

**SB 563**

University of Hawai'i  
**Regents Candidate Advisory Council**

Karl Fujii, Chair  
Neil Bellinger, Vice Chair  
L. Thomas Ramsey, Secretary  
Andres Albano, Member  
Nelson Befitel, Member  
Joseph Blanco, Member  
Somerset Wong, Member

THE HONORABLE SENATOR BRIAN T. TANIGUCHI, CHAIR  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Hawaii State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2013  
State of Hawaii

February 4, 2013

LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO  
S. B. 563  
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Hearing Date:  
Tuesday, February 5, 2013, 3:00 pm House Conference Room 414

Submitted by:  
OFFICERS OF THE REGENTS CANDIDATE ADVISORY COUNCIL  
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Kahele, and members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

The officers of the Regent Candidate Advisory Council of the University of Hawaii submit testimony in opposition to S. B. 563.

This proposed legislation calls for an amendment to the form and function of the candidate advisory council for the board of regents of the University of Hawaii and repeals section 304-104.5, HRS.

We call to the committee's attention language that was contained in this committee's Standing Committee Report #317, dated February 14, 2007 which specifically stated that the creation of the RCAC was:

*"the Senate's efforts to address the concerns raised by Hawaii's voters, through their approval of a constitutional amendment regarding the composition of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii and other related provisions of the law. Through this measure, the Senate endeavors to ensure that the law reflects the spirit of the constitutional amendment that was approved by the people of Hawaii. The public has called for change, and we must see to it that the change is real, meaningful, and productive."*

The proposed legislation goes against the clear mandate Hawaii's voters overwhelmingly approved in 2006 and is an abrupt and total change to the position this committee and the 2007 Legislature took when it passed legislation to create the RCAC. The Legislature also went

through the extraordinary effort to override Governor's Lingle's veto and her objections that the RCAC should be under the administrative control of the Governor's office. The Legislature fully concurred with the Senate Higher Education Committee's that the Governor should not be solely responsible for appointing a separate body that qualifies and presents candidates for appointment to the Board of Regents.

The Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB), the only national association that serves the interests and needs of academic governing boards on issues related to higher education governance and leadership, strongly believes that an essential best practice is to engage independent screening bodies to assist with the nominating process to identify outstanding citizens to serve as regents.

Further, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) have gone on record to say their focus on accreditation is how the Board is functioning. The issue of how UH Regents are selected, or the qualifications of members of the Board of Regents was never raised as an issue in any UH campus accreditation.

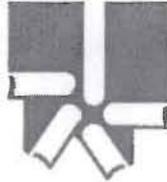
In addition to the RCAC screening process, the governor remains the appointing authority for the Board of Regents. The Senate also continues to provide the important role of advise and consent on the Governor's nominee.

The RCAC selection process involves seeking out university regent candidates who are broadly representative of the public interest and public good, bring diverse skill sets and points or views to the board, and have the commitment and qualifications to serve. The Council's selection process is comprehensive, transparent, well balanced, and solely and exclusively merit-based. The compilation of candidate regents lists occurs only after the RCAC completes its comprehensive review and selection process. It is significant that for the first time in the UH's 100 year existence, the RCAC process encourages all UH stakeholders to participate in the selection process by submitting BOR candidates for consideration.

It is important to distinguish between the selection of regent candidates and how the Board of Regents governs. How the Board of Regents governs is solely an internal leadership issue between the Board and the President. Rather than single out the regent selection process, we suggest what is more constructive and needed is for the committee to question the current board members on their practices governing the University.

In closing, we strongly urge the Committee to table this bill.

Karl Fujii, Chair  
Neil Bellinger, Vice-Chair  
L. Thomas Ramsey, Secretary  
Regents Candidate Advisory Council  
University of Hawaii  
Ph.: 808.692.1218  
Email: [borapp@hawaii.edu](mailto:borapp@hawaii.edu)



Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Tuesday, February 5, 2013  
3:00 p.m.

**SB 563, Relating to the University of Hawaii.**

Dear Chairman Taniguchi and Committee Members:

On behalf of the University of Hawaii Professional Assembly, our union believes that proposed SB 563 is not the preferred method of improving the Board of Regent selection process. UHPA has long been concerned about the viability of the current system of the candidate advisory council. Simply moving it temporarily to the Governor's office while maintaining many of its functions, does not enhance the authority of the Governor to nominate and appoint the Board of Regents. UHPA believes that the Governor should remain unfettered in the ability to assess and appoint the Board of Regents with the Senate consent affirming the appropriateness of the appointment.

Respectively submitted,

Kristeen Hanselman  
Associate Executive Director

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII  
PROFESSIONAL ASSEMBLY

1017 Palm Drive · Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-1928  
Telephone: (808) 593-2157 · Facsimile: (808) 593-2160  
Web Page: <http://www.uhpa.org>





February 3, 2013

Aloha Sen. Taniguchi, Sen. Kahele, and members of the Higher Education Committee,

My name is Tom Robinson, and I am the president of the Graduate Student Organization at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. The GSO unanimously voted against the abolition of the Regent Candidate Advisory Council because it is a necessary process in determining the leadership of the University of Hawai'i. We feel that RCAC provides a method of avoiding purely political appointments to our University which is supposed to be a non-political entity of the state of Hawai'i. We also are opposed to the abolition of RCAC because it is the only time that students have input in selecting the leadership of our university by being allowed to vet the student regent applicants.

Mahalo for your consideration

Thomas E Robinson Jr  
President – Graduate Student Organization