



# **UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM**

## **Legislative Testimony**

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Lower and Higher Education  
Friday, February 7, 2020 at 2:20 p.m.

By  
Judith Lemus, Director  
Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology  
And  
Michael Bruno  
Provost  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 2416 – RELATING TO KANEOHE BAY

Chair Woodson, Vice Chairs Hashem and Quinlan, and members of the committee:

The Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology (HIMB) offers the following comments on HB 2416 which creates a full-time internship coordinator position and He'eia estuarine research reserve cultural resource specialist positions with HIMB .

As a research institute heavily involved in helping the University of Hawai'i to achieve its strategic goal of being a 'Hawaiian place of learning,' HIMB wishes to express its support of efforts aimed at helping us to engage with our community partners and local college students. Collaborating with community members in the co-production of knowledge is a goal of HIMB, as is creating STEM-oriented career paths for local students via internships. These positions will go a long way towards fulfilling these goals for the community around Kāne'ohe Bay.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

# He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve

## *Ko'olaupoko, O'ahu, Hawai'i*

Testimony on behalf of He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve

### **Strongly Supporting HB 2416**

House Committee on Lower and Higher Education

February 5, 2020

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chairs Hashem and Quinlan, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for HB 2416 Relating to Kāne'ohe Bay. The He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve (HeNERR) is strong support of this bill.

The HeNERR was officially designated in 2017 as a co-management endeavor between state, federal, and community partners. The Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology as one of our official site partners. HeNERR was founded in a belief that Hawai'i can be an example for the world, and the efforts to restore the *ahupua'a* of He'eia can be a model for Hawai'i. The primary purpose of the HeNERR is to conduct the research needed to guide restoration efforts, and to educate the public about the value of healthy and functioning *ahupua'a*.

Our program is very much a value-added one for the State. In the past two years, our program has brought in more than \$2.5 million of federal money to achieve our goals. However, our program is not fully staffed and is not operating as effectively as it was designed to be. Only three out of the four main positions have been funded by the State, and only 90% of the funding was released by the Governor for those positions. By adding a 1.3 FTE position for our Cultural Resource Specialist, we can bring on the last position we need to fulfil our goals and we fill the deficit of the other three positions. Also, the addition of the Intern Coordinator at HIMB will help to fulfill the dream of creating career pathways for our local youth that will allow them to compete for professional-level positions in their own community. I, therefore, urge you to support this bill.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,



Kawika Winter, Ph.D.

Reserve Manager, He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve



*Ko`olau Foundation*

P. O. Box 4749  
Kane`ohe, HI 96744

February 6, 2020

To: Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair  
Rep. Sean Quinlan, Vice Chair  
& Members, Committee on Lower & Higher Education

From: Mahealani Cypher  
Ko`olau Foundation

Re: H.B. 2416, Relating to Kane`ohe Bay – SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chairs Hashem and Quinlan, and Committee Members:

The Ko`olau Foundation extends its aloha to you, and urges your support for House Bill 2416, which would provide funding for and establishment of staffing for the He`eia National Estuarine Research Reserve (HeNERRS).

We are particularly supportive of adding the cultural resource specialist position, which completes the original four-person team that was envisioned when the HeNERRS was approved by President Obama in early 2017. This specialist would help guide the NERRS in ensuring cultural sensitivity and awareness for the estuary, ocean waters and ahupua`a of He`eia.

The request for this position is for 1.3 FTE or \$130k, which includes .3 position funding for the other three team members whose current funding is under-funded.

Our Foundation, along with other community organizations, worked for several years with representatives of NOAA, DLNR, UH-HIMB and the Nature Conservancy to plan for and secure establishment of this important public-private partnership. The federal government provides 70% of the funding for the HeNERRS, with the state funding a 30% share.

Over time, we have learned that addressing cultural concerns early in the planning process for any work to be done can minimize or mitigate potential problems later on. This resource specialist can help identify areas of concern and offer guidance and support in early stages.

The Ko`olau Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the preservation of historic and cultural resources and heritage throughout the State of Hawai`i.

We urge your favorable consideration of this bill.

Mahalo for allowing us to share our mana`o.



# KO'OLAUPOKO HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB

February 7, 2020

Rep. Justin Woodson, Chair  
Reps. Mark Hashem & Sean Quinlan, Vice Chairs  
Members, House Committee on Lower and Higher Education  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha!

The Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club offers its strong support for House Bill 2416, which provides funding and establishes staffing for the He'eia NERRS (National Estuarine Research Reserve), specifically the cultural resource specialist. This position was supposed to be included in the initial funding of the He'eia NERRS staff when it was first funded by the Legislature, but unfortunately was left out.

Our civic club has been working hard for the past three years to get this last position established and funded. We mahalo the Legislature for funding the position in the past year, but it was only a contract hire and not embedded in the NERRS.

We ask that the cultural resource specialist position be fully funded and established in the NERRS, which is administered by the Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology, which functions under the UH-SOEST Department.

As the largest Native Hawaiian organization in the Ko'olaupoko region, it is very important for us to know that government programs in our community – particularly public-private partnerships like ours – properly address cultural concerns in the work that is done by the NERRS.

We urge your support and vote to pass out House Bill 2416. Mahalo for your kokua!

Me kealoha pumehana,

/s/ Leialoha Kaluhiwa

President

*The Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club was established in 1937 and is a not-for-profit community organization dedicated to preserving and perpetuating the history, heritage and culture of Native Hawaiians. One of the largest of the Hawaiian Civic Clubs, its membership is open to people of Hawaiian ancestry and those who are "Hawaiian at heart".*

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