



GOV. MSG. NO. 930

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

July 9, 2008

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

The Honorable Colleen Hanabusa, President
and Members of the Senate
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Madam President and Members of the Senate:

Re: House Bill No. 2519 HD2 SD2 CD1

On July 8, 2008, House Bill No. 2519, entitled "A Bill for an Act Relating to Health Care" became law without my signature, pursuant to Section 16 of Article III of the State Constitution.

The purpose of this bill is to create a working group to develop a plan to establish the Hawaii Health Corps Program to address physician and dentist shortages in the State.

The intent of this bill has merit and sets forth a specific set of programs to retain qualified medical professionals in Hawaii, especially those willing to work in the underserved areas of our state.

This bill raises concerns because it proposes the development of incentives that the State currently does not have the funds to support. Should the program envisioned by this bill be enacted, it would be difficult at the present time to identify a sustainable source of funding to support it for the foreseeable future.

It is hoped that the working group established in this bill will focus on private sector local and national sources of financial assistance to provide stipends, scholarships, and loan repayment programs to eligible medical and dental students.

For the foregoing reasons, I allowed House Bill No. 2519 to become law as Act 242, effective July 8, 2008, without my signature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Lingle".

LINDA LINGLE

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that many Hawaii
2 residents are increasingly unable to obtain timely and
3 appropriate health care because of physician and dentist
4 shortages, which primarily affect the rural areas of the state.

5 Because of the need to repay student loans to fund a
6 physician's or dentist's increasingly high cost of professional
7 education, these health care professionals are discouraged from
8 working in shortage areas, which generally provide lower
9 financial earnings for medical professionals.

10 The legislature finds that the establishment of various
11 programs such as student loan repayment and state-funded
12 physician and dentist stipend programs may be used to encourage
13 and enable physicians and dentists to provide care in shortage
14 areas.

15 The purpose of this Act is to create a working group to
16 develop a plan to establish a program known as the Hawaii health
17 corps program to address physician and dentist shortages that
18 includes student loan repayment and stipend programs.



1 SECTION 2. (a) There is established the Hawaii health
2 corps program working group to be placed within the department
3 of business, economic development, and tourism, for
4 administrative purposes only, to develop a plan to create a
5 program to be known as the Hawaii health corps program that will
6 address physician and dentist shortages through programs such as
7 student loan repayments and stipends. The working group shall
8 be composed of:

- 9 (1) The director of health or the director's designee;
- 10 (2) The director of human services or the director's
11 designee;
- 12 (3) The director of business, economic development, and
13 tourism or the director's designee;
- 14 (4) The dean of the University of Hawaii's John A. Burns
15 school of medicine or the dean's designee;
- 16 (5) The administrator of the state health planning and
17 development agency or the administrator's designee;
- 18 (6) A member of the senate appointed by the senate
19 president; and
- 20 (7) A member of the house of representatives appointed by
21 the speaker of the house of representatives.



1 (b) The members of the working group shall designate a
2 chair from among its members.

3 (c) The working group shall develop a plan to establish
4 the Hawaii health corps program to include the following:

5 (1) Up to twenty qualified participants may be selected
6 each year to receive tuition loan repayments; provided
7 that there shall be not more than one hundred
8 participants at any given time;

9 (2) Qualified participants shall agree to serve in
10 underserved and rural areas, as designated by the
11 working group;

12 (3) Loan repayments to fully satisfy the loan of a
13 qualified participant in the Hawaii health corps
14 program shall be paid over a five-year period with a
15 minimum repayment of twenty per cent per year;

16 (4) Qualified participants shall serve a minimum of five
17 years in the Hawaii health corps program; provided
18 that participants who do not serve the full five years
19 shall repay all loan payments plus any interest as
20 determined by the working group;



- 1 (5) Priority placement in the Hawaii health corps program
2 will be for graduates of the University of Hawaii's
3 John A. Burns school of medicine;
- 4 (6) Persons shall be selected to serve in the Hawaii
5 health corps program regardless of specialty;
- 6 (7) Qualified participants in the Hawaii health corps
7 program shall commit to serve as first responders in
8 the event of a declared emergency, or at the request
9 of the director of health; and
- 10 (8) The Hawaii health corps program shall be administered
11 by the department of business, economic development,
12 and tourism.
- 13 (d) The Hawaii health corps program working group shall
14 prepare a plan to be fully implemented by January 1, 2010, and
15 submit the plan and any proposed legislation to the legislature
16 not later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular
17 session of 2009.
- 18 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



