defense sector of the state's economy.

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Since 2023, the College of Social Sciences (CSS) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UH Mānoa) has developed and delivered programs to prepare high school and university students for careers in intelligence analysis, national security and cybersecurity. Now, in 2025, CSS and other UH Mānoa units are ready to broaden the scope of these pilot projects by establishing a UH Mānoa-based academic program, Intelligence Studies in the Asia Pacific (ISAP).

ISAP would change the historical practice of transferring personnel from the continent and foreign countries and moving them to Hawai'i to fill local jobs in national security. This workforce development project would enable the people of Hawai'i, who have a strong affinity for Pacific Islander and Asian cultures and languages, to take the lead in monitoring and addressing regional international affairs and security issues within their home state.

With the goal of preparing Hawai'i's people for local high-paying careers in national security fields, CSS will continue to work closely with UH Mānoa units such as Engineering and the College of Arts, Languages and Letters, as well as the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu's (UH West O'ahu) cybersecurity research laboratory and other campuses within the UH System. This workforce initiative would attract and serve

students who are pursuing a variety of majors, and provide credentials for working professionals to upgrade skills in a rapidly growing Hawai'i industry.

University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu

The Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity provides students with an advanced cybersecurity education in information security, mathematics, computer science, and computer engineering. This technical cybersecurity degree program prepares students to meet the advanced cybersecurity workforce requirements of public sector agencies and private sector enterprises. This degree program supports both four-year students at UH West O'ahu and pathway students from aligned Associate Degree programs from the University of Hawai'i Community Colleges.

In partnership with the College of Social Sciences (CSS) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa academic program, Intelligence Studies in the Asia Pacific (ISAP), our collective goal is to prepare Hawai'i's people for local high-paying careers in national security fields. UH West Oahu's Cyber Security Coordination Center (CSCC) provides students with unique opportunity to develop subject matter expertise and identification of best practices for network defense, vulnerability research, forensic analysis, and industrial control systems. The Cyber Security Research Laboratory (CSRL) provides students with unique internship opportunities to combine cyber security education and skills to promote advanced knowledge in an applied research environment. Students participate in faculty guided applied analysis and research related to the understanding and improvement of security and resiliency for critical information infrastructures and systems at the local, regional, and national level. The CSCC and CSRL provide a collaborative resource for Cybersecurity, Information Security and Assurance, and Information Technology degree students that will also produce highly trained cybersecurity and information technology professionals to meet increasing technical workforce requirements that exists in our communities.

The funding allocated in this bill will support the following initiatives:

1. The establishment of a multidisciplinary Integrated Security and Privacy (ISAP) program at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, utilizing 4.5 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employees, including 3 faculty members, with an estimated budget of \$500,000.
2. The creation of a 0.5 FTE position for the Director of the Cybersecurity Coordination Center and a 0.5 FTE position for the Director of the Cybersecurity Research Laboratory at the University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu. This funding will also cover expenses related to student internships, certifications, equipment, software, and professional certification fees.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our testimony in support and respectfully ask for your favorable consideration, provided its adoption does not impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.



The Committee on Higher Education
February 11, 2025
Room 229
3:10 PM

RE: **SB 1502, relating to the University of Hawaii**

Attention: Chair Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Michelle Kidani and Members of the
Committee

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) **supports SB 1502**, relating to the
University of Hawaii.

As technology continues to advance, it is imperative that the workforce of tomorrow prepares today. SB 1502 helps to meet this demand by establishing faculty positions at the University of Hawaii at Manoa's College of Social Sciences, and in the University of Hawaii West Oahu's Business Administration Program. By growing these programs now, more students will be prepared to meet the ever evolving workforce needs in information technology, cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science.

To ensure the recruitment and retention of the positions, it is essential for the FTE appropriation to have a recurring, general funded designation.

Respectfully submitted,

Christian L. Fern
Executive Director
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Higher Education
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at 9:15AM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference**

RE: SB1502 Relating to the University of Hawaii

Aloha e Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports Senate Bill 1502 (SB1502), which appropriates funds for the establishment of faculty positions, student programs, and facilities in the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and the University of Hawaii West Oahu for workforce development in the defense sector of the State's economy.

SB1502 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Military and Defense. This bill promotes policies that drive economic growth, enhance workforce opportunities, and improve the quality of life for Hawaii's residents.

This bill strengthens Hawaii's defense sector by investing in workforce development at the University of Hawaii. Funding new faculty and programs in international economics, cybersecurity, and intelligence studies will help meet the growing demand for specialized professionals. As a key player in national security and Indo-Pacific defense, Hawaii must expand academic programs and research capacity to attract federal investments and remain competitive in defense industries.

According to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, *Federal Civilian Employment*, Hawaii has approximately 35,800 federal workers, including 18,135 civilian Department of Defense employees. The defense sector drives the state's economy and requires a steady flow of skilled professionals. This bill addresses that need by expanding faculty and supporting workforce training programs like the Hawaii Intelligence Studies Summer Program and student internships. The Chamber strongly supports this initiative for its potential to fuel economic growth, create high-paying jobs, and strengthen Hawaii's role in defense and intelligence.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

We respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 1502. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Andy Huang, Chairman – L&L Hawaiian Barbecue **Ave Kwok**, Past Chair – Jade Dynasty Seafood Restaurant
Mike Palmer, Incoming Chair – Ho'okipa Partners **Tambara Garrick**, Treasurer – Hawaii Farm Project
Victor Lim, Government Relations Lead – McDonald's | **Mail: 2909 Wai'ala'e Avenue #22, Honolulu, HI 96826**

Sheryl Matsuoka, President & CEO **Ginny Wright**, Operations Associate **Holly Kessler**, Vice President of Operations

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FOR TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION (HRE)

SENATOR DONNA MERCADO KIM, CHAIR
SENATOR MICHELLE N. KIDANI, VICE CHAIR

SB1502

Relating to the University of Hawaii
Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at 3:10PM
Conference Room 229 Via Videoconference
Submitted by Sheryl Matsuoka

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

I am testifying in support of SB1502, which would establish faculty positions, student programs, and facilities in the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and the University of Hawai'i West Oahu for workforce development in the State's defense sector.

Passing SB1502 is crucial for young professionals and students in Hawaii because it invests in workforce development programs that create high-paying, in-demand jobs in fields like cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science. By funding faculty positions, internship programs, and student training initiatives at the University of Hawaii, this bill helps prepare the next generation for careers in the growing defense sector. These opportunities not only provide students with the skills they need to succeed but also encourage them to stay in Hawaii rather than seeking employment elsewhere, strengthening the state's local workforce.

In addition, SB1502 is a strategic move for Hawaii's long-term economic growth. With nearly \$9 billion in defense spending and a rising demand for skilled workers in national security and technology-related industries, investing in education and workforce pipelines ensures that Hawaii can maximize its economic potential. By aligning university programs with industry needs, this bill fosters innovation, supports local businesses, enhances economic diversification, and creates sustainable, well-paying career paths for residents. This investment will drive business growth, create jobs, and position Hawaii for long-term economic prosperity.

I respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 1502. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sheryl Matsuoka

President & CEO
Hawai'i Restaurant Association



LATE

**Testimony Before the Senate Committee
on Higher Education**

Tuesday, February 11, 2025; 3:10 pm
Conference Room 299 & Via Videoconference
State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Support for SB1502

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Honorable Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB1502.

First, we extend our appreciation to Majority Floor Leader Senator Glenn Wakai for introducing this legislation, which takes important steps toward diversifying Hawaii's economy and equipping the next generation with the skills needed to secure high-paying careers here at home.

Alignment with Kaua'i Chamber Priorities

The Kaua'i Chamber is dedicated to strengthening the local economy, advocating for sustainable business practices, and improving the overall well-being of Kauai's residents. Through strong collaborations with local businesses, government agencies, and the military, we strive to build a resilient and prosperous economy that benefits our entire community. SB1502 aligns with this mission by fostering workforce development in key fields such as cybersecurity, intelligence studies, and international economics, all of which are critical to both national security and the local economy.

Kauai's Strategic Role in the Defense Economy

Kaua'i plays a unique and significant role in the state's defense sector, primarily through the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF)—the world's largest instrumented multi-environment range. PMRF is a major economic driver for the island, providing direct military and civil employment and supporting local businesses.

Ensuring Equitable Access for Neighbor Islands

As Hawai'i expands its defense-related workforce, it is important to ensure that residents across the state, including those on Kaua'i and other neighbor islands, have equitable access to these new opportunities. Strengthening online learning options and expanding outreach to neighbor island high schools and Kaua'i Community College will help ensure a statewide talent pipeline that supports local job growth.

Conclusion

SB1502 takes meaningful steps toward preparing Hawai'i's workforce for careers in high-demand sectors. We appreciate Legislature's leadership in advancing this initiative and encourage continued efforts to ensure all students, including those on neighbor islands, can participate and benefit.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

With Respect and Aloha,

Mark Perriello
President & CEO



Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce

1321 Kino'ole Street - Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Phone (808) 935-7178 - Fax (808) 961-4435 - Email exec@hicc.biz - www.hicc.biz

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

SB 1502 - Relating to the University of Hawaii – IN SUPPORT

Tuesday, February 11, at 3:00 PM

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce, which represents over 300 businesses and individual members primarily on the east side of Hawai'i Island, we strongly **support SB1502**. This bill is essential for establishing faculty positions, student programs, and facilities within the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and the University of Hawai'i–West O'ahu to strengthen workforce development in the state's defense sector.

Investing in SB1502 is a strategic step toward creating high-paying, in-demand jobs in cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science—fields critical to both Hawai'i's economic future and national security. By funding faculty positions, internship opportunities, and student training programs, this bill equips young professionals with the skills necessary to thrive in the growing defense industry. More importantly, it encourages them to stay in Hawai'i, reinforcing our local workforce and reducing the outflow of talent to the mainland.

Beyond workforce development, SB1502 is a crucial investment in Hawai'i's long-term economic growth. With nearly \$9 billion in defense spending and a growing need for skilled professionals in security and technology-related fields, aligning university programs with industry needs strengthens our economy. This bill fosters innovation, supports local businesses, diversifies Hawai'i's economic landscape, and creates sustainable career pathways for our residents.

We urge your support in passing SB1502 to drive business growth, create jobs, and position Hawai'i for long-term economic success. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Carla Kuo

Executive Officer

Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION (HRE)

SENATOR DONNA MERCADO KIM, CHAIR
SENATOR MICHELLE N. KIDANI, VICE CHAIR

SB1502
Relating to the University of Hawaii

Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at 3:10PM
Conference Room 229 Via Videoconference

Submitted by Jumar Pantoca

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

I am testifying in support of SB1502, which would establish faculty positions, student programs, and facilities in the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa and the University of Hawai‘i West Oahu for workforce development in the State's defense sector.

Passing SB1502 is crucial for young professionals and students in Hawaii because it invests in workforce development programs that create high-paying, in-demand jobs in fields like cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science. By funding faculty positions, internship programs, and student training initiatives at the University of Hawaii, this bill helps prepare the next generation for careers in the growing defense sector. These opportunities not only provide students with the skills they need to succeed but also encourage them to stay in Hawaii rather than seeking employment elsewhere, strengthening the state’s local workforce.

In addition, SB1502 is a strategic move for Hawaii’s long-term economic growth. With nearly \$9 billion in defense spending and a rising demand for skilled workers in national security and technology-related industries, investing in education and workforce pipelines ensures that Hawaii can maximize its economic potential. By aligning university programs with industry needs, this bill fosters innovation, supports local businesses, enhances economic diversification, and creates sustainable, well-paying career paths for residents. This investment will drive business growth, create jobs, and position Hawaii for long-term economic prosperity.

I respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 1502. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION (HRE)
SENATOR DONNA MERCADO KIM, CHAIR
SENATOR MICHELLE N. KIDANI, VICE CHAIR

SB1502
Relating to the University of Hawaii

Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at 3:10PM
Conference Room 229 Via Videoconference

Submitted by Daisuke Oshimoto

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

I am testifying in support of SB1502, which would establish faculty positions, student programs, and facilities in the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa and the University of Hawai‘i West Oahu for workforce development in the State's defense sector.

Passing SB1502 is crucial for young professionals and students in Hawaii because it invests in workforce development programs that create high-paying, in-demand jobs in fields like cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science. By funding faculty positions, internship programs, and student training initiatives at the University of Hawaii, this bill helps prepare the next generation for careers in the growing defense sector. These opportunities not only provide students with the skills they need to succeed but also encourage them to stay in Hawaii rather than seeking employment elsewhere, strengthening the state’s local workforce.

In addition, SB1502 is a strategic move for Hawaii’s long-term economic growth. With nearly \$9 billion in defense spending and a rising demand for skilled workers in national security and technology-related industries, investing in education and workforce pipelines ensures that Hawaii can maximize its economic potential. By aligning university programs with industry needs, this bill fosters innovation, supports local businesses, enhances economic diversification, and creates sustainable, well-paying career paths for residents. This investment will drive business growth, create jobs, and position Hawaii for long-term economic prosperity.

I respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 1502. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The Honorable Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senate Committee on Higher Education
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State of Hawai'i

Dear Senator Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: SB1502 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.

I am writing in **strong support** of SB1502, which appropriates funds for the establishment of faculty positions, student programs, and facilities in the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and the University of Hawai'i West Oahu for workforce development in the defense sector of the State's economy.

As a current undergraduate student at UH Manoa majoring in Political Science and interested in pursuing a career in international relations and defense, these programs would directly support my education and preparedness for local Hawai'i defense sector careers. My current participation in the defense workforce development programs offered by the College of Social Sciences (CSS) has greatly increased my career preparedness and proficiencies in applicable skills like analysis and research which are valuable to national security employers. This program has connected me with working professionals in the defense and security institutions on Oahu, increasing my confidence in applying to work in local Hawai'i organizations after graduation.

The programs supported by SB1502 will continue to provide critical access to Hawai'i students to directly engage and participate in national defense industry operations on the island. Supporting these programs is an investment in local students who are eager to contribute towards national security initiatives while supporting their local communities.

Equipping students with the knowledge to address emerging issues, including technical skills in Artificial Intelligence literacy, cybersecurity, critical writing, and much more trains competencies that are applicable across majors and industries, providing tools to support versatile, dynamic graduates.

Your support for SB1502 helps prepare Hawai'i students for local job opportunities, providing them access to participate in the state opportunities for defense industry careers and equipping future leaders who have learned from the community of responsibility, care, and stewardship fostered at UH Manoa to contribute towards larger national security initiatives.

I ask for your consideration of SB1502, as it would provide valuable opportunities for Hawai'i students to build valuable professional development skills to promote their access to impactful careers in state defense and security sectors.

Sincerely,
Annabel Doherty

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION (HRE)
SENATOR DONNA MERCADO KIM, CHAIR
SENATOR MICHELLE N. KIDANI, VICE CHAIR

SB1502
Relating to the University of Hawaii

Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at 3:10PM
Conference Room 229 Via Videoconference

Submitted by David Kurohara

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

I am testifying in support of SB1502, which would establish faculty positions, student programs, and facilities in the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa and the University of Hawai‘i West Oahu for workforce development in the State's defense sector.

Passing SB1502 is crucial for young professionals and students in Hawaii because it invests in workforce development programs that create high-paying, in-demand jobs in fields like cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science. By funding faculty positions, internship programs, and student training initiatives at the University of Hawaii, this bill helps prepare the next generation for careers in the growing defense sector. These opportunities not only provide students with the skills they need to succeed but also encourage them to stay in Hawaii rather than seeking employment elsewhere, strengthening the state’s local workforce.

In addition, SB1502 is a strategic move for Hawaii’s long-term economic growth. With nearly \$9 billion in defense spending and a rising demand for skilled workers in national security and technology-related industries, investing in education and workforce pipelines ensures that Hawaii can maximize its economic potential. By aligning university programs with industry needs, this bill fosters innovation, supports local businesses, enhances economic diversification, and creates sustainable, well-paying career paths for residents. This investment will drive business growth, create jobs, and position Hawaii for long-term economic prosperity.

I respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 1502. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-1502

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 7:59:18 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/11/2025 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lt Gen (Ret) Dan Leaf	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a retired former deputy commander of U.S. Pacific Command, former Director of the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, and current independent consultant on cybersecurity and artificial intelligence-related matters, I urge passage of SB1502.

This bill would enable a prudent investment in workforce development for the defense sector in Hawai'i at a critical juncture. Information technology, cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science are all critical to our ability to counter the challenges posed by the Peoples' Republic of China and other nation-states opposed to concept of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.. We must invest in the intellectual capital of both faculty and students to be prepared for future strategic competition.

SB-1502

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 11:23:22 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/11/2025 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Marumoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

I am testifying in support of SB1502, which would establish faculty positions, student programs, and facilities in the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa and the University of Hawai‘i West Oahu for workforce development in the State's defense sector.

Passing SB1502 is crucial for young professionals and students in Hawaii because it invests in workforce development programs that create high-paying, in-demand jobs in fields like cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science. By funding faculty positions, internship programs, and student training initiatives at the University of Hawaii, this bill helps prepare the next generation for careers in the growing defense sector. These opportunities not only provide students with the skills they need to succeed but also encourage them to stay in Hawaii rather than seeking employment elsewhere, strengthening the state’s local workforce.

In addition, SB1502 is a strategic move for Hawaii’s long-term economic growth. With nearly \$9 billion in defense spending and a rising demand for skilled workers in national security and technology-related industries, investing in education and workforce pipelines ensures that Hawaii can maximize its economic potential. By aligning university programs with industry needs, this bill fosters innovation, supports local businesses, enhances economic diversification, and creates sustainable, well-paying career paths for residents. This investment will drive business growth, create jobs, and position Hawaii for long-term economic prosperity.

I respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 1502. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lauren Marumoto

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION (HRE)

SENATOR DONNA MERCADO KIM, CHAIR
SENATOR MICHELLE N. KIDANI, VICE CHAIR

SB1502

Relating to the University of Hawaii

Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at 3:10PM
Conference Room 229 Via Videoconference

Submitted by Stephen T. Sasaki

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

I am testifying in support of SB1502, which would establish faculty positions, student programs, and facilities in the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and the University of Hawai'i West Oahu for workforce development in the State's defense sector.

I respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 1502. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Passing SB1502 is crucial for young professionals and students in Hawaii because it invests in workforce development programs that create high-paying, in-demand jobs in fields like cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science.

By funding faculty positions, internship programs, and student training initiatives at the University of Hawaii, this bill helps prepare the next generation for careers in the growing defense sector. These opportunities not only provide students with the skills they need to succeed but also encourage them to stay in Hawaii rather than seeking employment elsewhere, strengthening the state's local workforce.

I have worked for and retired from the Department of Navy's Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard for 30 years and found this job after graduating from the University of Hawaii's College of Engineering. This employment opportunity came about through word of mouth, unlike many of my counterparts at other mainland shipyards who were part of multi-generation shipyard employee families.

In addition, SB1502 is a strategic move for Hawaii's long-term economic growth. With nearly \$9 billion in defense spending and a rising demand for skilled workers in national security and technology-related industries, investing in education and workforce pipelines ensures that Hawaii can maximize its economic potential. By aligning university programs with industry needs, this bill fosters innovation, supports local businesses, enhances economic diversification, and creates sustainable, high-paying career paths for residents.

This investment will drive business growth, create jobs, and position Hawaii for long-term economic prosperity. Key pathways include:

- Engineering
- Cyber security (e.g., Information Technology & Operational Technology)
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Specialists (e.g., Analyst, Imaging Specialists, Cartographers, Geospatial Engineers, et al.).

Additionally, Guam and the Indo-Pacific Region are expected to drive defense spending by an additional \$20 billion in the next 5-7 years. Hawaii is a key economic and supply chain driver for this effort, as well as providing the key technical resources for the Department of Defense's strategic objectives.

The Navy pays its employees well. For example:

- Entry-level engineers (GS-7, engineering scale) starting pay: \$61,199
- 2.5-year engineers (GS-12, engineering scale) pay: \$108,557
- Entry-level management starting pay: \$121,022
- Top-level management pay: \$214,500

Retirement benefits include:

- 1% per year of service
- Up to 5% matching in the Thrift Saving Program (i.e., Government IRA equivalent)
- Social Security

I respectfully ask you to pass Senate Bill 1502. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Upcoming Construction MACCs

MACC/IDIQ	Type	Duration	Capacity	Task Order Range	Projected Award
Unrestricted Paving MACC	DBB	5-Yr Base + 3-Yr Option	\$98M	\$100K - \$7M	FY25
Unrestricted MACC	DB/DBB	5-Yr Base + 3-Yr Option	\$8B	\$40M - \$300M	FY25
SB MACC	DB/DBB	5-Yr Base + 3-Yr Option	\$1B	\$3M-\$40M	FY25
HUBZone MACC	DB/DBB	5-Yr Base + 3-Yr Option	\$1B	\$150K – \$20M	FY25
Waterfront MACC	DB/DBB	5-Yr Base + 3-Yr Option	\$10B	\$300M - \$6B	FY25

****Contract Capacity & Projected Award are estimates and subject to change**

Dear Members of the Higher Education Committee,

I am Dr. Jairus Grove, Director of the intelligence initiative (Intelligence Studies in the Asia-Pacific, or ISAP) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I express my utmost support for institutionalizing and further developing the Intelligence Initiative program. This program stands as a beacon of opportunity, aimed at ensuring that Hawai'i residents are competitive in securing government billets and contractor jobs in national intelligence and are well-represented as decision-makers impacting the future safety and security of our state and nation.

Our program focuses on nurturing talent from high school through the PhD level, integrating students from all corners of the state. We emphasize the essential knowledge required across disciplines—including STEM, Social Sciences, and Humanities—ensuring these disciplines contribute effectively to the greater mission of U.S. national security.

Three core components of the Intelligence Initiative are crucial to our success:

1. **Talent Alignment:** We ensure students understand how their unique skills can be harnessed to contribute to national security missions.
2. **Experiential Learning:** We place students in strategic internships that provide indispensable security clearances, boosting their competitiveness for consequential roles.
3. **Workforce Diversity and Stability:** We collaborate with the U.S. government to cultivate a workforce that reflects our diverse community and is ready to lead our nation's efforts in the Asia-Pacific region.

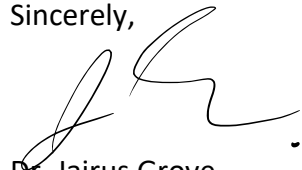
We have emerged beyond our pilot phase after five years of fruitful collaboration with Indo-Pacific Command and business enterprises supporting these endeavors. Our initiative provides students unparalleled mentorship opportunities from renowned national leaders, effectively building networks that will position them at the forefront of the intelligence job market.

While we have thrived on federal and university support, we seek your support to position our program as a permanent resource. This necessitates expanding our faculty to maintain a competitive standing alongside national intelligence programs. We must harness our brightest minds in Hawai'i, empowering them to solve the nation's most pressing challenges.

Our initiative embodies the state's values of a civically minded, diverse community. However, if we cannot build a sustainable program, we risk losing the chance to ensure national security leadership mirrors the vibrant communities of Hawai'i.

Thank you for considering our request. We are dedicated to enhancing our residents' economic and security prospects and hope your support will help achieve this transformative vision for Hawai'i and beyond.

Sincerely,



Dr. Jairus Grove
Professor of International Relations
Department of Political Science
University of Hawaii at Manoa