



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
And
Economic Development, Government Operations and Housing
And
Judiciary and Labor
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by
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SB 1388 – RELATING TO THE RESEARCH CORPORATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chairs Taniguchi, Dela Cruz, and Hee, Vice Chairs Kahele, Slom, and Shimabukuro and members of the Committees:

The University of Hawai'i opposes SB 1388 in its current form.

The Legislature wisely recognized the unique requirements of the research industry in Hawai'i when it created RCUH in 1965 to support the UH research and training enterprise and afforded RCUH exemptions from constraining practices more appropriate for State operations than the kind of nimble enterprise that can compete for federal and other research and training funding. The flexibility the Legislature provided when it created RCUH has been absolutely essential to UH's research and training enterprise today. And this flexibility will be absolutely essential to supporting our plans to build a one billion dollar research industry in Hawai'i that addresses the problems facing our communities and expands our economy both directly and indirectly.

RCUH's current governance structure, which facilitates close collaboration and mission alignment, contributes directly to this success. UH therefore opposes reducing the number of Regents on the RCUH Board and reducing the UH President's role in RCUH. In addition, Regents already are subject to the advice and consent of the Senate before becoming Regents, and requiring a second confirmation process for service on the RCUH Board would be unnecessary and redundant. Limiting RCUH's ability to pay a competitive salary to its Executive Director would also adversely affect its governance and ability to support UH research.

UH also opposes imposing a dollar limit on RCUH's exemption from HRS Chapter 103D. RCUH's procurement flexibility is critical to UH's ability to efficiently administer Federal and other grant funds, including large amounts.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.