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**STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE**

P.O. Box 119
Honolulu, Hawaii 96810-0119
Tel: (808) 587-4700 Fax: (808) 587-4703
www.spo.hawaii.gov

TESTIMONY
OF
AARON S. FUJIOKA
ADMINISTRATOR
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE

TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
HIGHER EDUCATION

February 3, 2009

2:00 PM

HB 1501

RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM.

Chair Chang, Vice-Chair Nakashima and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 1501.

The State Procurement Office (SPO) would like to submit written comments on HB 1501, limited to SECTION 1, which proposes to allow the board of regents (BOR) to auction the naming rights to University of Hawaii buildings to be exempt from chapter 103D.

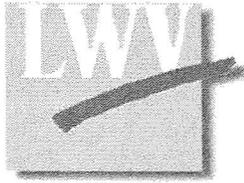
The process proposed for naming of buildings may be conducted in accordance with HRS Chapter 103D (Code) to allow for competition, which provides for a competitive sealed proposal process. A solicitation may be developed that would describe the minimum requirements such as most qualified to fulfill the financial obligations of a 10-year contract, subject to approval by the BOR; corporate or offensive names are prohibited; deceased person, historical figure, or legendary person to be memorialized or honored is allowed; and award made to the offeror meeting the qualifications and submitting the highest offer.

Statutorily exempting specific items from the Code is not in the best interest of government, the business community, and the general public. The Code establishes a time-tested, fair, and reliable set of rules and processes for award of contracts. The competitive procurement processes of the Code are to insure that all potential providers are afforded the opportunity to compete for the required services. To the extent agencies may need specific items to be exempted from Code requirements, the Code provides an exemption process.

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The Code should not be viewed as an obstacle to a purchasing agency's mission, but rather as the single source of public procurement policy to be applied equally and uniformly. It was the legislature's intent for the Code to be a single source of public procurement policy. If individual agencies are exempted and allowed to develop their own individual processes, it becomes problematic and confusing to vendors, contractors and service providers that must comply with a variety of different processes and standards. Fairness, open competition, a level playing field, and government disclosure and transparency in the procurement and contracting process are vital to good government. For this to be accomplished, we must participate in the process with one set of statutes and rules.

Thank you.



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HAWAII

TESTIMONY ON HB 1501 RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 3, 2009
2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 309

Testifier: JoAnn Maruoka, Legislative Team Member, LWV-HI

Chair Chang, Vice Chair Nakashima, and members,

The League of Women Voters opposes HB 1501 which would require the University of Hawaii Board of Regents to auction naming rights to buildings on the West Oahu campus. While it is well intended – that is, to generate income for the UH-West Oahu special fund for electric generation from renewable energy resources – it is wrong-headed to “sell off” building naming rights to the highest bidder. Such crass commercialization also sets a bad precedent, especially in the field of education.

Buildings on university campuses have long been named to honor intellectual contributions, or because financial contributions were given to further a field of study or for similar purposes. It is a fitting way to recognize such contributions.

However, the auctioning of naming rights smacks of professional sports stadiums or arenas. While it may be suitable for those venues, requiring that approach would certainly seem to sully the image and lower the value we place on our highest educational institution. Frankly, it is offensive to effect a bidding war for naming rights.

We strongly urge you to hold HB 1501. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

From: Joel Fischer [jfischer@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Saturday, January 31, 2009 2:23 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Subject: HB1501; HED; 2/3/09; 2PM; Rm 309

Importance: High

HB1501 Relating to the UH System
HED; Chair, Rep Chang

PLEASE KILL THIS BILL AND BURY THIS IDEA FOREVER!

AS a professor at UH for almost 40 years, I recoil in horror to think how low we have sunk! Auctioning off building names is UNACCEPTABLE! Our University has enough trouble with corrupt leaders. Selling names to the highest bidder is completely without institutional integrity. What's next, selling programs to the highest bidder?

HEWA!!!

By opposing this idea, I am not, in any way, saying I oppose West Oahu campus. The Chancellor there is a friend and former student, and I desperately want him to succeed. And I realize how big of a jam we are in financially.

But, please, let's draw the line at some point before we become mere shadows of an institution about which we can all be proud. This proposal really hurts me to the core. I know we can do better.

Thank you.

Aloha, joel

Dr. Joel Fischer, ACSW
Professor
University of Hawai'i, School of Social Work
Henke Hall
Honolulu, HI 96822

"It is reasonable that everyone who asks justice should DO justice."
Thomas Jefferson

"There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must take it because one's conscience tells one that it is right."
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Never, never, never quit."
Winston Churchill