



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2024**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 2063, RELATING TO THE ENRICHMENT OF DIVERSITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY

DATE: Wednesday, February 7, 2024 **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 309 and Videoconference

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Candace J. Park, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Perruso and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

This bill: (1) requires the University of Hawai'i to establish a three-year pilot program to enrich diversity across all University of Hawai'i campuses; and (2) makes an appropriation for the program.

Article X, section 6, of the Hawai'i Constitution gives the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i "exclusive jurisdiction over the internal structure, management, and operation of the university." Section 6 further provides: "This section shall not limit the power of the legislature to enact laws of statewide concern. The legislature shall have the exclusive jurisdiction to identify laws of statewide concern." If the Committee decides to pass this bill, we recommend an amendment that adds a statement identifying this bill as a law of statewide concern.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.



STATE OF HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543
February 07, 2024

The Honorable Representative Amy A. Perruso, Chair
House Committee on Higher Education & Technology
Thirty-Second Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Representative Perruso and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: HB2063 RELATING TO THE ENRICHMENT OF DIVERSITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities **SUPPORTS HB2063**, which establishes and appropriates funds for a three-year pilot program to enrich diversity across the University of Hawai'i System.

Our support for HB2063 is grounded in the belief that individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) are often overlooked in a college setting. The pilot program's focus on enriching diversity aligns with our commitment to fostering awareness and inclusion for community members with developmental disabilities.

The Council supports any effort that seeks to enrich diversity within the University of Hawai'i System, bringing much-needed awareness to the unique needs and contributions of individuals with developmental disabilities. By fostering an inclusive environment, this pilot program may encourage our population of individuals with I/DD to pursue higher education opportunities, contributing to the overall diversity and vibrancy of the university community. As an organization dedicated to advocating for the rights and opportunities of individuals with developmental disabilities, we appreciate any effort that brings attention to the unique needs and contributions of our community members.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support of HB2063**.

Sincerely,

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 Higher Education and Technology
Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at 2:00 p.m.

By

Debora Halbert, Vice President for Academic Strategy
University of Hawai'i System

HB 2063 – RELATING TO THE ENRICHMENT OF DIVERSITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Chair Perruso, Vice Chair Kapela, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) expresses our support for HB 2063 and the proposed appropriation which aims to fund a three-year pilot program to enrich diversity across all University of Hawai'i campuses. The proposed pilot program and accompanying appropriation align with our strategic plan's foundational principle on equity.

UH is proud to serve a diverse student and community population. Currently, 75% of students across the system are classified as residents of the State of Hawai'i, while the other 25% are classified as non-resident. Around 60% of students identify as Asian or a Pacific Islander, while 19% identify as Caucasian, 16% as two or more races, and 2% as African American or Black. Several of the campuses have been recognized in recent years as being among the most ethnically diverse campuses in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report*.

We believe that promoting diversity not only aligns with the values inherent in Hawai'i's culture but also contributes significantly to the overall academic and personal growth of our students. The proposed three-year pilot program is a commendable initiative that will provide open and inclusive activities for students and the general public.

Please note that UH already offers a variety of successful diversity programs across its campuses. A partial list of events can be found at <https://www.hawaii.edu/calendar>. Examples include cultural events celebrating various ethnic traditions, workshops promoting awareness of disabilities and inclusion, educational programs addressing LGBTQ+ issues, and initiatives supporting minority communities. These programs have proven effective in fostering a sense of community and respect among our diverse student body, and funding from this measure will allow expansion of these programs.

In conclusion, we support HB 2063 and express our gratitude for the recognition of the importance of diversity within UH.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

Center for Hawaiian Sovereignty Studies
46-255 Kahuhipa St. Suite 1205
Kane'ohe, HI 96744
(808) 247-7942

Kenneth R. Conklin, Ph.D. Executive Director
e-mail Ken_Conklin@yahoo.com
Unity, Equality, Aloha for all



To: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY

For hearing Wednesday, February 7, 2024

Re: HB 2063 RELATING TO THE ENRICHMENT OF DIVERSITY IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM.

Establishes and appropriates funds for a three-year pilot program to
enrich diversity across the University of Hawaii System.

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB2063 CURRENT LANGUAGE
BUT SUPPORTING IF LANGUAGE IS AMENDED

The best thing about this bill is that it seeks to promote demographic diversity of the races, ethnicities, nationalities, and genders of student and community activities. The worst thing about this bill is that it totally fails to promote the most important kind of diversity necessary for any ACADEMIC institution or university which wants to foster intellectual inquiry and academic freedom -- DIVERSITY OF VIEWPOINT. I have attended numerous events at UH-Manoa and UH-Windward led by panels of professors and students who were demographically diverse but conceptually parochial: biased, bigoted, prejudiced, shallow, disrespectful toward differing viewpoints which were often excluded

from being presented and were publicly ridiculed and dismissed when raised by people in the audience during discussion Q&A periods. It's important for organizers and presenters to have not only a diversity of viewpoints among themselves but also a diversity of viewpoints in the subject matter being presented. Such diversity of viewpoint is most clearly absent in the curriculum and activities in the fields of Hawaii's history, political science, sociology, anthropology, urban and regional studies, teacher education, philosophy, etc.

Section 1 CURRENTLY SAYS "The legislature finds that the University of Hawaii system serves a diverse student and community population across the State. Much like is mirrored in Hawaii's culture, it is important to recognize such diversity and promote an inclusive environment that celebrates those who may have been marginalized in the past. Through student and community activities that enrich diversity, the University of Hawaii has an opportunity to further foster a first-rate education experience. The purpose of this Act is to require and appropriate funds for the University of Hawaii to enrich diversity across its campuses."

Section 1 SHOULD BE AMENDED TO SAY: The legislature finds that the University of Hawaii system serves a diverse student and community population across the State, and teaches a curriculum which includes many controversial topics with widely diverse viewpoints. Much like is mirrored in Hawaii's culture, it is important to recognize such diversity and promote an inclusive environment that celebrates people and ideas which may have been marginalized in the past or are currently excluded from serious consideration. Through student and community activities that enrich diversity of people and viewpoints, the University of Hawaii has an opportunity to further foster a first-rate education experience. The purpose of this Act is to require and appropriate funds for the University of Hawaii to enrich demographic and viewpoint diversity across its campuses.

HB-2063

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 5:24:03 PM

Testimony for HET on 2/7/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruth Love	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Seems like a waste of taxpayer dollars. We're already very diverse. This area is very accepting of differences in ability, sexual orientation, religion, or ethnicity. No need to spend money on something just to satisfy some political buzzword and school the population on something they clearly already know.

Thank you very much,

Mrs. Ruth Love

HB-2063

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:24:24 AM

Testimony for HET on 2/7/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Crossland	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **oppose** this Bill.

Aloha Legislature

Please take into consideration my testimony in regards to HB2063. First as a parent of a High School athlete I would like to express my gratitude for taking the time to bring forth this bill.

When this past Winter sports season began, many of my son's fellow public charter school classmates were beyond excited to finally be able to participate in "High School" sports. Unfortunately, due to different circumstances many of these students did not find out they were unable to play until after the conditioning season started. Some of them had already started to put in the hard work by attending pre seasoning conditioning, obtaining sports physicals and submitting grade checks. Watching this from not only an adult but an educator's view was heartbreaking.

These student athletes were denied the opportunity to play based on where their families lived. This was because of geographical limitations and lines placed by us adults. This is not about "stacking teams" I am a firm believer in having school pride and playing for your home school. However, if your school does not offer the sport you are playing should you then be denied to play at all? Unfortunately, the question was asked many times by our children "why can't we just play?" Passing HB2063 will allow just this, the opportunity for our children to play. Many studies show the importance and positive outcomes sports have on our youth. Providing a positive outlet for our children is key especially on our island where this is sometimes limited. So, on behalf of our keiki I respectfully request that you pass this bill that will allow our children to play in the district they reside if their homeschool does not offer their sport.

May I leave you with these words. - Do you know what my favorite part of the game is? The opportunity to play. - Mike Singletary, NFL player and Coach

Mahalo
Chrystel Ramey