



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
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by

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HB 2250 HD1 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PROGRAM PLUS

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

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding HB 2250 HD1 – Relating to the University of Hawaii Promise Program Plus.

The University of Hawai'i (University) supports the intent of this bill, as expanding the Hawai'i Promise Program to qualified students in four-year degree programs at the University is the highest priority in the Board of Regent's budget request for the University this year. The intent of HB 2250 HD1 is understandable as the University recognizes that there are current and projected job shortages in the fields of teaching, health care, social work and engineering.

The University would welcome the opportunity to assist students pursuing future employment in these fields. There would be some difficulties administering such a program. For example, providing aid as a scholarship that ends up having to be repaid when students do not complete the program or do not spend three years working in the field in Hawai'i. These conditions effectively turn the scholarship into a loan program. Another difficulty is in the field of teaching, in particular preparation for secondary teaching. Students are accepted into the program after the completion of their General Education Core and after completing the majority of their academic major content courses, which then limits the student's eligibility for the Hawai'i Promise Program Plus. While the University is willing to find ways to undertake and overcome such challenges for the benefit of having this program, managing such a program would place an administrative burden on the University to collect monies from students who do not finish their program or work for three years in the State. Therefore, there are processes that must be adequately resourced.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.