



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Lower & Higher Education and  
House Committee on Finance  
Tuesday, February 18, 2020 at 2:00 p.m., Rm 309  
by  
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HB 2543 Proposed HD1 – RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING

Chairs Woodson and Luke, Vice Chairs Hashem, Quinlan, and Cullen, and members of the committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2543 Proposed HD1. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) writes in support of HB 2543 Proposed HD1 and the overall efforts of the legislature to further early learning opportunities for Hawai'i's families. UH Hilo will also cooperate with the larger effort of the various state departments and private early education and childcare entities to move this important initiative forward.

Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani is the only indigenous language college in the country, and is a leader in efforts to revitalize and renormalize Hawaiian as a model for other endangered languages around the world. Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani works hand in hand with 'Aha Pūnana Leo, the state's sole private provider of Hawaiian language medium early education. Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani should have the responsibility for building classrooms for Hawaiian language immersion and establishing pathways for the development of other Hawaiian language immersion classes.

UH Hilo recommends amendments to Part V. Hawaiian Language Immersion, Section 14, to read as follows:

There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawai'i the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for the purpose of assisting ~~[the 'Imiloa astronomy center]~~ Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani in partnership with 'Imiloa Astronomy Center and other public and private partners as appropriate and or required by law to build two or more classrooms for Hawaiian language ~~[immersion]~~ medium education pre-kindergarten programs that shall be used to establish a pathway for the development of other Hawaiian language medium education and Hawaiian language immersion classes.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2543 Proposed HD1.