



# **UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM**

## **Legislative Testimony**

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Finance  
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by  
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and  
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**HCR 55/HR 25 – REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS AND THE  
BARACK OBAMA FOUNDATION TO SUPPORT AND RECOMMEND  
HAWAII AS THE SITE FOR THE BARACK OBAMA PRESIDENTIAL  
LIBRARY AND CENTER.**

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HCR 55/HR 25 expressing support for Hawai'i as the site for the Barack Obama Presidential Library and Center, and for the proposal submitted to the Barack Obama Foundation by the University of Hawai'i in collaboration and with support from state and community leaders.

The University of Hawai'i is optimistic that President Obama and the Barack Obama Foundation will strongly consider locating significant programmatic elements in a Barack Obama Presidential Center in Hawai'i. While there is strong competition from elsewhere for the primary records and library facilities, the opportunity for Hawai'i to be a significant focus of President Obama's post-Presidential work is also of great interest and value. As the Barack Obama Foundation finalizes its plans in the coming months, creative engagement from the University of Hawai'i, State leadership, and the community will be critical in maximizing this opportunity. We therefore greatly appreciate the Legislature's expression of support through this Resolution.

To further align the Resolution with programmatic opportunities for which we expect Hawai'i to be particularly competitive, we respectfully suggest that the Committee may wish to consider language modifications such as the following:

[Suggested revisions to title and first three paragraphs]

**REQUESTING THAT THE BARACK OBAMA FOUNDATION ESTABLISH A  
PRESIDENTIAL CENTER IN HAWAII.**

WHEREAS, presidential centers are important institutions that both preserve the historical record and sponsor programs to make a better future;

WHEREAS, presidential centers have evolved since their founding by Franklin Delano Roosevelt to include multiple components, including: archives, museum exhibitions, conference facilities, university research programs, and educational initiatives;

WHEREAS, the distinct elements of a presidential center can be located in a single location, as in the case of the George W. Bush Presidential Center in Dallas, or in more than one site, as with the Clinton Presidential Center in Little Rock and the Clinton Foundation, headquartered in New York;

...

[Suggested revisions to 6th paragraph, starting with line 8]

WHEREAS, as the world's attention pivots to the Asia-Pacific region due to its growing economic and geopolitical prominence, Hawai'i represents the ideal location to create a Barack Obama Presidential Center; and

...

[Suggested revisions to resolution clause, starting with line 20]

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-eight Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular Session of 2015, the Senate concurring, that this body requests that the Barack Obama Foundation support and recommend the establishment of a Barack Obama Presidential Center in Hawai'i;

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Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.