

ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I AT MĀNOA
2465 Campus Road, Campus Center 211A
Honolulu HI 96822

Senate Resolution 17-17

**IN REGARDS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I AT MĀNOA’S (UHM) COMMITMENT
TO STUDENT VETERANS**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE UNDERGRADUATE SENATE:

WHEREAS, the Associated Students of the University of Hawai‘i (ASUH) at Mānoa Senate is the elected body representing approximately 11,000 full-time classified undergraduate students; and,

WHEREAS, the current self-identified student Veteran population of UHM, as of Spring 2017, is 597¹; and,

WHEREAS, The Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) is currently tracking 958 students that are utilizing G.I. Bill benefits at UHM²; and,

WHEREAS, VA data shows that the retention rate of UHM Student Veterans is 82.1%, compared to 78.94% of all UHM students and 67.7% of all students nationally³; and,

WHEREAS, On September 24, 2013, then Interim President Lassner announced the creation of a system wide Serving Veterans Task Force to “explore issues and concerns related to military-impacted and veteran students⁴; and,

WHEREAS, On November 22, 2013, then Interim President Lassner charged the task force with providing recommendations to improve both veterans’ access to UH and their success

WHEREAS, The Serving Veterans Task Force was issued the following charge by then Interim President Lassner on November 22, 2013:

“To provide recommendations that improve veteran access to UH and the success of student veterans. While not every campus is represented on the Task Force,

¹<https://www.hawaii.edu/institutionalresearch/enrT05Report.action?SEMESTER=SPRING&drillThruLevel=&agglevel=&reportId=ENRT05&campusContext=&drillId=&VALUE=&exportType=&drillValue=&drillTarget=#12>

²<https://www.vets.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool/>

³ibid

⁴https://www.hawaii.edu/offices/studentaffairs/downloads/agendas/Serving_Veterans_Task_Force_Report_2014.pdf

the Task Force is responsible for reaching out to all campuses and representing the interests and concerns of the entire UH System and veterans throughout Hawai'i." It was "suggested [that the] Task Force actions include the following:

- 1) Survey and catalog current capabilities and practices of UH and our campuses relative to best practices and available programs, particularly noting the new "8 Keys to Success" developed by the US Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Education;
- 2) Work with our veteran students and recent veteran graduates to understand barriers to their enrollment and success (including tuition policies), their use of UH services, and the impacts of UH services on their success;
- 3) Identify ongoing system wide approaches to collecting and utilizing data to inform the extent and success of veterans' participation at UH;
- 4) Provide recommendations for priority actions across the UH System and campuses that will improve the educational access and success of our veteran students; and
- 5) Identify changes in federal policy that would support increased access and success for student veterans that UH can recommend to federal officials and our Congressional Delegation⁵; and,

WHEREAS, the report issued by the task force subsequent to eight formal meetings held between November 2013 and April 2014 called for various improvements to student veteran services across all UH campuses⁶; and,

WHEREAS, the Serving Veterans Task Force Report to Interim President Lassner lists eighteen specific recommendations for "improving the provision of educational and support services to student veterans at UH, based on best practices and model programs elsewhere"; and,

WHEREAS, the three specific recommendations selected for priority consideration in terms of timeliness were to implement system wide non-resident tuition differential waivers for recently discharged veterans, to establish an ongoing "UH Serving Veterans Committee" to continue the work begun by the task force, and to establish a physical presence on each UH campus wherein a locus of veteran support may be found⁷; and,

⁵ *ibid*

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ *ibid*

WHEREAS, the ASUH acknowledges that the Task Force’s first recommendation was addressed with changes in UH tuition policy and that UHM has made progress in serving the Veterans of our campus by establishing the Office of Veteran Student Services (OVSS); and,

WHEREAS, the ASUH also acknowledges that UHM has made progress in serving our student Veterans in the form of the establishment of the Office of Veteran Student Services (OVSS) and that the office is in the hiring process of its faculty OVSS Junior Specialist; and,

WHEREAS, as the flagship campus, our efforts to serve our student Veteran community are falling short of the efforts made by the Community Colleges and The University of Hawai‘i Maui College. At these institutions they have dedicated spaces that are sensitive to veteran needs, where they can study, specifically allocated resources for student Veterans use, are able to meet with counselors, and have a campus atmosphere that is genuinely concerned to support empowerment and success of its student Veterans; and,

BE IT RESOLVED, the ASUH recommends to UHM administration that, as the flagship campus, we lead by example by reaffirming and recommitting our efforts to serving our student Veterans; and,

BE IT RESOLVED, the influx of student Veterans into our institution would provide new opportunities for the enrichment of classroom discussion and the further enhancement of our campus diversity; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the ASUH recommends to UHM Administration that it establish a “Serving Veterans Committee” as future efforts to serve student Veterans should not fall solely the future OVSS Junior Specialist but be an ongoing campus initiative; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this initiative should continue to build on the Serving Veterans Task Force Charge and recommendations; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the ASUH recommends that areas of this initiative, such as enrollment and retention, be institutionalized within the strategic plan of UHM since VA data shows a strong commitment of our student Veterans of our campus; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this would assist in building UHM enrollment which is currently a priority within the Strategic Plan of UHM and demonstrate UHM commitment to its veterans; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ASUH advises the administration to address current short falls through means such as the creation of a Veterans New Student Orientation as Veterans have expressed a sense of alienation and confusion when they first experience the Manoa campus and are unaware of the student services provided on campus; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that these recommendations mirror best practices⁸ and address current UHM student Veteran concerns/needs but should not be limited to these recommendations ; and.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the ASUH request a commitment and or response from UHM administration in regards to this resolution by April 5, 2017

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, copies of this resolution shall be sent to: Chair Ken Ito and Vice-Chair James Kunane Tokioka and members of the House Committee on Veterans, Military, and International Affairs, and Culture and the Arts; Chair Angus L.K. McKelvey and members of the House Committee on Higher Education; Chair Kaiali'i Kahele and members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education; University of Hawai'i Board of Regents Chair Jan Naoe Sullivan and Members; President/interim Chancellor David Lassner, Interim Associate Vice President for Student Affairs Hae Okimoto, UH Student Caucus, UHM Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Michael Bruno, Interim Vice Chancellor for Students Lori Ideta, SEED Director Christine Quemuel, Graduate Student Organization, Student Veterans Organization at UH Mānoa President Terry McDermontt and Ka Leo O Hawai'i.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO DISCHARGE FROM THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Aye(s): Vice President Dela Cruz, Secretary Nishihara, Senators-at-Large Enriquez, Urasaki, Senators Arenivas, Chen, Chun, Crollard, Delos Reyes, Finau, Ho, Honda, Ishii, Klinestiver, Lao, Lee, Leval, Negrillo, Sakamoto, Takagi, Tran, Wang, Yamada [23]

Naye(s): [0]

Abstain(s): [0]

ROLL CALL VOTE TO TABLE

Aye(s): Vice President Dela Cruz, Secretary Nishihara, Senators-at-Large Enriquez, Urasaki, Senators Arenivas, Chen, Chun, Crollard, Delos Reyes, Finau, Ho, Honda, Ishii, Klinestiver, Lao, Lee, Leval, Negrillo, Sakamoto, Takagi, Tran, Wang, Yamada [23]

Naye(s): [0]

Abstain(s): [0]

ROLL CALL VOTE TO ACCEPT

Aye(s): Vice President Dela Cruz, Secretary Nishihara, Senators-at-Large Enriquez, Urasaki, Willis, Senators Arenivas, Chen, Delos Reyes, Fianu, Honda, Ishii, Klinestiver, Lao, Lee, Lo, Pang, Sakamoto, Takagi, Wang, Yamada [20]

Naye(s): [0]

Abstain(s): [0]

⁸ <https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/enhancing-veteran-success-higher-education>

Introducers: William Arenivas, Senator, Colleges of Arts and Sciences; Jannah Lyn Dela Cruz, Vice President; Eugene Lao, Senator, Colleges of Arts and Science; Nicholas Ishii, Senator, Colleges of Arts and Sciences