

LATE

SB 1387



LATE

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

February 5, 2013, 3:00 PM
State Capitol Room 414

Testimony of
Policy Office of the Governor, State of Hawaii

To the Senate Higher Education Committee
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

Senate Bill 1387 – Relating to the Regents Candidate Advisory Council

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Kahele, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 1387 (SB1387) with comments. The bill proposes amendments to 304A-104.5 of HRS. The amendments would give the Governor the authority to reject a list of nominees to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents and require the Regents Candidate Advisory Council (RCAC) to provide another list of nominees.

The Governor supports increased flexibility in being able to appoint Regents. SB1387 provides some additional flexibility by giving the Governor the opportunity to request an additional list of candidates from the RCAC. We suggest that the bill be amended to allow the Governor to request additional names without rejecting the entire list presented initially by the RCAC.

The Governor believes that the University of Hawaii (UH) system is the single most underutilized public resource in Hawaii. UH contributes to and plays a leadership role in every element of improving Hawaii. The UH Regents provide vital leadership to ensure that college is accessible and affordable for students on all islands, support the entrepreneurial professor, facilitate innovation and technology transfer, support renovation, support premier education and research projects, and improve student success.

In making appointments for boards and commissions, the Governor considers the individual qualities—personal and professional—of the candidates, as well as how the candidates would balance the board in terms of their experience, skill sets or perspectives. The Board of Regents' balance among the members is important to

Testimony of Governor Neil Abercrombie – SB1387
February 5, 2013
Page 2

fulfill the Board's charge to govern and steward public higher education. Governor Abercrombie believes that flexibility need to balance many characteristics of the candidates to reflect the diversity of Hawaii and the functional needs of the Board of Regents. Considering only a limited "short list" of candidates currently provided by a candidate advisory council makes it extremely challenging to balance the Board on the many dimensions of importance to the University and our state.

The UH and state are best served by a process that increases the Governor's flexibility to appoint Regents which is accomplished, in part, by this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.