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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AN UNDERGRADUATE HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that current data  
2 suggests that Native Hawaiians are less likely to attend college  
3 in comparison to other ethnic groups due to low levels of  
4 preparation and inadequate finances. For Native Hawaiian  
5 students who attend college, graduation and retention rates are  
6 significantly lower than the general student population.

7           The legislature further finds that for many Native Hawaiian  
8 students a strong desire to live close to family, participation  
9 in family activities at home, and cultural pressures are factors  
10 that contribute to non-completion of a college degree. In  
11 addition, multiple studies testing for factors leading to  
12 retention have identified that the more involved Native Hawaiian  
13 students are in school activities and the more interaction they  
14 have with faculty and their peers, the more likely they are to  
15 persevere in their higher education. The development of a  
16 health sciences academy, with a focus on Native Hawaiian student



1 retention, would target integration of the student and their  
2 family in school activities.

3 The legislature further finds that it has been reported  
4 that thirty per cent of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander  
5 students have parents with high school degrees as the highest  
6 education level, and eighteen per cent have parents with a  
7 bachelor's degree or higher.

8 Moreover, health care sector employment is projected to  
9 increase by more than one hundred sixty per cent by 2040, and  
10 the wages in that sector are typically more consistent with a  
11 livable wage in Hawai'i. However, these jobs typically require a  
12 bachelor's degree at minimum. Currently only about fifteen per  
13 cent of Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders hold bachelor's  
14 degrees.

15 To address these issues, S.R. No. 60, S.D. 1, regular  
16 session of 2014, created the Native Hawaiian health task force  
17 to improve the health of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.  
18 The goal of the task force is to articulate priorities to  
19 advance health care equity for Native Hawaiians which would in  
20 turn improve health care for all people of Hawai'i. The work  
21 conducted by the task force was community- and land-focused and



1 emphasized Native Hawaiian values and aspirations such as  
2 examining past efforts to improve the health of Native  
3 Hawaiians. The task force used nā pou kihi as the cultural  
4 framework to organize its findings and recommendations. Nā pou  
5 kihi reflects the necessary four corner posts of a hale (home)  
6 necessary to support the weight of the structure and everyone  
7 who resides under its roof. The framework and recommendations  
8 were widely discussed and embraced by government agencies,  
9 community members, and affected stakeholders.

10 One of the four corner posts of nā pou kihi, ka wai ola,  
11 focuses on achieving social justice through educational  
12 achievement and economic success for Native Hawaiians. Native  
13 Hawaiians have a long history of valuing learning and the  
14 pursuit of knowledge, which are celebrated in mo'olelo (history)  
15 and exemplified in the phenomenal achievements of Native  
16 Hawaiian kūpuna. Economically, Native Hawaiian ancestors  
17 developed a sophisticated system of resource management that  
18 ensured equitable access to the riches of the 'āina (land), wai  
19 (fresh water), and kai (ocean) for all. All members of society  
20 had a clear and well-defined role that contributed to the  
21 welfare of the community. Ka wai ola provides the foundation



1 for securing the educational and economic benefits necessary for  
2 Native Hawaiians to thrive and flourish in society.

3 The legislature further finds that establishment of a  
4 health sciences academy with a focus on Native Hawaiian student  
5 retention would promote integration of students into the  
6 academic college milieu and serve as a model for other  
7 underrepresented groups.

8 This Act reflects the position of the legislature on Native  
9 Hawaiian health care. The legislature supports:

- 10 (1) Collaborative efforts to ensure that funding for  
11 Native Hawaiian health care continues;
- 12 (2) Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders by focusing on  
13 essential social and cultural determinants that  
14 improve health outcomes amongst the State's indigenous  
15 population;
- 16 (3) Options to improve health care for keiki and residents  
17 in rural areas; and
- 18 (4) Collaborative efforts to provide better dental care  
19 for keiki and adults throughout the State's  
20 communities.



1           The purpose of this Act is to develop an undergraduate  
2 health sciences academy within the University of Hawai'i system  
3 to target the recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian,  
4 Pacific Islander, and first generation college students.

5           SECTION 2. Chapter 304A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
6 amended by adding a new section to part IV, subpart M, to be  
7 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

8           "§304A- Undergraduate health sciences academy pathway.

9           (a) There shall be an undergraduate health sciences academy  
10 established within the University of Hawaii system to target the  
11 recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islanders,  
12 and first generation college students. The undergraduate health  
13 sciences academy shall be administered by the University of  
14 Hawaii West Oahu and shall offer such courses of study as may be  
15 deemed appropriate in collaboration with other University of  
16 Hawaii campuses.

17           (b) The mission of the undergraduate health sciences  
18 academy shall be to eliminate health disparities in Native  
19 Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and other underserved communities by  
20 promoting access to quality health sciences education pathways  
21 at the early college and undergraduate levels.



1        (c) The following Native Hawaiian principles shall guide  
2 the academic programs:

3        (1) Ho'omālamalama - education strategies: students shall  
4 be directed to the health science pathway that best  
5 aligns with their career goals;

6        (2) Ho'omana - empowerment strategies: develop health  
7 leadership curriculum, foster mentorship programs, and  
8 implement community service initiatives;

9        (3) Ho'opili - engagement strategies: promote 'ohana  
10 (family) involvement, the use of technology to engage  
11 the community and the family in the learning process,  
12 and the creation of community-based internships and  
13 service projects; and

14        (4) Ho'okāhuli - transformation strategies: creation of  
15 internships and the incorporation of technology  
16 throughout the program.

17        (d) No later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
18 the regular session of each odd-numbered year the University of  
19 Hawaii West Oahu shall submit a report to the legislature on  
20 findings by the early college and undergraduate health sciences



1 academy pathway regarding the educational outcomes, including  
2 but not limited to enrollment and graduation data."

3 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
5 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 for  
6 permanent faculty and staff positions at the undergraduate  
7 health sciences academy to be administered by the University of  
8 Hawai'i West O'ahu and John A. Burns School of Medicine.

9 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the University of  
10 Hawai'i West O'ahu for the purposes of this Act.

11 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

12 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2018.

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**Report Title:**

UH; Health Sciences; Native Hawaiians; Pacific Islanders;  
Report; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes an undergraduate health sciences academy to be administered by the University of Hawai'i West O'ahu to increase recruitment and retention of Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and first generation college students. Requires the University of Hawai'i West O'ahu to submit a report to the legislature regarding educational outcomes. Appropriates funds. (SD1)

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