Thank you very much for this opportunity to explain the Law School’s tuition proposal. There is no law school in the United States as important to its home state as the William S. Richardson School of Law is for Hawai‘i. Our proposed increases in tuition will allow us to continue to attract highly qualified students from all backgrounds to build upon the dreams of opportunity, service, and leadership that motivated CJ Richardson and his allies and that still inspire us today. We are proud to be a different kind of law school.

We have proposed a tuition schedule that does not overly burden our current students and that uses higher non-resident tuition rates to help subsidize relatively low increases in tuition rates for Hawai‘i residents. Our projected non-resident tuition increase over the next five years is higher than the projected non-resident tuition increases among our peer law schools, as defined by the UH System. The Law School’s revised proposed tuition increases are:

- **JD Resident/LLM increases:** 4%, 5%, 6%, 7%, 7%
- **JD Nonresident increases:** 6%, 7%, 8%, 8%, 8%

We worked closely with the Chancellor on the details of our tuition proposal for almost a year. This tuition proposal we originally made has been raised 1 percent, across the board, from the first proposal seen by the Board of Regents. The revised package responds to questions that were raised, and it has been done with many thanks to Executive Vice President Linda Johnsrud and her excellent staff, who revisited their original data with us. The proposed tuition schedule designates 20 percent for financial aid, with the added 1 percent committed to helping to fund the major building renovation that the Law School desperately needs.

The Law School is proud to retain our graduates in Hawai‘i—over 90 percent of recent graduates stay in the state—and we train them to become leaders in government, business, public interest, and academia as well as private practice. Over 25 percent of the current members of the Board of Regents are graduates of the Law School, for example, as are a notably high percentage of the members of the Hawai‘i Legislature, our congressional delegation, and the judiciary in Hawai‘i and across the Pacific.

Richardson lawyers tend to be different. They are willing to forego high salaries to stay in Hawai‘i and to contribute to the community. The salaries our graduates earn, even in private practice, are markedly below the national average. (Data in Attachment A) Yet even with our relatively low tuition, our students are now graduating with an average law school debt of...
over $60,000 and over 70 percent of all our graduates have had to take out loans to pay for law school.

Even now, a combination of tuition payments and money from other sources such as grants and gifts means that less than one-third of the Law School budget is provided by general funds. Further, unlike other UH units, we pay for our own Law Library as well as our admissions, financial aid, and student service operations.

Our relatively affordable tuition has enabled us to become the most diverse law school in the United States, and very possibly the most diverse in the world. In particular, we have had marked success in attracting students and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders. Currently, for example, we have 57 Native Hawaiian students out of a total enrollment in our full and part-time JD programs of 365 (16%); last year, we had an even higher percentage: 62 out of a total of 361 total students (17%). Our Ka Huli Ao Center for Excellence in Native Hawaiian Law has had exceptional success in generating programs, scholarships and post-JD Fellowships, as well as a certificate program in Native Hawaiian law, but our relatively low tuition is clearly a key factor in our success in enrolling and retaining Native Hawaiian students in addition to students from other vulnerable communities vital to our commitment to train leaders to serve Hawai‘i’s disadvantaged communities.

We have been fortunate that nearly all of our graduates have found jobs thus far. This pattern is starkly different from the current and projected employment pattern for graduates of other American law schools. We thus far have been able to avoid the awful publicity—and even class action law suits—that other law schools have faced since the 2008 recession began. (Newspaper accounts available upon request.) In fact, nearly 20 law schools—almost 10 percent of all accredited law schools in the United States—are currently being sued for fraud in the representations they made about employment possibilities for their graduates. There is every reason to think that the pattern of past large tuition hikes at other law schools is changing as the number of applicants to law schools has plummeted and appears to be going still lower this year.

The William S. Richardson School of Law takes great pride in our differences from other law schools. We are small enough to get to know one another well and to be able to work together to create the kind of law school that uniquely serves Hawai‘i and the Pacific region. From the start, all our students pledge: “To guard zealously legal, civil, and human rights which are the birthright of all people, And, above all, to endeavor always to seek justice.” We aim to continue to help our entire, very diverse group of students to do this.

Mahalo nui!