



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
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By
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SB 1235 – RELATING TO CABLE TELEVISION

Chair Baker, Vice Chair Galuteria and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i is strongly opposed to SB 1235, which would eliminate all funding for the higher education cable TV programming that serves residents on all islands of the State.

The current allocation of cable television franchise funds is the result of extended formal processes and agreements painstakingly developed over several decades. In brief, 3% of the gross revenue of the cable television franchisees is provided for Public, Educational and Government (PEG) Access funding in each county. On Oahu and in Maui County, 25% of those P, E and G funds (25% of 3%) are provided for Educational Access programming.

On Oahu that 25% allocation of the PEG resources is collaboratively and amicably managed and allocated through the Hawai'i Educational Networking Consortium (HENC), a collaboration of the Department of Education (DOE), University of Hawai'i (UH) and the Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), collectively representing all accredited education at the K12 and higher education levels. In Maui County, the Educational Access resources are managed collaboratively by UH Maui College and the DOE Maui District.

The resources provided through these franchise fees to support higher education programming are used to develop and regularly update college credit programming that is available to all cable TV viewers on all islands. In addition to a 24-hr higher education channel that is available on all islands, last year we worked with Oceanic to roll out a new statewide video-on-demand higher education channel.

In a typical year UH offers an average of 90 cable credit courses that are applicable to 7 fields of study to students on all islands. Course are offered in diverse fields including Arts & Sciences, Business Administration, Culinary Education, Health Sciences, Hospitality & Tourism, Legal Education, and Information & Computer Science. While many viewers watch for personal enrichment, in a typical year we enroll an average of 1300 students, statewide, which take cable courses to complete their Associate of Arts degrees or to complete general education requirements for their college degrees.

We strongly oppose this bill, which would reduce students' access to higher education opportunities on all islands.