



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented to the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 3:10 p.m.

by

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SB 1219 – RELATING TO UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII RESEARCH

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports this measure that would remove the sunset provision of Act 39, Session Laws of Hawai'i (SLH) 2017. This law, currently codified in sections 1951 through 1959 of HRS Chapter 304A, provides UH with the express statutory authority to sponsor and directly participate in the transformation of innovations created by its researchers into viable commercial enterprises. Unless the sunset date is repealed, the authority is extinguished on June 30, 2021.

As our experience with the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates, the state's economy is heavily dependent on a few sectors. As the state's only public system of higher education, UH plays a critical role in helping to diversify the economy by promoting research, discovery and commercial innovation. To remain competitive, it is imperative for UH to have a strong and comprehensive university level research program with the capacity to support commercial innovation.

The University of Hawai'i respectfully requests that the sunset provision of Act 39, SLH 2017, be repealed.