



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Government Reform
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By
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HB 1849 – RELATING TO STATE BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Wildberger, and members of the committee:

The University of Hawaii (UH) supports HB 1849, which would redact certain information on the financial disclosure statements deemed to be public records for non-paid volunteer members of state boards and commissions.

UH strongly opposed legislation in 2014 that made the financial filings of Board of Regents (BOR) members publicly available. For decades prior, Regents had been submitting financial disclosures for the Ethics Commission to monitor and address conflicts of interest.

Four sitting Regents resigned when the Legislature changed the conditions of their public service. They had provided their financial disclosures for Ethics Commission review but were not willing to have their privacy and that of their families compromised.

In the years since, we have seen declining numbers of applications from individuals willing and interested to serve as Regents. While there are multiple factors, we know that for some potential applicants the requirement of submitting financial disclosures for public review is enough to discourage them from considering service as a Regent.

We support HB 1849 in the hopes that it will be a first step forward in increasing the number of candidates for the Board of Regents and all other state boards and commissions.