



# 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 Labor and Technology  
and  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
February 8, 2024 at 3:05 p.m.

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#### SB 2507 – RELATING TO CIVIL SERVICE

Chairs Aquino and Kim, Vice Chairs Moriwaki and Kidani, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today. The University of Hawai'i (UH) **supports** SB 2507, Relating to Civil Service. This bill would permit certain personal services to be excluded from civil service in certain situations, notably at student or employee (faculty) housing of the UH, where the property or facility is leased to a non-governmental entity.

There are examples of private student housing being built near the UH. At the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UH-Mānoa), Atherton RISE opened in August of 2023 on property not owned by the UH or the State of Hawai'i. Although the facility is for student housing of UH students, it is not owned or operated by the UH. At the University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH-Hilo), Adult Student Housing is a private operation of family housing for UH students on property adjacent to UH-Hilo. Although the facility is for families of UH students, it is not operated by the UH. The UH has recently leased land adjacent to the UH-Mānoa campus to a private developer to build and operate housing for graduate students. Set to open in 2025, the facility will not be constructed, operated, or maintained by the UH.

UH seeks to expand affordable housing inventory for both students and employees. Partnering with private industry is a strategic approach. Private industry collaboration allows UH to engage in revenue-generating commercial activities while securing the necessary financing for developing new housing inventory. The increased number of UH housing units also expands the housing inventory available to the general public.

Every student or employee in a UH residence is one less person looking to rent in a community that already struggles with housing options.

To be successful in these endeavors, however, UH must have the flexibility to collaborate with private industry without mandating that those partners use public employees for day-to-day operational needs, such as custodial services, facility repairs and maintenance. This flexibility ensures that UH can operate in a financially sustainable manner while delivering high-quality services.

SB 2507 will make clear in the statute that at facilities that are privately owned or operated by a non-governmental entity, that there is not a requirement for civil service employees to perform personal services. This is also consistent in those instances when governmental offices lease private spaces for government offices.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.