

HR-121

Submitted on: 3/16/2025 8:00:31 AM

Testimony for HED on 3/19/2025 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keoni Shizuma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee members of the House Committee on Higher Education,

Attending college in the early 2000s, I bounced between schools and majors, searching for a connection to an industry or profession that I could have a successful career in. While at UH Manoa however, I found something much more important, an identity.

Through Hawaiian language and Hawaiian studies courses, I found a connection and understanding of a culture I never knew I already had. This gave my life meaning, direction, and a motivation that still drives me today. It is not an exaggeration to say that I am a much more aware, engaged, and active member in my community because of this.

I am not special or one-of-a-kind. I am one of thousands of Native Hawaiians who could benefit from Kawaihuelani, and the services they provide for our keiki and communities throughout the state, including those in our charter or immersion schools today.

Please support the further growth and development of Kawaihuelani Center for Hawaiian Language.

Mahalo,

Keoni Shizuma