



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Higher Education  
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By  
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SB 3073 SD2 Proposed HD1 - RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT HILO

Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama, and members of the committee:

My name is Donald Straney, Chancellor of the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and I am presenting the University's testimony on SB3073 SD2 Proposed HD1. This bill establishes a five year school of aviation pilot program at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo

The proposed HD1 introduces several new factors to the possibility for legislative support for this bachelor's degree program. One of these, a five-year assessment by the Board of Regents for continuation of the program, is consistent with usual UH practices for reviewing programs before establishing them as permanent, although this occurs after 6 years.

Four features of this draft are problematic:

- 1) It will be difficult for the program to be financially and managerially independent. The degree program would have a director, who must report to the Chancellor and the Board of Regents. Most challenging, the degree program will require students to take courses across the curriculum, courses instructed by faculty in classrooms and facilities that are not part of the proposed degree program. We do not recharge degree programs for instruction provided by other departments.
- 2) The University of Hawai'i cannot establish a separate accounting system and program ID.
- 3) UH Hilo charges fees of every student to fund health services, student recreational facilities, campus center, student government, among others. These services are not funded by either general or tuition funds. The students earning a bachelor's degree in aeronautical science will need to participate in these services. We believe it is not possible to provide the services and benefits students at UH Hilo enjoy unless we can levy these fees and assessments. In addition, UH Hilo is required to use 12% of tuition revenue to fund financial aid. If tuition from aeronautical science students is excluded from this, the campus will still be responsible for the full assessment on total tuition revenue. This will reduce the funds available for other programs.
- 4) Requiring specific legislative authorization before using any general funds to support the aeronautical science degree program will impose a difficult condition. As mentioned above, this degree program requires courses that are taught by faculty in classrooms in other departments whose positions are funded by general

funds. We will hire faculty to teach the aeronautical science courses and wish to do so using vacant appropriated positions. We anticipate there may be other, less obvious reliance on existing general funded staff, facilities and services. The legislature has authorized UH to provide these general funded services to students at UH Hilo; we should not exclude one group of degree-seeking students from these services.

We believe the aeronautical science degree will be a new program that can benefit Hawai'i students and our economy. We will work with this committee and the legislature to make its establishment possible. However, we believe there are aspects of this version of the bill that will make it difficult to establish aeronautical science as a program that is part of the University.

For the reasons stated above, the University of Hawai'i cannot support the proposed HD1 but recommends the language in the original version of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.