

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 11 2025

RE: S.B. No. 1254

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Higher Education, to which was referred
S.B. No. 1254 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to ensure that only
individuals without an active employment relationship with the
University of Hawaii shall be eligible for appointment to the
Board of Regents.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure
from one individual.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this
measure from the Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME
Local 152, AFL-CIO and one individual.

Your Committee finds that appointing a current employee of
the University of Hawaii to the Board of Regents may raise a
conflict of interest as the employee may have personal or
departmental interests that could raise ethical concerns,
compromise the impartiality of decisions made by the Board of
Regents, and erode the public's trust in the governance of the
University. Your Committee further finds that an individual
concurrently filling the roles of employee and regent could lead
to confusion regarding duties and responsibilities, hindering
effective decision-making. This measure prohibits active



employees of the University of Hawaii or the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii (RCUH) from serving on the Board of Regents to ensure greater accountability, transparency, and fairness in the University's governance.

Your Committee notes the concerns raised regarding the student member of the Board of Regents who may have an active employment relationship with the University or RCUH, and therefore, be subject to the same conflict of interest issues as non-student members. Your Committee finds that this issue raises concerns that merit further consideration and respectfully requests that subsequent Committees to which this measure is referred examine the matter.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Higher Education that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 1254 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Higher Education,



DONNA MERCADO KIM, Chair



