



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

H.B. 1692 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR VARIOUS IMPROVEMENTS AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I-WEST O'AHU

Testimony Presented Before the House Committee on Higher Education

February 8, 2005

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Acting Chancellor, University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu

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Chair Tommy Waters and Members of the Committee:

The purpose of HB 1692 is to appropriate funds for improvements at the University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu. We welcome the intent of this bill to support the Board of Regent approved biennium budget request of UHWO. As we have indicated in prior testimony, UHWO needs to expand its curriculum in order to meet its potential for service to the state of Hawai'i. Three areas have been identified as top priorities for development. They are education, applied health, and Hawaiian/Pacific studies:

Education, will begin with a program in Early Childhood Education, to be launched in Fall 2006. Demand for qualified teachers in the state can not be met by existing programs; by initiating a program in early childhood education that articulates with four of the UH community colleges, UH West O'ahu lays the groundwork for starting an education degree. Next we must develop programs that lead to teacher licensure—either a Bachelor's degree in Education or a Post-Baccalaureate certificate or both. Our planning has begun, but we need resources to launch the programs.

Applied Health, will begin with a program in Respiratory Therapy to be launched in Fall 2006. Current two-year technical degrees are becoming insufficient for advancement in many of the health related fields such as respiratory therapy, physical therapy and occupational therapy; a bachelor degree is more often required. These are projected to be growth fields in Hawai'i as the population ages. UH West O'ahu is partnering with Kapi'olani Community College to develop a "2+2" degree, an innovative curricular model that allows students with an associate of science degree in health fields to pursue a bachelor's degree that will expand their career options and their potential for advancement.

Hawaiian/Pacific Studies. Expanding academic offerings in this area is a UH system priority and a growing interest for West O'ahu students—both among Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian students. The faculty is committed to honoring our host culture, and at the same time, serving one of the most economically disadvantaged groups in the islands. UHWO has a small program in Hawaiian/Pacific Studies that needs to grow to meet the demand of the students we serve.

Investing in curriculum expansion at UHWO makes good sense. Demand for higher education in western O'ahu will only increase. Population growth in leeward/central O'ahu and the neighbor islands exceeds growth in the core Honolulu area.

Expanding our curriculum to meet state workforce needs is our top priority. The faculty positions we seek will initiate new programs in the workforce development areas of education and applied health care and expand the Hawaiian/Pacific Studies program. The staff positions will provide the additional infrastructure support needed to support program growth. Lastly, resources are needed to increase library holdings and technological services.

Thank you for your support of the growth of the University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu, and the opportunity to testify on this bill.