



UNIVERSITY  
of HAWAII®  
SYSTEM

**House Committee on Judiciary  
Wednesday, June 24, 2020, 3:05 p.m.**

**Testimony by:**

**Kendra Oishi, Executive Administrator and Secretary, Board of Regents**

**S.B. No. 2038, S.D. 1, H.D. 1 Proposed – RELATING TO BOARD MEMBERS**

Chair Lee, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and members of the Committee:

The Office of the Board of Regents (Board Office) supports the intent of S.B. No. 2038, S.D. 1, H.D. 1 Proposed, which would: (1) Explicitly permit two or more members of a board to attend a State of the State, State of the City, State of the County, or State of the Judiciary address; and (2) Authorize boards to hold meetings by interactive conference technology during a state of emergency declared due to a contagious illness without requiring members of the public to join board members at a physical location.

The Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i (Board), which is currently made up of 12 Regents from all four counties, holds monthly, in-person meetings across the University of Hawai'i's campuses statewide. Under normal circumstances, these meetings are open to the public and are often attended by members of the community. The COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at-home orders issued by the state and counties made it difficult to conduct meetings under the current guidelines. The Governor's proclamation suspending certain specific provisions of Hawai'i's Sunshine Law "to the extent necessary to enable boards to conduct business in person or through remote technology without holding meetings open to the public," addressed this concern.

The Governor's proclamation has minimized COVID-19-related disruptions to Board operations and meetings. Through the use of interactive conference technology to hold its meetings, the Board has been able to continue meaningful engagement among its members on matters of importance to the University of Hawai'i and the State of Hawaii, while allowing for both oral and written public testimony. The ability to conduct Board meetings without requiring the physical presence of Regents, University administrators and personnel, or the general public has allowed the Board to continue to conduct its business while maintaining the safety and welfare of all participants.

The Board Office believes that this measure is a reasonable solution that will allow boards to continue to carry-out their duties and responsibilities during specific emergency situations while maintaining transparency and public accountability.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the intent of S.B. No. 2038, S.D.1, H.D. 1 Proposed.

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