



MĀNOA  
**STAFF SENATE**

**Mānoa Staff Senate**

Tuesday, August 18, 2020

**IN OPPOSITION to Board Resolution 20-03 “Proclaiming an Emergency and Directing Action by the University Administration”**

Dear University of Hawai'i Board of Regents,

On behalf of the Mānoa Staff Senate, I write today to comment on UH Board of Regents Revised Resolution 20-03, an emergency resolution that will significantly impact UH Mānoa staff.

We feel that this resolution contains an inherent conflict between considered, long-term planning and sweeping change made quickly without the due diligence that comes with shared governance. A primary concern is that this discussion continues to prioritize established processes of shared governance and deliberation that takes place in an open, public setting.

This resolution purports to address the pandemic-related crisis we find ourselves in by providing guidance and direction to the university administration. We, as a collective of staff, are fully aware of the severity of this crisis and of the need to all pull together to weather it. The staff has been working very hard, both on campus and from home, since the beginning of the pandemic to keep our university running and to serve our students and community. Staff are anxious to have their voices heard, through shared governance as we make crucial decisions to solve the problems we now face. The Mānoa Staff Senate would like to take this opportunity to stress that the process of shared governance is not optional in these dire circumstances, but a necessary component of any plan to move forward.

We are also concerned that the focus of the resolution is to institute changes that have been under consideration for a long time and do not relate to the current pandemic and the conditions it has engendered. The Mānoa Staff Senate does not feel it is appropriate to make permanent long-term

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## MĀNOA STAFF SENATE

changes to the structure of the university in a crisis environment. We would ask, therefore, that the resolution refrains from directing the administration to take such actions as the “permanent closure, consolidation, reorganization, restructuring, and/or merger of physical plant facilities, academic programs, departments, colleges, campuses, and academic centers.” These changes are far more sweeping than is warranted as a crisis response and represent a permanent change to the very nature of our university. Decisions of this magnitude must be made by the entire university community through consultation and shared governance.

In closing, we would like to reiterate our key points of concern:

- Shared governance is a necessary part of the process of addressing this crisis, and is not, in our opinion, optional.
- All discussion of this resolution by the BOR must be done in public session.
- Long term planning and sweeping, permanent change is not compatible with crisis response and should not be lumped together into the same process.

As the shared governance body that represents the staff working on the Mānoa campus, we appreciate this opportunity to share our concerns with you. We look forward to working with other campus governance organizations and the UH administration to ensure the future of this great university. By working together, we can chart a path forward in this difficult time to continue as a world-class leader in higher education and an R1 research institution.

Aloha,

**Jaret KC Leong**  
Mānoa Staff Senate Chair

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