



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented to the
Senate Committee on Higher Education and
Senate Committee on Labor, Culture, and the Arts
Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

by
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SB 3267 – RELATING TO THE RESEARCH CORPORATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chairs Kim and Taniguchi, Vice Chairs Kidani and Ihara, and Members of the Committees:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) appreciates the Hawai'i State Legislature's intent to help provide clarity to the purpose of the Research Corporation of the University of Hawai'i (RCUH) through SB 3267 and would like to offer comments on this measure.

Revolving funds service ordered through RCUH are governed by UH Administrative Procedure AP 12.204 and intramural UH funds service ordered through RCUH are governed by AP 12.203. Both administrative processes are very descriptive and prescriptive of the activities allowed and the financial monitoring required for these accounts. The establishment, renewal and approval of these accounts is controlled and explicitly articulated in these policies by the chancellors (UH Hilo, UH West O'ahu), provost (UH Mānoa) and RCUH, with further delegation allowed. Over the years, this has resulted in different interpretations of these policies, which UH has determined to have resulted in the non-uniform application of these guidelines and criteria toward the establishment and renewal of these accounts. As a result, the Office of the Vice President of Research and Innovation (OVPRI) will be taking over the approval process of these accounts. This change will result in uniform and consistent application of these administrative procedures across the UH System and it will also allow for a smooth transition of programs out of RCUH and into UH. This will take effect for all existing and new accounts beginning July 1, 2022 (FY23).

Employment through RCUH per statute is intended for limited term appointments. Such appointments primarily involve the use of UH extramural funds and may sometimes involve the use of UH intramural funds. Currently, there is an established process for the establishment of such limited term appointments through RCUH. The Office of Human Resources (OHR) at UH reviews these positions for compliance with the RCUH statute and UH collective bargaining agreements. If the request for establishment of a position is rejected by OHR, then the decision can be appealed to OVPRI – which approves appeals on all positions that exclusively use extramural funds. Positions that are funded by intramural accounts or a combination of intramural and extramural funds

require a more thoughtful process that currently involves a discussion with the position requestor. Although this process has worked for UH and RCUH for at least a decade, UH recognizes the need, in consultation with our unions, to make the process even more effective, transparent and data-driven. As a first step, OVPRI will be establishing a committee of subject matter experts from UH and RCUH to review these requests.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on this measure.