



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Labor
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By

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HB 430 – RELATING TO INTERNSHIPS

Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 430, relating to internships. The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports and appreciates the desire to expand work-based learning while helping Hawai'i's youth gain practical experience that will help them in their future careers.

It is important to note that internships are one of several nationally recognized "high impact practices" within higher education that tend to correlate with student success beyond graduation. Paid internships are even more important to the future financial success of students. When done well, internships help students build their self confidence while acclimating to workplace culture and developing essential industry-based skills that will enhance their employability.

The University of Hawai'i's Strategic Plan 2023-2029 features an imperative calling on UH to "Meet Hawai'i's workforce needs of today and tomorrow." One of the stated objectives under this imperative is to partner more effectively with employers to "ensure the necessary preparation and support for students to succeed in their career." This bill would support the UH's ongoing efforts to expand work-based learning opportunities for its students while allowing them, in many cases, to simultaneously earn college credit.

We respectfully request consideration of one possible amendment to this bill. Currently, the bill specifies that participating college or university students may intern "for a maximum of forty hours per week" (page 7, lines 11-13). UH recommends adding language to the bill to ensure that college students are able to maintain their academic commitments:

"... for a maximum of up to twenty hours per week while an intern is enrolled in two or more college or university courses, or forty hours per week otherwise."

This amendment is designed to accommodate students who are enrolled in full-time academic programs recognizing that their ability to work full-time may be limited by their coursework. Capping the internship experience at twenty hours per week ensures that

the participating full-time college students will be able to gain valuable work experience while maintaining their academic performance. For part-time college students, the original language allowing up to forty hours per week would still apply.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.