



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Judiciary
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By

Jerris Hedges, MD, Dean
Keawe Kaholokula, MD, Chair
Native Hawaiian Health
John A. Burns School of Medicine
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SCR 140 – ASSERTING THAT RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND URGING THE STATE TO COMMIT TO RECOGNIZING AND ADDRESSING THE RESULTING INEQUITIES

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **support** of SCR 140. This resolution seeks to address the inequities of systemic racism by urging the State to establish partnerships with communities and residents most impacted by racism, prioritize diversity in board membership and promote equity through its policies in an effort to understand and eliminate racism.

The John A. Burns School of Medicine has been committed to helping the State address social inequities in order to deal with health disparities in Hawai'i. We have long recognized the issues faced by native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) groups in accessing health care as well as the problems that stem from the lack of proper medical treatment. The COVID-19 pandemic brought these disparities into greater focus when it was found that the highest rates of positive cases in Hawai'i were among native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander groups.

We suggest that copies of the resolution be transmitted to the Dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine as well as the Director of the Department of Human Services in addition to the recipients identified in the measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.