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Statement of
THEODORE E. LIU
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Tuesday, February 03, 2009
2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 309

in consideration of
HB 346
MAKING APPROPRIATIONS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.

Chair Chang, Vice Chair Nakashima and Members of the House Committee on Higher Education.

The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) supports the intent of HB 346 which would establish and fund an undergraduate bachelor of science in applied engineering program at the University of Hawaii at Hilo (UHH), provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Executive Biennium Budget or the budget submitted by the University of Hawaii.

The University of Hawaii at Hilo is developing a strong focus on programs related to science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). This focus is supportive of the State's economic development goals, which include developing an economy based on human capital rather than finite resources. Programs such as the one proposed will help train our young people

In particular, an applied engineering program could focus on areas of particular need, such as sustainable energy. In order to meet the goal of the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative to produce 70 % of Hawaii's energy from renewable sources and efficiency by 2030, we will need a large workforce of skilled technicians to develop and support new energy systems.

The University of Hawaii at Hilo has indicated that they wish to partner with DBEDT to create a special advisory committee to the Chancellor to help develop this program and we would be honored to provide our assistance.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
February 3, 2009 at 2:00pm

by

Linda K. Johnsrud

Vice President for Academic Planning and Policy, University of Hawai'i

HB 346 – MAKING APPROPRIATIONS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Chang, Vice Chair Nakashima, and members of the House Committee on Higher Education. Thank you very much for this opportunity to testify on House Bill 346 that establishes an undergraduate degree program in applied engineering at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, creates a special advisory committee, and appropriates funds for the committee and two faculty positions.

The University of Hawai'i thanks the legislature for this intent to support the growth of the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. We support this proposal in principle, but not at this time.

The development of a new academic offering requires review by the Council of Chief Academic Officers representing all ten campuses. The Council is the advisory body that assesses academic and workforce need in the state, the cost of program implementation, potential articulation and transfer among campuses, academic considerations such as accreditation and faculty availability, and whether or not the effort duplicates existing programs at other campuses. After a campus is authorized to plan a new program, a program proposal goes before the Board of Regents.

Any new program proposed in the current budgetary environment must undergo stringent review of initial implementation as well as continuing operational costs. In this specific case, applied technology degrees are expensive, and it is important that we clearly delineate this proposal for applied engineering from UH Mānoa's engineering program and Maui Community College's proposal for an engineering technology program.

Thank you again for your support of UH, and the opportunity to testify on HB 346.