



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 Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Tuesday, April 2, 2024, at 2:00 p.m.

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

HCR 205/HR 185 – URGING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO ADOPT AND PUBLICIZE A STATEWIDE EQUITY STATEMENT

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HCR 205 and HR 185 calling for the University of Hawai'i (UH) to adopt and publicize a statewide equity statement.

UH serves a diverse student and community population, with several campuses recognized in recent years by *U.S. News and World Report* as among the most ethnically diverse campuses in the nation. In addition to ethnic diversity, UH is home to many first-generation students, veterans, international students, and students from the continental United States — all of whom help make each class of students complex and diverse. As a result, UH has a special burden to ensure that all students feel welcome within the institution.

This resolution comes at a time when some states are actively eliminating their diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts. The U.S. Supreme Court has held that diversity is not a compelling state interest for admissions purposes. Thus, the UH welcomes the legislature's support in prioritizing DEI efforts, including encouraging the UH to draft and post a systemwide equity statement.

UH is participating in a national equity action initiative that focuses on utilizing a framework to assist with implementing various equity priorities. One such priority is the development of an official Equity Statement, which is currently in draft form and ready for consultation.

In light of national hostility toward DEI efforts and in an atmosphere where many states actively seek to undermine efforts to make higher education equitable for all students, it is refreshing to have the support of the Hawai'i House of Representatives through the introduction of HCR 205 and HR 185 in doing this work for the future of our state and the public good.

Thank you for the opportunity to shine a light on this critical subject.

HCR-205

Submitted on: 3/28/2024 4:36:20 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sharee Orr	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Stop wasting taxpayer dollars on frivolous stuff. There are more important things like homelessness, cost of living, crime plus many other things more important than a dumb statement. You people are the worst. Stop being a waste of breath.

HCR-205

Submitted on: 3/28/2024 5:24:49 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Teresa Parmenter	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose this. Such a waste of time

HCR-205

Submitted on: 3/28/2024 5:37:12 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yvonne Alvarado	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Yvonne Alvarado Oppose Bill HCR205

HCR-205

Submitted on: 3/28/2024 5:59:43 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sharron VanDeusen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE HCR205.

HCR-205

Submitted on: 3/28/2024 6:47:36 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marlies Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose

Waste of money and time! What about Lahaina?

the media is creating equity issues

If we have it we can deal with it individually

HCR-205

Submitted on: 3/29/2024 8:59:31 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alex Akui	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Opposed, waste of time & funds

HCR-205

Submitted on: 3/29/2024 7:09:39 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lora Santiago	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill HCR205. It is a big waste of time! Try fixing real problems we have currently and more important such as the homeless, election integrity/fraud, crime on the rise etc.

HCR-205

Submitted on: 3/29/2024 11:22:52 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Cabjuan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose! Stop wasting taxpayer \$\$ with this nonsense and fix our state please.

HCR-205

Submitted on: 3/29/2024 4:15:06 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Candace Vizcarra	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

WASTE OF TIME

HCR-205

Submitted on: 4/1/2024 9:11:51 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice Johnson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

There is not a need to push for or shove the equity statement down the throats of UH or any organization for that matter to satisfy the current political climate that offers nothing more than division and self-destruction.

To stand in the gap and honor the values under God is a privilege you took to serve the people who trust you. This does not represent the people who trusted you to make good and right decisions.

Going against what we the people voted each of you who in for, having drafted/ approve of this, should be held accountable for not focusing on the real and daunting challenges of the area/State you represent, such as the cost of living, affordability, homeless, mental illness, drugs, illegal immigration, crime, etc.

Therefore, I strongly oppose this HCR.