



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 Housing
January 30, 2025 at 1:10 p.m.

By

Jan Gouveia

Vice President for Administration
University of Hawai'i System

SB 456 – RELATING TO BED BUGS

Chair Chang, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and Members of the Committee:

For the reasons more detailed below, the University of Hawai'i believes it should not be included in SB 456 and, to that extent, respectfully opposes the measure.

Generally speaking, SB 456 introduces legal requirements specific to bed bugs before renting a dwelling unit. It involves notice to prospective tenants of potential bed bug infestations in the current unit or any adjacent unit. It further imposes specific time frames upon the landlord to address suspicions of infestation and remediation upon confirmation. Finally, it specifically prohibits the University from recovering any costs from residents associated with bed bug remediation.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Student Housing Services (Student Housing) program does not exceed rental terms of more than ten months. In fact, it is not uncommon for many residents to reside in the housing program for only one semester or a few months out of a year. In the summer, there are many residents that stay for periods ranging from a few days to a couple of months. The Student Housing program is more akin to short term housing or hotel-like durations that make many of the provisions in SB 456 unnecessary or infeasible.

Furthermore, the Student Housing program has a bed bug protocol that has been in place for many years. Over the last ten years (at least), the program has not experienced a single “outbreak” of bed bugs. In the limited instances of isolated reports of bed bugs over the years, it is the protocol of the program to relocate impacted residents, secure the services of an external exterminator, and take all appropriate and necessary action.

Finally, it has been the practice of the Student Housing program to not recover remediation costs from student-residents. However, if circumstances are warranted, the University believes it should have the ability to do so.

Given the nature of student housing operations and regular residential turn-over, along with the demonstrated effectiveness of the Student Housing program's existing bed bug

protocol, the University believes it should not be included in SB 456. For these reasons, the University opposes SB 456.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.