

MAR 04 2016

SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO ESTABLISH AN OMBUDS OFFICE OR
SYSTEM OF OMBUDS OFFICES.

1 WHEREAS, there are approximately 55,000 part and full-time
2 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the University
3 of Hawaii System; and
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5 WHEREAS, the University of Hawaii's ten campuses do not
6 have ombuds offices; and
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8 WHEREAS, the University of Hawaii has offices on each
9 campus and at the system level that reflect a commitment to
10 promoting a safe, nonviolent, non-discriminatory community,
11 however those offices focus solely on concerns related to
12 discrimination; and
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14 WHEREAS, each University of Hawaii campus has established
15 academic grievance policies and procedures that also focus
16 primarily on discrimination and academic concerns; and
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18 WHEREAS, an institutional exclusion of workplace concerns
19 not relating to discrimination exists, in policy and
20 organizationally, which fosters an environment in which problems
21 may go unheard, untracked, and unresolved; and
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23 WHEREAS, ombuds offices provide an easy first point of
24 contact for a person with concerns or a misunderstanding of
25 policies, as well as directing someone to an appropriate office
26 or assisting them with following established procedures and
27 timelines for complaints; and
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29 WHEREAS, ombuds offices provide university chancellors and
30 presidents unbiased, routine feedback regarding the university
31 community's adherence to established policies; and
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33 WHEREAS, eighty percent of "research one" universities have
34 an ombuds office, and all but one of the University of Hawaii at
35 Manoa's peer institutions have ombuds offices; and
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1 WHEREAS, legislation was introduced during the Regular
2 Session of 2015 that sought to establish an office of the ombuds
3 at the University of Hawaii, and support for the legislation
4 indicates a growing desire for the establishment of ombuds
5 offices on every campus; and

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7 WHEREAS, a system of ombuds offices can be established
8 without duplicating or undermining preexisting resolution
9 procedures; and

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11 WHEREAS, ombuds offices must be independent, impartial, and
12 confidential in order to best serve students, staff, and
13 faculty; now, therefore,

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15 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
16 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2016,
17 that the University of Hawaii Board of Regents is urged to
18 establish a system-coordinated ombuds office with an accessible
19 specialist on the Manoa campus; and

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21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the other University of Hawaii
22 campuses should have access to the specialist at the Manoa
23 campus; and

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25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ombuds office report
26 directly to the chancellors of each campus and the president of
27 the University of Hawaii; and

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29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Regents use the
30 United States Ombudsman Association's published standards as a
31 guide to establishing the ombuds office or offices; and

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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all applicable policies and
34 procedures be updated to include workplace related concerns not
35 pertaining to discrimination as a valid reason for seeking
36 redress; and

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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ombuds office or offices be
39 adequately resourced and financed as part of the University's
40 base budget to ensure permanence; and



BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, because changes affecting the University's budget take time, the Board of Regents may appoint interim officials to act in the capacity of ombudspersons but interim appointments should be no longer than one calendar year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents, President of the University of Hawaii, University of Hawaii Vice President for Community Colleges, University of Hawaii at Manoa Interim Chancellor, University of Hawaii at Hilo Chancellor, University of Hawaii West Oahu Chancellor, University of Hawaii Community College Chancellor, University of Hawaii Honolulu Community College Chancellor, University of Hawaii Kapiolani Community College Chancellor, University of Hawaii Kauai Community College Chancellor, University of Hawaii Leeward Community College Chancellor, University of Hawaii Maui College Chancellor, and University of Hawaii Windward Community College Chancellor.

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