



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Education  
Thursday, March 18, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

By  
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### SB 1384 – RELATING TO EDUCATION

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Kapela, and members of the Committee:

Aloha e nā alaka'i o ka 'aha'ōlelo o Hawai'i nei,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 1384. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) supports the distinctive provisions of SB 1384 relating to the representation of Hawaiian language medium education on early education. UH Hilo is home to Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani, College of Hawaiian Language, who has been leading efforts to revitalize the Hawaiian language while also serving as a model to national and international indigenous communities who also seek to revive their endangered languages. With support from the Hawai'i State Legislature, UH Hilo/Ka Haka 'Ula has established a complete baccalaureate through to PhD program that offers high quality education to develop capacity for Hawaiian medium education and the further advancement of Hawaiian and indigenous languages writ large.

The distinctive provisions of SB 1384 allow for consecutive terms for the representative of Hawaiian language medium early education. There is an extreme shortage of qualified individuals for all aspects of education through Hawaiian. This provision allows the state access to important contributions from the small pool of highly qualified individuals in this highly distinctive area of education of our state.

The introduction of SB 1384 indicates an awareness of the unique challenges of developing high quality education through Hawaiian in the state and leadership in addressing those challenges.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this bill.