

Senate Judiciary Committee
Hearing on S.B. 1440
February 26, 1992

Testimony of Jon M. Van Dyke
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Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

(This testimony does not represent an institutional position, and is offered in my personal capacity.)

I strongly support S.B. 1440, which is designed to reduce the number of persons who must render an oath of office prior to their undertaking employment with the State of Hawaii. The proposed constitutional amendment would limit the oath requirement to the top elected and appointed officers of the state. Other persons, who are not in such top policy making positions would not be required to undertake the oath.

This change would be particularly helpful at the University of Hawaii, where we bring together scholars from many different cultural traditions and nations, many of whom are not citizens of the United States and many of whom have different perspectives on governmental activities. Through the interchange of such diversity, an exciting educational process emerges. It is particularly inappropriate at the University to subject scholars to any type of ideological orthodoxy.

Many persons have felt that the oath is burdensome, even when they are loyal U.S. citizens according to their own perspective. Removing the oath requirement will remove a festering sore and allow our university to continue to pursue its goal of providing a wide range of diverse viewpoints in order to enrich the educational environment for the students of our community. I hope this committee and the full Senate will give this proposed bill every possible consideration for passage.