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## Testimony on the Presidential Search criteria from Dr. Carolyn Stephenson

1 message

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**Carolyn M Stephenson** <cstephen@hawaii.edu>  
To: bor.testimony@hawaii.edu

Wed, May 15, 2024 at 5:54 PM

Thank you to all the members of the Board of Regents and the PSAG for all your work on the presidential search.

I am Carolyn Stephenson, faculty member at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and a member of the UHM Faculty Senate Executive Committee, but I am providing testimony as an individual.

First, I am concerned with the introductory paragraph:

"Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The next President will have superb leadership experience and skills, demonstrating the ability to successfully lead large, complex, and diverse organizations in settings that value individual and collective achievement, innovation, and accountability. The ideal candidate will have the following minimum and many of the desired professional qualifications and personal qualities:"

The University of Hawaii is an institution of higher education, not just a large, complex, and diverse organization. The next President must demonstrate the ability to successfully lead a university, an academic institution of higher education. This needs to be front and center, in this initial paragraph.

Second, the Minimal Qualifications are weak, and could be strengthened in many ways other faculty members and organizations have identified in their testimony. I particularly want to call your attention to the testimony of the UHMFS Senate Executive Committee, of which I am a part.

As part of the Minimum Qualifications, many of the criteria listed under the category of desirable qualifications, in the section "Academic," need to be moved to minimum qualifications. A Ph.D. and strong record of scholarly achievement are essential to leadership of an academic institution of higher education. Commitment to academic freedom and demonstrated success as a faculty member, preferably at an R1 university, are also essential, as are commitment to teaching and research excellence. Please strengthen and move these criteria to the Minimum Qualifications section.

I hope that this search will produce a leader for UH, not just someone who can lead other types of business or political organizations.



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## Testimony for Special BOR meeting Agenda item IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the Presidential Search

1 message

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**Marguerite Butler** <mbutler808@gmail.com>  
To: Zoom on behalf of Board of Regents <bor.testimony@hawaii.edu>  
Cc: Sarita Rai <sarita@hawaii.edu>

Wed, May 15, 2024 at 6:33 PM

Aloha BoR,

Enclosed please find our late written testimony for May 16, 2024.

Sincerely,  
Marguerite Butler

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Marguerite A. Butler  
Professor

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 **BOR testimony to amend PSAG Presidential Search Criteria 5\_16\_24.pdf**  
481K

TO: The Board of Regents, University of Hawai'i

FROM:

Dr. Marguerite Butler, Professor, SoLS, UHM, co-chair MFS Committee on Faculty Service

Dr. Sarita Rai, Specialist and Director, Study Abroad Center, UHM, chair MFS Committee on Administration and Budget

DATE: 05/16/24

RE: Agenda item IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the Presidential Search

Dear Chair Lee, Regents, and President Lassner,

Having spent months developing the [MFS Presidential Criteria](#) with the Manoa Faculty Senate, we fully appreciate how much work the PSAG has put in and are grateful for their efforts.

We would like to address three primary issues:

1. The min Q's are vague.
2. Wording in support of our R1 campus has been removed and there is no mention of professional trades, which does not fully reflect our comprehensive university system.
3. Many criteria are without any measurables to evaluate how candidates meet MQ's and DQ's, making the objective ranking of candidates very difficult.

In order to assist in strengthening these criteria, we provide the edits below.

The PSAG criteria are given in **Times font** (with yellow highlights to indicate specific wording), whereas our responses are indented and given in san serif font. Recommended changes are in **courier font**.

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The definition of the Manoa Chancellor (pg. 15 of the BOR materials)

"Each UH campus currently operates under the leadership of its own Chancellor, except for the Mānoa campus that currently operates under the leadership of the Provost and President. However, the Board of Regents expressed a desire for **a new leadership structure that transfers the President's day-to-day responsibilities over the Mānoa campus to a new Mānoa Chancellor** who will report to the President, pending a formal action by the Board and in consultation with Mānoa stakeholders. The incoming President should be cognizant that such a transfer of duties may occur and, if so, will be responsible for guiding such a transition and ultimately hiring a new Chancellor for UH Mānoa."

Strongly recommended edit: Change "*President's day-to-day responsibilities*" to "*duties of the chief executive of the Mānoa campus*".

**It is critical** that the Manoa chancellor be given the duties appropriate for a Chancellor of an R1 university (as well as the other 9 UH campus Chancellors). Oversight of the "day-to-day" is used to describe the current role of the Mānoa Provost.

- The **Chancellor** of a campus is the chief executive of the campus, whom all campus leaders report to, and oversees at the campus level: long-range planning and vision, internal and external communications, and all aspects of campus function including day-to-day operations.
- The **Provost** of a campus is generally a chief academic officer of the campus, and whom all deans report to.

The PSAG criteria:

### **Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities**

The next President will have superb leadership experience and skills, demonstrating the ability to successfully lead large, complex, and diverse organizations in settings that value individual and collective achievement, innovation, and accountability. The ideal candidate will have the following minimum and many of the desired professional qualifications and personal qualities:

#### **Minimum Qualifications:**

1. **A track record of significant and successful leadership that aligns with the University of Hawai'i's traditions of academic excellence, access, and shared governance.**

This criterion will be difficult to score objectively, and is too loose to effectively screen candidates.

Replace with the following, specifying the evaluation of successful leadership in complex organizations, such as the UH System:

Recommend replacing with:

"Achieved prominence as a national or international leader in their field as a result of personal efforts and possesses experience leading a large, complex nonprofit organization that involved the creation and dissemination of knowledge, including a successful history of attracting federal funding."

2. **Outstanding communication skills, including the ability to serve as UH System's chief advocate, effectively articulating the value of a UH education and research, and the value it plays in the UH System and within the state, and the UH System's vision and opportunities to contribute to the state economy for audiences internal and external.**

This criterion is unclear and with all due respect, does not read well.

Recommend replacing with:

"Possess outstanding communication skills and the knowledge and experience to clearly articulate the value and complexity of a comprehensive university system that includes extensive research activity, generation of knowledge across disciplines, and excellence in professional trades.

Evidence of academic vision, with the talent to communicate across disciplines and philosophies to audiences both inside and outside of the university and serve as the University's chief advocate."

3. **Excellent operational skills and experience that will transfer into leading a large, complex organization.**

We are not seeking a day-to-day manager, we are searching for a leader of the UH System.

Recommend deleting, covered by edited MQ1 above.

4. **Demonstrated** history of working with multicultural and diverse populations.

This criterion as written could be satisfied with a negative track record.

Recommend revision:

"Successful history of working with diverse multicultural populations in achieving shared goals."

5. **A well-developed understanding of academic values, culture, and emerging issues in higher education.**

Insufficient for a University President.

Recommend prepending with:

"A national or international reputation for leadership in higher education, and a well-developed understanding of academic values, culture, and emerging issues in higher education"

6. **A commitment to academic excellence and support for research, scholarship, and teaching with a strong sense of ethics and high integrity.**

Recommend prepending with DQ 3:

"Demonstrated commitment to academic freedom and academic integrity of an institution of higher education. Demonstrated

commitment to academic excellence and support for research, scholarship, and teaching."

7. Demonstrated fiscal and strategic acumen, including experience and accountability for budget decisions and a record of success in creating financially sustainable budget models for a large, complex organization and its key components.

OK

8. Demonstrated leadership qualities capable of leveraging UH's strengths in international education.

Criterion unclear. Why only international education? Leveraging with regard to what?

Recommend delete.

9. Experience working with a governing board (e.g., board of regents, trustees, board of directors for a nonprofit organization or business).

Recommend edits:

"A record of success working with a governing board (e.g., board of regents, trustees, board of directors for a nonprofit organization or business) to advance the missions of the institution."

### **Desirable Qualifications:**

#### **Academic**

1. A Ph.D. or other terminal degree is strongly preferred; candidates without a terminal degree should have credentials and/or experiences sufficient to warrant the respect and confidence of the academic community.
2. A strong record of scholarly achievement (e.g., research, publications, intellectual leadership, and extramural funding).
3. Demonstrated commitment to academic freedom and academic integrity of an institution of higher education.
4. Demonstrated success as a faculty member at either a four-year university and/or community college.
5. Demonstrated commitment to teaching and research excellence.

These desirable criteria are **insufficient** for a University President and repetitive.

Combine DQ 1,2,4,5 with below to reduce repetition, clarify the evaluation of the criterion, and raise the leadership profile to a level appropriate for a President of the UH System:

Recommended replacement:

"Achieved the rank of tenured Full Professor at a research university as the result of a distinguished academic record of high-quality teaching and scholarship/research, including a successful history of attracting federal funding for scholarship/research and education."

**Missing from these criteria are any qualifications to oversee an R1 university.**

Please add as it is especially critical for candidates from non-academic backgrounds (MFS proposed it as an MQ).

Please add as a DQ:

"Have the necessary knowledge and experience to clearly articulate the value and complexity of the positions of the Chancellors of an R1 campus as well as that of campuses including professional trades."

**Vision and Leadership**

6. **Proven ability to lead complex institutions and contribute to a strategic vision that fosters innovation, growth, and long-term success.**

Please add the following to differentiate candidates with the most relevant experience:

"...Ideally the experience includes institutions with extensive research activity, generation of knowledge across disciplines, and expertise in professional trades. Evidence of the ability to balance conflicting visions of what a university should be."

7. Demonstrated political and diplomatic acumen in engaging with policymakers at all levels of government and success in advocating for the organizational interests in a multifaceted social and political milieu.
8. A history of success in building strong, diverse leadership teams and demonstrating accountability and performance.

Please add the following to differentiate candidates with the most relevant experience:

"A history of success in building strong, diverse leadership teams and demonstrating accountability and performance, especially in support of a complex institution of statewide or national importance."

9. Success in developing systems for the recruitment, development, and retention of exceptional executive management, faculty, staff, and students.
10. **A strong commitment and demonstrated success in ethical leadership and integrity, with a track record of upholding the highest standards of conduct.**

Agree with the intent, but what are the measurables? Upon what evidence will it be decided that a candidate meets this DQ?

Please replace with the following:

"Demonstrated success in ethical leadership and personal integrity. A demonstrable commitment to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, including maintaining the confidence of their faculty or organization; where accomplishments may include proactive development of strategies for DEI, personal involvement in supporting/mentoring the development of personnel, implementation of systems for improving the handling of grievances, or establishing pathways to hear issues arising with personnel."

11. Proven success in fundraising and growing philanthropic support, as well as in outreach and engagement with elected officials, alumni, community members, private organizations, and others to advance long-term support for the University's mission.
12. Exceptional listening, laulima, and consensus-building skills to develop strategic and implementation plans.

Unclear how this will be evaluated by the search committee.

Please replace with:

"Excellent track record of listening, laulima (collaboration), engagement, and consensus-building skills to bring together a diverse group of constituents and the larger community in support of achieving strategic initiatives, and more specifically, to build relationships with faculty, staff, and students."

13. Show evidence of embracing the Hawai'i Law of the Aloha Spirit in everything they do: Akahai, Lōkahi, 'Olu'olu, Ha'aha'a, and Ahonui.

It is unclear how this would be evaluated by the search committee. More directly relevant to the UH System than a Hawaii Revised Statute is demonstrated commitment to the UH strategic initiatives.

Please replace with:

"Demonstrated commitment to the University's strategic initiatives including sustainability and establishing a Hawaiian place of learning (or comparable efforts in place-based learning supporting Indigenous and/or minority communities)."



14. Demonstrated understanding and respect of the Indigenous culture and people of Hawai'i and Hawaiian traditions, values, and language and an appreciation of Hawai'i's multi-ethnic population and unique way of life.

The Presidential search should be a national one. For example we may have an excellent candidate that is familiar with other Pacific peoples and cultures. Please consider allowing a slight expansion:

Please edit:

"Demonstrated understanding and respect for Indigenous cultures and peoples, especially the people of Hawai'i and Hawaiian traditions, values, and language and an appreciation of Hawai'i's multi-ethnic population and unique way of life."

15. Demonstrated success working in a shared governance environment.

### **Students and Community**

16. Evidence of successful collaboration with PreK-12 education and workforce development.

A little unclear on what the aims are. To improve student success? Workforce development is addressed in DQ22 so is repetitive here.

Please consider:

"Evidence of successful collaboration between higher education and all levels of educational development beginning with Pre-K, to improve student achievement and experience."

17. Evidence of being student-centered and working with diverse student demographics, demonstrated by a track record of addressing challenges affecting mental health, retention, and graduation.
18. Demonstrated ability to adapt to changing circumstances, as well as a strong awareness of diverse needs of the state and how higher education addresses the needs.
19. Comfortable serving in an environment with strong sunshine laws.
20. Experience and deep understanding of intercollegiate athletics and how Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) relates to the current intercollegiate athletic setting.

Athletics are campus activities and therefore under the purview of the respective campus Chancellor working with their athletic directors, and therefore too specific for a Presidential criterion.

Recommend delete, include in the narrative of the profile.

21. Ability to lead an Indigenous-serving and Indigenous-centered institution, including a dedication to sustainability and understanding the importance of caring for and honoring the land.

22. A vision and clearly articulated plan to eliminate workforce shortages in Hawai'i while preparing students for a future different from the present.

A vision is fine, but a "clearly articulated plan" to improve workforce shortages is too specific for a University President. A President can be aware of workforce shortages and inform students of those opportunities, but there are limits to what a University President can and should do as students have free will to explore their passions. Universities train people to think critically and learn how to be life-long learners so that they can adapt to future needs. Afterall, the workforce shortages of today may be irrelevant in the future.

Proposed edit:

"A vision for how a public university can be responsive to the workforce needs of the state and issues of statewide concern while fostering a higher education system that prepares students to be critical thinkers and life-long learners with flexibility to adapt to future needs."

23. Experience working with a unionized environment and labor relations.



## Presidential Search Criteria Recommended by the Mānoa Faculty Senate

### **Duties (partial):**

1. Hire a Mānoa Chancellor.
2. Together with the Chancellor and their leadership teams, clarify the division of the positions of President and Chancellor and lead the reorganization of the associated administrative offices.

### **Minimum Qualifications:**

1. Achieved prominence as a national or international leader in their field as a result of personal efforts and possesses experience leading a large, complex nonprofit organization that focused on the creation and dissemination of knowledge, including a successful history of attracting federal funding.

### **Communication to the outside**

2. Have the necessary knowledge and experience to clearly articulate the value and complexity of the position of the Chancellor of an R1 university.
3. Evidence of academic vision, with the talent to communicate across disciplines and philosophies to audiences both inside and outside of the university and serve as the University's chief advocate.

### **Political acumen**

4. Demonstrated political and diplomatic acumen in engaging with policymakers at all levels of government to effectively advocate for the university's interests in a multifaceted social and political milieu.

### **Value of a comprehensive multi-campus university**

5. A national or international reputation for leadership in higher education. A well-developed understanding of academic values and culture, and emerging issues in higher education. Demonstrated commitment to and achievement in academic excellence, including in promoting and sustaining the Arts, Humanities, and Languages, and all fields as well as STEM fields. A track record of inclusion and development of multiple facets of higher education, including professional trades and certificate programs.



6. A profound commitment to the land grant mission and the desire, fortitude, vision, and ability to define the role of and position the university as a leading land grant institution for the future.

Fiscal/fundraising, Communication to the outside

7. Demonstrated financial and strategic acumen, including experience and accountability for financial and budgetary decisions, and a record of success in creating financially sustainable budget models for large, complex institutions, and creating incentive structures for energizing the faculty and staff in greater accomplishment of the university's missions.

8. Proven success in fundraising and growing philanthropic support, improving outreach and engagement with elected officials, alumni, community members, private organizations, and others to advance long-term support for the university's missions.

Implementation of strategic vision, Hawai'i context

9. A record of success in the implementation of strategic vision in a complex institution that includes extensive research activity, generation of knowledge across disciplines, and expertise in professional trades, with the ability to balance conflicting visions of what a university should be. Demonstrated commitment to the university's strategic initiatives including sustainability and establishing a Hawaiian place of learning (or comparable efforts in place-based learning supporting Indigenous and/or minority communities).

10. Demonstrated leadership in cultural change and transition. Ability to promote an innovative and entrepreneurial attitude with exceptional collaboration and listening skills, the ability to engage with other points of view and competing ideas, and to define a best path forward.

Development of people, Hawai'i context

11. A student-focused leader who recognizes the unique responsibility of the University of Hawai'i as the only system with an R1 university with an Indigenous college and is able to reinvigorate its commitment to all students.

12. Excellent track record of collaboration, engagement, and consensus-building to bring together a diverse group of faculty and staff, as well as other constituents, including a board of regents, students, alumni, and the larger community.

13. Demonstrated leadership with a history of being able to delegate and not dictate, with a track record of building a strong academic leadership team. Personal success in the recruitment, development, and retention of exceptional faculty, staff, students.



14. Demonstrated track-record of ethical leadership and demonstrable commitment to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, including maintaining the confidence of their faculty; where accomplishments may include proactive development of strategies for DEI, personal involvement in supporting/mentoring the development of faculty and staff, implementation of systems for improving the handling of grievances, or establishing pathways to hear issues arising with faculty and staff.

**Desirable Qualifications:**

1. Achieved the rank of tenured Full Professor at a research university as the result of a distinguished academic record of high-quality teaching and scholarship/research, including a successful history of attracting federal funding for scholarship/research and education.
2. Demonstrated leadership in mentoring and developing leadership within their previous organizations, as evidenced by mentees attaining success in their own right. Demonstrated abilities to develop diverse future leaders in support of a complex institution of statewide or national importance.

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*Please provide your testimony on this form for the next University of Hawaii Board of Regents meeting. Make sure you include all the requested information so that the Board of Regents is able to clearly understand the testimony provided.*

***\*\*All written testimony submitted are public documents. Therefore, any testimony submitted is public information and will be posted on the board's website.***

Your Name (required) \*

Kahea Faria

Your Organization (optional)

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) \*

kaheaf@hawaii.edu

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) \*

Special BOR - IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search

Your Position (required) \*

Support

Your Testimony/Comments

Aloha Members of the Board of Regents,

I am writing in strong SUPPORT of the current presidential profile, especially the Kuleana Imperative and all of the mentions of similar items in the document.

Mahalo!

Your Testimony (pdf or word)

No file attached

**Public Testimony Form - University of Hawaii Board of Regents**

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Your Name (required) \*

Kēhaulani Custino

Your Organization (optional)

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) \*

kehaulani.custino@gmail.com

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) \*

Special BOR - IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search

Your Position (required) \*

Support

Your Testimony/Comments

I am in strong **SUPPORT** of the current Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search that includes the **Kuleana Imperative** and all of the mentions of similar items in the document.

"The incoming President must be a culturally responsive leader who demonstrates inspiring and authentic leadership qualities. They should have significant administrative and leadership experience at an institution or organization, preferably of comparable size and scope, and a demonstrated track record of success as a leader. Of utmost importance is a President who understands and embraces their personal kuleana and the UH System's Strategic Plan, "Kuleana imperative," to the Indigenous people of Hawai'i and to Hawai'i as a multicultural community. The President must be a global leader who can leverage UH Systems' strengths in international education to synergize well with the UH Systems Indigenous-serving commitments."

Mahalo

Your Testimony (pdf or word)

No file attached

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Your Name (required) \*

Julie Kaomea

Your Organization (optional)

University of Hawai'i

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) \*

juilie.kaomea@hawaii.edu

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) \*

Special BOR - IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search

Your Position (required) \*

Support

### Your Testimony/Comments

As a member of the UH System community, I fully support the vision outlined for our institution's future and enthusiastically endorse the qualities sought in our next President, especially our commitment to honoring our kuleana to Native Hawaiians and Hawai'i. It is not just a statement but a fundamental principle that shapes our identity as an institution. Our dedication to being Indigenous-serving and Indigenous-centered is not merely rhetoric but a lived reality, and our next President must embody and advance these values.

I firmly believe that the President is pivotal in steering our institution toward its mission of fostering an environment where Native Hawaiians thrive. This entails advocating for their success in learning, teaching, service, and research and nurturing them as leaders who can drive positive change within our community and beyond. Central to this endeavor is the promotion of Hawaiian language, culture, and knowledge among all members of the UH community, recognizing the transformative power of understanding the past and present impacts of colonization.

In conclusion, the next President of the UH System must be a visionary leader deeply committed to advancing our institution's mission of serving Native Hawaiians and Hawai'i. I am confident that by embodying the qualities outlined in the



proposed presidential selection criteria, our next President will lead us toward a future of continued excellence, innovation, and positive impact. Mahalo.

[Your Testimony \(pdf or word\)](#)

No file attached

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Your Name (required) \*

Alethea Ku'u lei Serna

Your Organization (optional)

University of Hawaii at Manoa, College of Education, School for Teacher Education

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) \*

kserna@hawaii.edu

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) \*

Special BOR - IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search

Your Position (required) \*

Support

Your Testimony/Comments

Aloha,

I am in support of the PSAG's Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria as it is written on May 10, 2024.

I am, especially, in strong support of the ***Kuleana Imperative*** criteria and statement in the PSAG's recommended criteria. I mahalo the PSAG for listening to the faculty, staff, and students across the UH system. You must keep that section in the criteria. We have worked extremely hard, under President Lassner, to create programs and activities that honor the Native Hawaiian culture as the host culture of Hawaii per the UH strategic plan. At the School for Teacher Education, have worked with faculty, staff, and students to create a Native Hawaiian Place of Learning for future teachers to perpetuate and understand while teaching our keiki in Hawaii schools. We have worked to incorporate and highlight Hawaiian culture that is inclusive of "all" - local and settler non-Hawaiians. While we have a lot more to do, we have been successful in the work that we have put forth and have extended that work in our communities and beyond Hawaii.

We are an indigenous-serving institution and must keep that criteria in the Presidential profile. If not, it would be a travesty that mimics the historic educational and institutional oppression that has been placed on Hawaiians since the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom. Don't let history repeat itself!

Please consider my testimony.

Sincerely,  
Kuulei Serna, PhD.  
Professor

[Your Testimony \(pdf or word\)](#)

No file attached

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Your Name (required) \*

Candido Barbieto

Your Organization (optional)

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) \*

candido@hawaii.edu

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) \*

Special BOR - IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search

Your Position (required) \*

Support

Your Testimony/Comments

Aloha Members of the Board of Regents,

I am writing in strong **SUPPORT** of the current presidential profile, especially the **Kuleana Imperative** and all of the mentions of similar items in the document.

Mahalo!

Your Testimony (pdf or word)

No file attached

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Your Name (required) \*

Keokapukoa Kaohelaulii

Your Organization (optional)

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) \*

keokapu@hawaii.edu

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) \*

Special BOR - IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search

Your Position (required) \*

Support

Your Testimony/Comments

Aloha Members of the Board of Regents,

I am writing in strong **SUPPORT** of the current presidential profile, especially the **Kuleana Imperative** and all of the mentions of similar items in the document.

Mahalo!

Your Testimony (pdf or word)

No file attached

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Your Name (required) \*

Erin Kahunawaika'ala Wright

Your Organization (optional)

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) \*

kahunawai@gmail.com

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) \*

Special BOR - IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search

Your Position (required) \*

Comments Only

Your Testimony/Comments

Aloha mai kākou,

Mahalo for the opportunity to leave comments regarding the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the Presidential Search agenda item.

For over 20 years, I have worked for the University of Hawai'i providing support for Native Hawaiians moving to and through higher education. In that time, I have worked directly with students and Kānaka staff and faculty; I have also served on various campus leadership-initiated committees and task forces created for "Hawaiian place of learning" and how Mānoa should address racism and bias. Unsurprisingly, these initiatives were without any meaningful and lasting results. Regardless, Kānaka have made amazing progress in bringing our Native Hawaiian folx to the University, often times, without campus- and system-level support. For example, Native Hawaiian enrollment has been trending upward for several years and about one-quarter of all enrolled students in the University of Hawai'i System identifies as Native Hawaiian (concentrated in our community colleges).

So, I was a bit surprised but immensely satisfied to read language and, more importantly, kuleana for our Native Hawaiian community explicitly in the Proposed Presidential Profile (Kuleana Imperative). It demonstrates the University's

commitment to taking the labor of Native Hawaiians and prioritizing it at the highest level where systemic change is more possible. While positional leadership is not the only way to enact systemic change, tasking the president with this kuleana can make broad scale changes happen much more quickly. It is also a very clear way for our Native Hawaiian community to hold our leadership accountable for this work.

However, it was brought to my attention there were public remarks by a regent to remove this language. Removing this language from the Presidential Profile will further erode the relationship between Native Hawaiians and the Board of Regents already fractured by the University's continued commitment to the Thirty-Meter Telescope on Maunakea. Native Hawaiians have created our own opportunities on our campuses for Native Hawaiian students and their 'ohana and it is time the University of Hawai'i to take responsibility for this critical work so lasting and meaningful change can happen across our System. Higher education plays a vital role for our 'ohana and communities and allowing the future president to opt out of this work will continue to perpetuate inequality in higher education and beyond. To be honest, I am wondering why this regent would even want this part of the position description to be removed?

Like everyone else, Native Hawaiians simply want to be treated fairly in our own homeland in the institution started by our Queen. As I continue to say, generations of Native Hawaiians have invested in this work with amazing results. And, for me, it is leadership's turn to support our endeavors for the long term. Mahalo for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Mahalo a nui,

Erin Kahunawaika'ala Wright

[Your Testimony \(pdf or word\)](#)

No file attached

## Public Testimony Form - University of Hawaii Board of Regents

*Please provide your testimony on this form for the next University of Hawaii Board of Regents meeting. Make sure you include all the requested information so that the Board of Regents is able to clearly understand the testimony provided.*

***\*\*All written testimony submitted are public documents. Therefore, any testimony submitted is public information and will be posted on the board's website.***

Your Name (required) \*

Sean Nagamatsu

Your Organization (optional)

University of Hawai'i

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) \*

seandn@hawaii.edu

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) \*

Special BOR - IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search

Your Position (required) \*

Support

### Your Testimony/Comments

As a member of the UH System community who supports students at the four year and UHCC campuses, I fully support the vision outlined for our institution's future and enthusiastically endorse the qualities sought in our next President, especially our commitment to honoring our kuleana to Native Hawaiians and Hawai'i. It is not just a statement but a fundamental principle that shapes our identity as an institution. Our dedication to being Indigenous-serving and Indigenous-centered is not merely rhetoric but a lived reality, and our next President must embody and advance these values.

I firmly believe that the President is pivotal in steering our institution toward its mission of fostering an environment where Native Hawaiians thrive. This entails advocating for their success in learning, teaching, service, and research and nurturing them as leaders who can drive positive change within our community and beyond. Central to this endeavor is the promotion of Hawaiian language, culture, and knowledge among all members of the UH community, recognizing the transformative power of understanding the past and present impacts of colonization.

In conclusion, the next President of the UH System must be a visionary leader deeply committed to advancing our institution's mission of serving Native Hawaiians and Hawai'i. I am confident that by embodying the qualities outlined in the



proposed presidential selection criteria, our next President will lead us toward a future of continued excellence, innovation, and positive impact. Mahalo.

[Your Testimony \(pdf or word\)](#)

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Your Name (required) \*

Nicole Reyes

Your Organization (optional)

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) \*

reyesn4@hawaii.edu

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) \*

Special BOR - IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search

Your Position (required) \*

Support

Your Testimony/Comments

Dear Board of Regents,

My name is Nicole Alia Salis Reyes and I am an Associate Professor in the College of Education (COE) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. While I draw on my professional knowledge and expertise, I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the COE in this testimony.

**I support the approval of the proposed Presidential profile and selection criteria for the President search as developed by the UH Presidential Search Advisory Group (PSAG). In particular, I write to support the expectation of the new President to guide the UH System in fulfilling its kuleana to Native Hawaiians at to Hawai'i.**

As the only public system of higher education in Hawai'i, the UH System must do its part to serve Hawai'i and it's people. Indeed, in various documents and statement, including its strategic initiative, the UH has stated its intentions to be an Indigenous-serving and Indigenous-centered institution. In my studies as a higher education scholar, I have seen how there is still much work to do in this regard. The next UH President will play a vital role in this work. It is essential that this is taken into consideration throughout the search process.

Me ka 'oia'i'o,  
Nicole Alia Salis Reyes

[Your Testimony \(pdf or word\)](#)

No file attached

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Your Name (required) \*

Kirsten Mawyer

Your Organization (optional)

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) \*

kmawyer@hawaii.edu

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) \*

Special BOR - IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search

Your Position (required) \*

Support

Your Testimony/Comments

As a member of the UH System community, I fully support the vision outlined for our institution's future and wholeheartedly endorse the leadership profile and its clear articulation that our next President must steward our kuleana to Native Hawaiians and Hawai'i. Our dedication to being Indigenous-serving and Indigenous-centered is not merely rhetoric but a lived reality, and our next President must embody and advance these values.

The President is critical to steering our institution toward its mission of fostering an environment where Native Hawaiians thrive. This entails advocating for their success in learning, teaching, service, and research and nurturing them as leaders who can drive positive change within our community and beyond. Central to this endeavor is the promotion of Hawaiian language, culture, and knowledge among all members of the UH community, recognizing the transformative power of understanding the past and present impacts of colonization.

The next President of the UH System must be a visionary leader deeply committed to advancing our institution's mission of serving Native Hawaiians and Hawai'i. I am confident that by embodying the qualities outlined in the proposed presidential

selection criteria, our next President will lead us toward a future of continued excellence, innovation, and positive impact. Mahalo.

[Your Testimony \(pdf or word\)](#)

No file attached

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Your Name (required) \*

Kenika Lorenzo-Elarco

Your Organization (optional)

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) \*

kenika.lorenzo-elarco@hawaii.edu

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) \*

Special BOR - IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search

Your Position (required) \*

Support

Your Testimony/Comments

Aloha nui kākou!

As a member of the UH System community, I fully support the vision outlined for our institution's future and enthusiastically endorse the qualities sought in our next President. Notably our commitment to honoring our kuleana (responsibility) to Kānaka 'Ōiwi (Native Hawaiians) and the broader Hawai'i kaiāulu (community) and 'āina (environment). This kuleana is more than just a statement; it is a fundamental principle that shapes who we are as an institution--a kuleana that defines our identity. Our dedication to being an Indigenous-serving and Indigenous-centered institution is incredibly important to me, not only as a Native Hawaiian but as a product of this institution. It's critical that our next President not only understands and embodies these values, but has the ability to advance them.

Throughout my time at UH, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative impact of programs and initiatives that prioritize Native Hawaiian knowledge and perspectives. For instance, the implementation of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i classes has not only strengthened our community's connection to culture but has been instrumental in the revitalization of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i,

enriching the educational experience for all students and the larger UH community. Similarly, research projects rooted in Indigenous methodologies have led to groundbreaking discoveries that benefit our local communities and beyond.

I firmly believe that the President is pivotal in steering our institution toward its mission of fostering an environment where Native Hawaiians don't just learn, but thrive in postsecondary education and beyond. This entails advocating for their success in learning, teaching, service, and research and nurturing them as future leaders and changemakers within our community and beyond. Central to this endeavor is the promotion of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language), culture, and knowledge among all members of the UH community, recognizing the transformative power of understanding the past and present impacts of colonization. Moreover, the next President must be proactive in addressing the unique challenges faced by Native Hawaiian students. This includes expanding support services, enhancing mentorship opportunities, and fostering partnerships with Hawaiian communities to ensure that our educational programs are relevant and responsive to their needs.

In conclusion, the next President of the UH System must be a visionary leader deeply committed to advancing our institution's mission of serving Native Hawaiians and Hawai'i. I am confident that by embodying the qualities outlined in the proposed presidential selection criteria, our next President will lead us toward a future of continued excellence, innovation, and positive impact. Mahalo.

[Your Testimony \(pdf or word\)](#)

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Your Name (required) \*

Brian Faria

Your Organization (optional)

Windward Community College

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) \*

bfaria@hawaii.edu

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) \*

Special BOR - IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search

Your Position (required) \*

Support

Your Testimony/Comments

I am writing in strong **SUPPORT** of the current presidential profile, especially the **Kuleana Imperative** and all of the mentions of similar items in the document.

Your Testimony (pdf or word)

No file attached



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Your Name (required) \*

Pililuaikekaiohilo Keala

Your Organization (optional)

Your e-mail address (in case we need to reach you) \*

pkeala@hawaii.edu

Board of Regents Agenda Item (required) \*

Special BOR - IV.A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search

Your Position (required) \*

Support

Your Testimony/Comments

Aloha Members of the Board of Regents,

I am writing in strong **SUPPORT** of the current presidential profile, especially the **Kuleana Imperative** and all of the mentions of similar items in the document.

Mahalo!

Your Testimony (pdf or word)

No file attached

May 16, 2024

**Testimony on Board of Regents Agenda Item IV. A. Approval of the Proposed Presidential Profile and Selection Criteria for the President Search**

**Aloha Chair Lee and Regents,**

**Jill Nunokawa testifying in my personal and community capacity on this agenda item. I am including my April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024 testimony to the Presidential Search firm's listening phase that was purported to be a phase of integration during this search process.**

**I pressed the firm and search committee on the issue of separating the Manoa Chancellor job description and duties from the Presidential description and duties, especially since they acknowledged they have not written the JDP. Finally, it was disclosed they had received their "charge" from the Board of Regents, which specifically stated that there was to be NO separation between the roles of the UH System President and the UH-Manoa Chancellor. I was told by the firm and search committee member Erin Centeio that this issue was already addressed and any changes must be brought up to the Board itself, which is what brings me here today.**

**There is still time and with the great public and internal pressure to separate the two very distinct and time-consuming positions, I do not comprehend this path of discombobulation and cognitive dissonance in refusing to separate these roles.**

**For example, the University of California President is Michael Drake, while the UCLA Chancellor is Gene Block and the UC-Berkeley Chancellor is Carol Christ. Can you imagine any current university President or university Chancellor leaving their respective singular roles and duties to apply for a dual and grueling professional commitment at our UH system and at UH-Manoa? Additionally, we have suffered from serious conflicts of interest by having the UH System President serve as the UH-Manoa Chancellor. I will refrain from going through the lengthy list of negligent. Moreover, the most disturbing conflict of interest is not our President's dual roles but his ongoing secret commitment to the Department of Defense mission and task orders as the Principal Investigator on the largest contracts, one of which expires with NAVSEA at the end of this month. This re-negotiated contract does NOT need Board approval, like the prior others. It is disingenuous to suggest that in the future, the Board will arbitrarily "agendize" the UARC contract and/or ARL at UH's role in this huge DOD contract. The Air Force DOD contract comes up next year for re-negotiation. Also, as stated by the Air Force representative at the public hearings on Maui this week, the Air Force has no relationship with UH regarding its proposed seven telescopes on Haleakala. This is not true because the IFA has a significant operational presence on Haleakala. Also, the Air Force has its own contract to work with RCUH employees at the MHPCC in Kihei, with the plan to expand and increase its operations over the next few years. This would be with and through the active cooperation of the UH system.**

April 30, 2024

**Public Comments Pertaining to the Search for the Next University of Hawai'i President  
Jill Leilani Nunokawa**

Chag Pesach Sameach,

As we come to the closing day of Passover, in a tense and turbulent time, I wish for present and future liberation and happiness for all peoples on our planet.

Haiku:

Dear Lord, hear my pray'r  
In the name of the deceased  
Exodus Movement

In my personal and public capacity, I write to encourage authentic transparency in the presidential search process. I have witnessed the ongoing strife and suffering caused by the utter lack of disclosure, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion at the University of Hawai'i for almost ten (10) years. The absolute failure to genuinely address; student housing needs, student mental health needs, student rights under Title IX, student, faculty and administration's representation and integration of diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as the hyper-hypocrisy of advertising and representing UH as a "Native Hawaiian Place of Learning" while simultaneously and secretly securing hundreds of millions of dollars in the Department of Defense funding for military task orders, many of which are top secret and hidden from public and Board of Regent oversight. These facts alone mandate an immediate halt to the current business and profit as usual at UH.

The public will be able to determine for themselves at the end of this search whether the current regime was allowed to hand pick its successor and thus, increase the DOD funding through UH. The coconut wireless has stated the current Dean of the College of Engineering, Brennon Morioka, will be the next UH President. Today is the first day of the public process and yet, the outcome has been pre-determined. This disturbing rumor is intensified by the fact the UH Board of Regents has moved its May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024 meeting from the UH Maui Campus to UH Manoa, thereby cutting off the Maui residents from testifying in person unless they flight to

Oahu. Additionally, the Maui News reported yesterday the Department of the Air Force (which is under the Department of Defense) is proposing to construct and operate the Air Force Maui Optical and Supercomputing Site Small Telescope Advanced Research (AMOS STAR) facility on the island of Maui. This DOD development would consist of up to seven (7) new telescopes on Haleakala. The DOD has contracts with the UH System that currently place the Air Force operations on Haleakala, where toxic spills have still not been fully cleaned and cleared. The Air Force also has military task orders that are processed, implemented and operated through UH at the Maui High Performance Computing Center (MHPCC) in Kihei. The reigning UH President has been the Principal Investigator on these DOD contracts for decades. This fact combined with the current President also holding the title of UH-Manoa Chancellor has been a huge conflict of interest at UH-Manoa and in our community. The UH Strategic Plan, which is in place till 2029, reinforces UH's commitment and states as an imperative to fulfill kuleana to Native Hawaiians and Hawai'i. It states, "GOAL: Model what it means to be an indigenous serving and indigenous-centered institution: Native Hawaiians thrive, traditional Hawaiian values and knowledge are embraced, and UH scholarship and service advance all Native Hawaiians and Hawai'i." One of the objectives listed states, "Play an active role in the reconciliation of injustices, advancing language parity, and improving the lives of Native Hawaiians across the islands."

This stated commitment and written goal directly clashes with the history of the military in Hawai'i from the illegal overthrow of the sovereign nation of Hawai'i to the reason why Pu'uloa was bombed in 1941, the destruction and obliteration of water sources on Kaho'olawe and Kapukaki (Red Hill), Makua Valley and Pohakuloa as active firing areas, and the current occupation and control of approximately 25% of the lands on this Pacific Basin archipelago.

To play an active role in the reconciliation of injustices prohibits further destruction and development for the DOD and its military task orders. This is especially true at our public institution of higher education. Our stated strategic plan is irreconcilable with the DOD's mission and instigates further harm to Native Hawaiians and the people of Hawai'i by contributing to generational trauma and the pricing out of paradise many are suffering through now. Maui, especially after the fires that caused catastrophic damage to lands, resources and people, has limited housing and access to water and sewer treatment plants. Building more military operational facilities and using UH to front and launder DOD funding is in direct conflict and is irreconcilable with its own stated strategic plan.

The rumored successor currently receives DOD funding through the College of Engineering. The next UH President must demonstrate an evidenced-based history of prioritizing students and the public mission of a university. They must have demonstrated transparency, accountability, inclusion and diversity in their professional endeavors. They must articulate the commitment necessary to lead during times of great change, conflict and controversy within higher education and be able to quantify and evidence a pattern of authentic actualization of accountability to diverse stakeholders and indigenous peoples in principle, practice and purpose.

**We all recognize the historic importance of this time with the national Presidential election and the increase threats of nuclear disasters, wars, and climate chaos. We live and love on a once thriving archipelago that sustained hundreds of thousands of indigenous peoples prior to contact by Captain Cook. One of the great equalizers to these ongoing threats is public education, involvement and inclusion. In order to achieve any equalization, we must ensure the democratic processes are implemented and integrated with authenticity, accountability, and transparency. Many of these processes have failed to accomplish these goals and have created a great deal of distrust, disillusionment, disengagement, and disenfranchisement.**

**The time is now to build public trust by ensuring the public University of Hawai'i system is integrating its own strategic plan and reviewing the current conflict and clash with the purpose and mission of UARCs and the DOD military task orders through University systems.**