Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
February 9, 2007

By
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SB 21 Relating to Leeward Community College

Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committee:

Leeward Community College supports the intent of SB 21 provided that its passage
does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved
Executive Biennium Budget. This measure would appropriate funding for the planning,
design and construction of a second access road to the Leeward Community College
campus and surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The Second Access Road project at Leeward CC is part of the campus' Long Range
Development Plan (LRDP). This specific project was identified in the initial 1966 Master
Plan for the College and was recommended to be completed prior to 1971 when the
campus became fully operational. In 1974, DAGS completed construction plans and an
Environmental Impact Statement for this project. Subsequently, CIP funds were
awarded to the Department of Transportation in 2002 by the State Legislature with
construction slated to begin in 2004, but the project never materialized. It has been 40
years since this project was identified as a critical need for the campus and yet the
project has yet to be completed.

The same concerns and issues that have been continuously raised since the
identification of this project still exist but have only been further exacerbated (i.e. traffic
congestion, pedestrian and bicycle health and safety, lack of emergency evacuation
egress points, deteriorating conditions of existing roadways). The viewpoint held by
many is that it is only a matter of time when a tragic natural or man-made incident will
occur that will severely affect Leeward Community College’s students, faculty, and staff
and surrounding neighborhood residents. Two recent incidents bring this further into
focus. For instance had the military truck hit the overpass that serves the Leeward
campus, thousands of students, staff, and neighborhood residents would have been
effectively stranded on campus and the area would be inaccessible. Also a few weeks
ago, the campus had a natural gas leak incident that required a partial evacuation of
campus. Luckily, this incident occurred in the late afternoon when most classes had
concluded for the day and the evacuation proceeded relatively smoothly. But had this
happened during the morning or early afternoon or had the emergency been more
profound, then the safe evacuation of the campus and adjoining residential neighborhood may well have been compromised.

Adding further justification to the need of a second access road is related to the proposed mass transit system. Leeward CC is projected to be the site of a transit stop. A second access road would be critical to meet the pedestrian and vehicular traffic needs of the area. The second access roadway would also provide for increased recreational opportunities as additional access points to the Pearl Harbor Historic Trail corridor may be possible...which would become a much more visible community asset to Oahu residents and visitors.

Presently a consultant hired by the State DOT is in the final stages of the alternative roadway analysis for a second access road. The preliminary alternative analysis is scheduled to be completed by February 2007.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.