



# 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 Ways and Means  
Friday, February 28, 2025 at 10:05 a.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 SD1 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 1502 SD1. 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 O'ahu'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 Cyber Security Coordination Center and a 0.5 FTE position for the Director of the Cyber Security 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.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair**

**Friday, February 28, 2025, at 10:05AM  
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference**

**RE: SB1502 SD1 Relating to the University of Hawaii**

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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 Senate Draft 1 (SB1502 SD1), which appropriates funds for the establishment of faculty positions, student programs, and facilities at 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

SB1502 SD1 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Military & Defense. This bill promotes policies that drive economic growth, enhance workforce opportunities, and improve the quality of life for Hawaii's residents.

Investing in workforce development is essential to providing local students with the skills and opportunities needed to succeed in high-demand fields such as cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science—while also preventing brain drain and keeping more of Hawaii's talent at home. Too often, young professionals leave the islands in search of better career prospects, but by strengthening education and training programs locally, we can create pathways for them to build successful careers right here in Hawaii. To support this goal, the State is prioritizing funding for workforce development programs that will equip Hawaii's students with the education and training necessary to thrive in the defense sector. By leveraging the expertise of the University of Hawaii at Manoa's College of Social Sciences and the University of Hawaii, West Oahu's Business Administration program, this initiative will provide resources for faculty positions, student programs, and operational support to build a pipeline of skilled professionals ready to tackle emerging defense challenges.

This bill allocates critical funding for professors specializing in international economics, intelligence studies, and cybersecurity, as well as educational specialists, research assistants, and hands-on training programs. The Chamber strongly supports this investment as a vital step toward fostering job growth, enhancing workforce capabilities, and reinforcing Hawaii's role in national security and economic stability.

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 Senate Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 1502 SD1  
Relating to the University of Hawaii**

Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Friday, February 28, 2025 at 10:05 AM  
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference  
415 South Beretania Street

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Military Affairs Council ("MAC") supports SB 1502 SD1 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 SD1 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.

**LATE**



# Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
SB1502 SD1 - Relating to the University of Hawaii – IN SUPPORT  
Friday, February 28, 2025 10:05 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce, representing over 300 businesses and individual members primarily on the East side of Hawai'i Island, I submit this testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 1502 Senate Draft 1 (SB1502 SD1). This bill appropriates funding to establish faculty positions, student programs, and facilities at the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu, strengthening workforce development in the state's defense sector.

Investing in workforce development is essential to equipping local students with the skills and opportunities needed to succeed in high-demand fields such as cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science. By expanding educational and training programs in these areas, we can help retain local talent and reduce brain drain, ensuring that Hawai'i's young professionals have viable career paths at home rather than seeking opportunities elsewhere.

SB1502 SD1 prioritizes funding for workforce development programs that will prepare students for careers in the defense sector. By leveraging the expertise of UH Mānoa's College of Social Sciences and UH West O'ahu's Business Administration program, this initiative will support faculty positions, student programs, and operational resources to develop a highly skilled workforce ready to address emerging defense challenges.

Specifically, this bill allocates funding for faculty specializing in international economics, intelligence studies, and cybersecurity, as well as educational specialists, research assistants, and hands-on training initiatives. The Chamber strongly supports this investment as a crucial step toward fostering job growth, enhancing workforce capabilities, and reinforcing Hawai'i's role in national security and economic stability.

We respectfully urge the passage of Senate Bill 1502 Senate Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Carla Kuo  
Executive Officer  
Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce



The Committee on Ways and Means

February 28, 2025

Room 211

10:05 AM

RE: **SB 1502, SD 1, Relating to the University of Hawaii**

Attention: Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Sharon Moriwaki and Members of the Committee

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA), the exclusive bargaining representative for all University of Hawai'i faculty members across Hawai'i's statewide 10-campus system, **supports SB 1502, SD 1**, relating to the University of Hawaii.

As technology continues to advance, it is imperative that the workforce of tomorrow prepares today. SB 1502, SD 1 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. L. Fern'.

Christian L. Fern  
Executive Director  
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly

University of Hawaii  
Professional Assembly

1017 Palm Drive ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-1928  
Telephone: (808) 593-2157 ♦ Facsimile: (808) 593-2160  
Website: [www.uhpa.org](http://www.uhpa.org)

**LATE**

**SB-1502-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 12:02:38 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monty Pereira	Testifying for Watanabe Floral, Inc	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

**Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair**

**Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair**

**Friday, February 28, 2025, at 10:05AM**

**Conference Room 211 & Videoconference**

**RE: SB1502 SD1 Relating to the University of Hawaii**

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Monty Pereira, GM of Watanabe Floral, Inc.. I am in support of Senate Bill 1502 Senate Draft 1 (SB1502 SD1), which appropriates funds for the establishment of faculty positions, student programs, and facilities at 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.

This bill promotes policies that drive economic growth, enhance workforce opportunities, and improve the quality of life for Hawaii's residents.

Investing in workforce development is essential to providing local students with the skills and opportunities needed to succeed in high-demand fields such as cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science—while also preventing brain drain and keeping more of Hawaii’s talent at home. Too often, young professionals leave the islands in search of better career prospects, but by strengthening education and training programs locally, we can create pathways for them to build successful careers right here in Hawaii. To support this goal, the State is prioritizing funding for

workforce development programs that will equip Hawaii's students with the education and training necessary to thrive in the defense sector. By leveraging the expertise of the University of Hawaii at Manoa's College of Social Sciences and the University of Hawaii, West Oahu's Business Administration program, this initiative will provide resources for faculty positions, student programs, and operational support to build a pipeline of skilled professionals ready to tackle emerging defense challenges.

This bill allocates critical funding for professors specializing in international economics, intelligence studies, and cybersecurity, as well as educational specialists, research assistants, and hands-on training programs. The Chamber strongly supports this investment as a vital step toward fostering job growth, enhancing workforce capabilities, and reinforcing Hawaii's role in national security and economic stability.

I respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 1502 Senate Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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

I am testifying in support of Senate Bill 1502.

Committee on WAM 2-28-2025 10:05 am in Conference Room 211 and Videoconference

My name is Shaiann Cottrell. I am a community member and a student of Social Work at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa. I am in support of SB1502 which allocates funding for faculty positions, student programs, and facilities in the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa and the University of Hawaii West Oahu for workforce development in the defense sector of the State's economy.

This bill will expand academic programs and research capacity, bringing in new faculty and attracting more students. It will strengthen our community by creating career opportunities for my generation and those to come, allowing us to succeed right here at home.

I support SB1502 because it provides vital funding to expand educational opportunities and workforce development in high demand fields. By investing in programs that prepare students for careers in cybersecurity, intelligence, and data science, this bill ensures that Hawaii's workforce remains competitive and prepared for the future. It also creates opportunities for local students to stay in Hawaii, contribute to the economy, and strengthen our communities.

In conclusion, SB1502 is a crucial investment in Hawaii's future, supporting education, workforce development, and economic growth. By funding faculty positions, student programs, and facilities, this bill empowers students like me to pursue meaningful careers while strengthening our local workforce in critical fields. I urge the committee to support SB1502 to ensure that Hawaii remains a leader in education and innovation, providing opportunities for generations to come.

Mahalo for your time and consideration and thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Shaiann Cottrell  
2854 Kuikele pl  
Honolulu, HI 96819

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
February 28, 2025 at 10:05 a.m.

By  
Anna Paguirigan, Cybersecurity student  
University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu

**LATE**

SB 1502 SD1 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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

My name is Anna Paguirigan and I am presenting testimony as a private citizen in support of SB 1502 SD1. I was a fresh Cybersecurity student eager to learn and gain the knowledge and experience to get started in the field. I was met with obvious concerns in the program such as lack of funding for faculty, resources, and lacking a community. Seeing the potential of our students grow every year where we now reached top 8th in the nation at the Fall 2024 National Cyber League competition, is greatly uplifting even though we don't have the same resources as our opponents; yet it was made possible!

I could not let that potential die, so I've joined student government (ASUHWO) as a Business Administration senator (as Cybersecurity is in the Business division) in hopes to remotely make a change. I couldn't just sit and stare at the problem, knowing I can try to do something about it. As a result, I've taken the initiative to make the change I can control: to create a real student-led community through the formation of a RISO, Cyber Force One. With the community aspect checked off, faculty and resources remain an issue. Now after 2 years of advocacy while serving in ASUHWO and praying hard, this bill came up. In the passing of this bill, I have high hopes for the future of our program and especially our future students.

I can already imagine their enthusiasm right from their freshman year seeing that there is a firm and stable faculty support, resources such as certification vouchers, competition and internship opportunities, and enhanced facilities. These, coupled by a supportive and nurturing learning atmosphere from peers, will lead to great endeavors. Beyond benefiting UH West O'ahu, this investment will ripple outward, strengthening the community they will be serving in: our local, national, and even the global cybersecurity workforce. I eagerly look forward to a future where funding is no longer a barrier to excellence—where our students can thrive, innovate, and contribute meaningfully to the field of cybersecurity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I strongly urge the passing of SB 1502 SD1 to make this vision a reality.

**LATE**

**SB-1502-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:09:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andres Hernandez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Andres Hernandez, and I am writing to express my strong support for SB1502. I am a senior student at the University of Hawaii West Oahu (UHWO). The funds appropriated from SB1502 will assist in one of the greatest challenges faced by students enrolled in UH Manoa College of Social Sciences and UH West Oahu's Business Administration Program.

Hawaii's unique geography creates obstacles for students transitioning from the classroom to the workplace. I have personally faced challenges in securing specialized work experience, as many opportunities conflict with a student's schedule, financial needs, and experience level. This bill directly supports practical learning opportunities, whether through faculty support, essential equipment, or in-school programs, ensuring students gain the hands-on experience needed to succeed.

Both students and faculty at UH Manoa and UH West Oahu have identified this need, and SB1502 provides a critical solution. I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB1502 to support the academic and professional success of Hawaii's students.

Thank you.

**LATE**

**SB-1502-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:23:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joel K Kawamae	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As our society becomes more and more reliant on technologies use in our everyday lives, we need to improve our understanding of new technologies by investing in the education of our people. The more educated they are, the more resilient we become to the exploitation of bad-actors and natural disasters. In my opinion, funding education programs is a no-brainer.

**LATE**

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

My name is Kendall Wong and I am providing written testimony in strong support of SB1502 SD1. As a current UH West Oahu Cybersecurity student and former Department of Defense high school intern, this bill would greatly benefit our program and would help to promote more cybersecurity related jobs. This field is going to continue to grow in a world where digital technology dominates and is integrated into the many daily lives of people all around the world. As cyber threats evolve and new ones emerge, we need more people working in this field to innovate and create solutions to combat these threats. By adding additional faculty positions for our program, it will mean more mentors, classes, and resources to help students like me learn, succeed and apply the knowledge and skills in this increasingly important field.

I respectfully request that SB1501 SD1 be passed. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify.

Very Respectfully,  
Kendall Wong