



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
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By

Debora Halbert, Vice President for Academic Strategy
University of Hawai'i System

SB 2286 SD1 – RELATING TO INTERNSHIPS

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 2286 SD1 relating to internships. The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports and appreciates the Senate's desire to expand work-based learning while helping Hawai'i's youth gain practical experience that will help them in their future careers. To the extent that this bill addresses college students, it is important to note that internships are indeed one of several nationally recognized "high impact practices" within higher education that tend to correlate with student success beyond graduation. When done well, internships help students build their self-confidence while acclimating to workplace culture and developing essential industry-based skills that will enhance their employability.

The bill's current text states: "workers' compensation coverage for a recent graduate shall lapse on July 31 of the graduating year." However, UH has two annual commencements (December and May); therefore the language will need to consider an amended termination date to be inclusive.

A suggested revision to page 10, lines 4-5:

"workers' compensation coverage for a recent graduate shall lapse on the last day of February for Fall graduates and July 31 for Spring graduates of the graduating year."

The University of Hawai'i's Strategic Plan 2023-2029 features an imperative calling on UH to "Meet Hawai'i's workforce needs of today and tomorrow." One of the stated objectives under this imperative is to partner more effectively with employers to "ensure the necessary preparation and support for students to succeed in their career," where UH will track its students' participation in internships as one of the metrics used to measure achievement of this objective. This bill would support the UH's ongoing efforts to expand work-based learning opportunities for its students while allowing them, in many cases, to simultaneously earn college credit.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure. While we support the bill, we defer to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations regarding the specific language describing the operational features of the internship program.