



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
STATE COUNCIL  
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543  
April 03, 2023

The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
House Committee on Finance  
The Thirty-Second Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawai'i  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Representative Yamashita and Committee Members:

**SUBJECT: SB1151 SD2 HD1 RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROMISE PROGRAM.**

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities **STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB1151 SD2 HD1**, which exempts University of Hawai'i community college students who are enrolled in certificate programs from the requirement to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid each academic year to be considered eligible for the Hawai'i community college promise program.

We support a Self Advocacy Advisory Council with over 200 individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD). By talking with them, we have learned, the ones who attended higher education did it on a half-time basis. The majority enrolled in certificate programs. When we asked if they applied for the Promise Program, some stated they had not because they had first to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, which they thought they could not apply for it because they weren't enrolled full-time at the Community College. While the other self-advocates expressed that applying for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid was too hard.

Eliminating the need to apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid if the student would only qualify for the Promise Program and expanding the Promise Program to certificate programs allows I/DD individuals to gain employment skills and promote independence. This measure would increase the opportunity for our population to better integrate and participate in the community through achieving higher education.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **supporting of SB1151 SD2 HD1.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daintry Bartoldus".

Daintry Bartoldus  
Executive Administrator



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Finance  
Monday, April 3, 2023 at 2:30 p.m.

By

Della Teraoka

Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

Community Colleges

University of Hawai'i System

### SB 1151 SD2 HD1 – RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROMISE PROGRAM

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of SB 1151 SD2 HD1, which ensures access to Hawai'i Promise program funding by exempting certificate program students from the requirement to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each academic year to be considered eligible for the Hawai'i Promise program.

The Hawai'i Promise program has demonstrated its value and benefit to students pursuing degree programs at the University of Hawai'i Community Colleges (UHCC). For students who are interested in pursuing a certificate program, the requirement of completing the FAFSA to be considered eligible for the Hawai'i Promise scholarship may be a barrier to some students, including students with developmental disabilities. Exempting students pursuing a certificate program from completing the FAFSA each academic year can ensure access to those students pursuing their educational goals with a shorter certificate program. Hawai'i Promise is an important tool directly benefiting Hawai'i's families otherwise least able to afford higher education.

The UHCC is committed to creating an application form for students exempted from completing the FAFSA and using the Hawai'i Promise scholarship to cover full direct costs as there would be no ability to determine "unmet need" without the completed FAFSA. Being exempt from completing the FAFSA also means that certificate students will not be eligible to receive federal financial aid and the full direct cost will be borne by Hawai'i Promise.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of SB 1151 SD2 HD1, on the condition its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 1151 SD2 HD1.



**S E A C**  
**Special Education Advisory Council**  
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April 3, 2023

**Special Education  
Advisory Council**

Ms. Martha Guinan, *Chair*  
Ms. Susan Wood, *Vice Chair*

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Ms. Virginia Beringer  
Ms. Mary Brogan  
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Ms. Deborah Cheeseman  
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Amanda Kaahanui, Staff  
Susan Rocco, Staff

Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Committee on Finance  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: SB 1151, SD2, HD1 – Relating to the Hawaii Community  
College Promise Program

Dear Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii's State Advisory Council under the Individual's with Disabilities Act (IDEA) strongly supports SB 1151, SD2, HD1 which which exempts University of Hawai'i Community College students who are enrolled in certificate programs from the requirement to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid each academic year to be considered eligible for the Hawai'i Community College Promise Program.

In 2021, only about 22% of all special education students enrolled in higher education--less than half the rate of students without disabilities. While there is not data specific to students with developmental disabilities, that rate is presumed to be very small, despite the fact that research has shown that many individuals with developmental disabilities can achieve success in a college program, including certificate programs, with the proper supports.

This bill will benefit many students with disabilities in community college certificate programs by providing greater access to financial support through the Promise Program and the opportunity to learn practical skills that can lead to better employment outcomes.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important legislation.

Respectfully,

Martha Guinan, Chair



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The House Committee on Finance

April 3, 2023

2:30 PM

Room 308

RE: **SB 1151, SD 2 HD 1, Relating to the Hawaii Community College Promise Program**

Attention: Chair Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair Lisa Kitagawa and members of the Committee

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in **support of SB 1151, SD 2, HD 1**, Relating to Hawaii Community College Promise Program.

This bill ensures wider access to the Hawai'i Promise Program for community college students in certificate programs through the waiver of federal requirements, and will enable more families the opportunity to enroll in community college and acquire the skills necessary to enter the workforce.

Certificate programs allow individuals to attain practical experience focused on the skills and knowledge needed for a specific job, opening the door to gainful employment. The absence of general education courses required in degree programs means it takes less time and money to complete certificate programs. As a community, we have witnessed the difficulties Hawai'i residents faced during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the thousands of jobs that were lost. During the Covid shutdown, over 11,600 Hawai'i residents studied and received certificates from our University of Hawai'i community colleges. This impactful movement enables families to enter the workforce with practicable training that can be built on to advance in the workplace and further educational opportunities.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Fern'.

Christian L. Fern  
Executive Director  
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly

University of Hawaii  
Professional Assembly

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