



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 1604**  
**RELATING TO UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII**

Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Hawai'i State Capitol

February 11, 2025

3:10PM

Conference Room 229

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Aloha e Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **strongly supports SB1604**, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii for the development of faculty, staff, teacher, and workforce housing at Kaua'i Community College.

This initiative aligns directly with OHA's strategic objectives to strengthen the well-being of Native Hawaiians by fostering economic stability, cultural identity, and community resilience. **SB1604 addresses the critical housing needs of individuals serving in educational and community-based roles in Kaua'i, contributing to OHA's broader goal of enhancing access to quality housing for Native Hawaiians.** By increasing housing opportunities for faculty, staff, and the wider workforce, this bill supports a more sustainable and vibrant educational environment. It also aligns with OHA's focus on improving educational pathways, strengthening Hawaiian cultural ties, and promoting economic stability for Native Hawaiian families.

**This housing initiative supports the long-term success of the University of Hawaii and plays a crucial role in the development of a thriving Native Hawaiian community.** It ensures that faculty, staff, and students are well-positioned to contribute to the cultural and educational advancement of Kaua'i and the broader Hawaiian Islands.

For these reasons, OHA respectfully **urges the Committee to SUPPORT SB1604**, which will enhance housing stability and contribute to the growth of Native Hawaiian communities through strategic housing development at Kaua'i Community College.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI  
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 02/11/2025

**Time:** 03:10 PM

**Location:** CR 229 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Higher Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

**Bill Title:** SB 1604 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.

**Purpose of Bill:** Appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii for the development of faculty, staff, teacher, and workforce housing at the Kauai Community College.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawai'i State Department of Education (Department) supports SB 1604, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i for the development of faculty, staff, teacher, and workforce housing at the Kauai Community College.

The Department strongly supports efforts to address Hawai'i's critical teacher recruitment and retention challenges. Our state's exceptionally high cost of living and a severe shortage of affordable housing significantly impact our ability to attract and retain qualified educators throughout our school system.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 1604.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

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

By

Della Teraoka, Interim Vice President for Community Colleges  
University of Hawai'i System

#### SB 1604 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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

The University of Hawai'i Community Colleges (UHCC) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments regarding SB 1604, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i for the development of faculty, staff, teacher, and workforce housing at Kaua'i Community College.

The UHCC recognizes the need for workforce housing on the island of Kaua'i. Additionally, the University of Hawai'i (UH) is committed to our mission of providing quality education and training for the residents of the state. Therefore UH greatly appreciates the support and effort to provide housing on the Kaua'i Community College campus for faculty and students to address the high demand for housing.

The UHCC is working with a consultant on an assessment report which evaluates the construction costs, operational costs, and overall site analysis of housing on the Kaua'i Community College campus. Further review of the report's findings will be conducted by the University and shared with the Legislature.

At this time, we support continued dialog and discussion of this initiative.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding SB 1604.



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

RE: **SB 1604, 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 1604**, relating to the  
University of Hawaii.

SB 1604 provides funding for the development of faculty and other workforce housing at the  
Kauai Community College (KCC). While many people may be interested in pursuing a career in  
Hawaii outside of Oahu, a lack of affordable or available housing is often a deterrent. Through  
the prioritization of workforce housing on Kauai at or near KCC, more hardworking University of  
Hawaii faculty and staff, as well as other state and county employees, and students will be  
incentivised to pursue careers and education on the Garden Isle.

Respectfully submitted,

Christian L. Fern  
Executive Director  
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly