



ASUH

Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i
YOUR STUDENT GOVERNMENT

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means (WAM)
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

LATE

Date: Wednesday, February 28, 2018
Time: 11:00 AM
Place: Conference Room 211

Re: COMMENTS ON SB 2329 – RELATING TO TUITION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I

Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran and members of the committee:

My name is Jannah Lyn Dela Cruz, and I am the President of the Associated Students of the University of Hawaii, the undergraduate student government at UH Manoa. We represent the voices of over 10,000 full-time classified undergraduate students on the UHM campus. The ASUH **supports the intent** of the Senate Bill 2329 - Relating to Tuition at the University of Hawai'i that caps increases in tuition for the University of Hawai'i based on the change in the State's median household income.

For many of our constituents, college tuition and fees place a huge burden on students and their families. There are students who find themselves working full time jobs or taking out large student loans in order to subsidize their education. For these reasons, the ASUH has historically spoken out against tuition increases and in favor of lower tuition rates and tuition assistance. Although the ASUH recognizes that the intent of SB 2329 is to adjust tuition rates based on a student's ability to pay, the bill does little in helping to stabilize tuition rates.

Our constituents are long term planners who require a sense of security and stability when it comes to their education. Student aid avenues from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, scholarships, and student loans can only go so far in subsidizing their education. Therefore, students often rely on out-of-pocket funds from themselves or their families to cover remaining costs.

SB 2329 allows tuition schedules to be created based on statistics that are constantly updated. An extremely variable tuition schedule, such as the one outlined in the bill, will put students and their families in an uncertain situation. Families will lose much of their ability to plan their educational investments. The ASUH also foresees this new method of determining tuition rates being used as a way to justify future tuition increases — any of which will hurt our constituents. Instead, the ASUH requests that the State Legislature seek additional ways to offer students tuition assistance and truly stabilize tuition rates. Such steps will help students afford their college tuition and allow them to better plan for their futures.

It is for these reasons that the 10,000 full-time classified, undergraduate students on the UH Manoa campus strongly urge you to reconsider Senate Bill 2329 - Relating to Tuition at the University of Hawai'i.

Thank you very much for your time.

Jannah Lyn Dela Cruz
President
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