



LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR  
JAMES R. AIONA, JR.  
LT. GOVERNOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
335 MERCHANT STREET, ROOM 310  
P.O. Box 541  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809  
Phone Number: (808) 586-2850  
Fax Number: (808) 586-2856  
[www.hawaii.gov/dcca](http://www.hawaii.gov/dcca)

LAWRENCE M. REIFURTH  
DIRECTOR  
RONALD BOYER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE  
Regular Session of 2008

Wednesday, February 6, 2008  
8:00 a.m.

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 1598 – RELATING TO HEALTHCARE**

TO THE HONORABLE JOSH GREEN, M.D., CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE:

My name is J. P. Schmidt, State Insurance Commissioner, testifying on behalf of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (“Department”). The Department opposes this bill, which creates a state agency to operate a single payer system to provide health care to all of Hawaii’s people.

The problem with single payer systems is that they are often under funded. In Medicare, for example, there is chronic under-reimbursement of doctors. In Canada and Britain there are long waiting periods for treatment, so long that some people die while they’re waiting. In addition, because of the limited budgets, the medical care differs somewhat from the kind of extensive choices in healthcare we get in the United States. For example, in Canada there are very few MRI units and elective hip surgery is a rarity. We are concerned that there is no guarantee that the Legislature will have a commitment to full funding of a single payer system year in and year out as medical costs rise. If there is inadequate funding, then healthcare for all will suffer.

000179

About half of the 9 percent of the population that is uninsured is eligible for some type of government program. In addition, there are incremental changes that can be made to reduce the number of uninsured. For example, last session the Administration introduced HB 1320 to provide guaranteed issue of health insurance to sole proprietors and part time workers of small businesses. These are the kinds of measures that we should be pursuing before considering a more radical change like a shift to a single payer system.

It should also be noted that health insurance expenses are deductible for federal income tax purposes when the employer pays for it. This represents a significant subsidy of healthcare costs from the federal government that could be lost in a switch to an employee financed single payer system, if the Prepaid Health Care Act is repealed as is suggested by the bill.

Finally, we point out that the issue of single payer was studied by the Hawaii Healthcare Task Force in 2005. The Task Force submitted a report to the Legislature including a feasibility study. No conclusions regarding single payer were reached except to say that further study was needed.

We thank this Committee for the opportunity to present testimony on this matter and ask that this bill be held.

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY BY GEORGINA K. KAWAMURA  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
STATE OF HAWAII  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND  
HOUSING  
ON  
HOUSE BILL NO. 1598

February 6, 2008

RELATING TO HEALTH CARE

House Bill No. 1598 proposes to create a single-payer, universal healthcare insurance system to provide health care to all “permanent residents” of Hawaii. The healthcare system is intended to be financed by the universal healthcare provision fund although the bill does not contain language establishing such a fund. The State Healthcare Insurance Planning and Financing Authority would be responsible for implementing the provisions of the Act and would be comprised of seven elected members. After the November 4, 2008 election, the Authority would assume the functions of the State Health Planning and Development Agency, assume the prepaid health Act functions and the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund, and serve as the State liaison with the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

We are opposed to this bill and offer the following comments.

We have concerns on the feasibility of establishing State-funded universal health care for all of Hawaii’s “permanent residents”; we note that the bill does not contain a definition of “permanent residents,” making it difficult to ascertain the size of the intended target group and thus the projected costs.

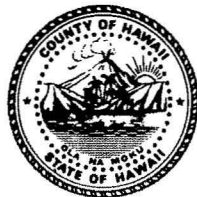
000181

The bill intends for the universal healthcare provision fund to be capitalized by taxes and/or revenue raising measures implemented by the Authority. It is unclear whether this would divert existing taxes or allow the Authority to impose taxes, which may be in conflict with Article VII, Section I of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii. We defer to the Department of the Attorney General on this matter.

It is unclear how the healthcare plans of the Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund and the plans of private employers will be combined into a single entity. We also note that although the bill attempts to designate the Authority as the “liaison” with the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, the State Department of Human Services is presently the official Medicaid State agency. Unilaterally designating the Authority as a “liaison” may jeopardize the receipt of hundreds of millions of dollars in Medicaid reimbursement presently received by the State.

**BOB JACOBSON**  
Councilmember

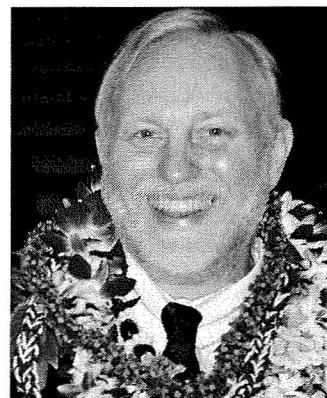
*Chair, Environmental Management Committee*  
*Vice-Chair, Finance Committee*



**HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL**

*County of Hawai'i*

333 Kīlauea Avenue, Second Floor  
Ben Franklin Building, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720  
Mailing Address: 25 Aupuni Street, Suite 200  
Phone: (808) 961-8263  
Fax: (808) 961-8912  
E-Mail: [bjacobson@co.hawaii.hi.us](mailto:bjacobson@co.hawaii.hi.us)



Sunday, February 03, 2008

To: COMMITTEE ON HEALTH and COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES &  
HOUSING

Chairpersons Green and Shimabukuro, and Honored Representatives

Topic: Support Testimony regarding House Bill 1598, Hearing on Wednesday, February  
6, 2008, 8:00 a.m.

Aloha Chairpersons, and Committee Members,

I urge you to pass House Bill 1598. House Bill 1598 establishes an agency to operate a single-payer universal healthcare insurance system. I've been a Registered Nurse for thirty years working in Hawai'i and Minnesota. One common problem that all communities face is the crisis of uninsured residents. This problem bankrupts families, creates homeless individuals and bankrupts the institutions that are charged with providing care for those without resources. Unless something is done by us in this state, I don't believe that anything is going to solve this problem anywhere. All politics are local. We need to solve this problem here and now.

Mahalo nui loa,

**000183**

*District 6 ~ Upper Puna, Ka'u, and South Kona*  
*Hawai'i County Is An Equal Opportunity Provider And Employer*

TESTIMONY FOR  
HB 1598

HB 1598 Relating to Healthcare will establish an agency to administer and operate a single payer universal healthcare insurance system.

The Hawaii Alliance for Retired Americans (HARA) supports HB 1598. This bill will address many of the concerns which impact our members. Our membership consists of retired and elderly seniors generally on fixed pensions. The increase of the cost for healthcare adversely impacts their living allowance. This bill will address some of the concerning of rising healthcare.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this bill.

000184


**HAWAII MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

 1360 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96814  
 TELEPHONE (808) 536-7702 • FAX (808) 528-2378

**PLEASE DELIVER**

 to rm 329 for:  
**Health Committee**  
**Wednesday**  
**2/06/2008**  
**8:00am**

February 6, 2008

**To:** Representative Josh Green, M.D., chair  
 Representative John Mizuno, Vice Chair  
 Committee on Health

**From:** Cynthia J. Goto, M.D., President  
 Linda Rasmussen, M.D., Legislative Co-Chair  
 Philip Hellreich, M.D., Legislative Co-Chair  
 Paula Arcena, Executive Director  
 Dick Botti, Government Relations

**Re:** HB1598 RELATING TO HEALTH (Establishes agency to operate a single payer universal healthcare insurance system.)

HMA is opposed to HB 1598 that would create a single payer healthcare system.

The HMA strongly believes that every member of our society needs and deserves a core group of medical and surgical benefits, including Psychiatry and addiction medicine. Over and above these benefits, the HMA generally favors free market solutions and opposes mandated benefits.

Because there is an infinite demand for healthcare, placing the decisions in the hands of our government and insurers will not increase the effectiveness of healthcare. Instead, it will result in the rationing of health care services, long delays for needed elective surgery, denial of necessary but expensive high tech therapies and diagnostic procedures, and inhibit the development of new therapies and diagnostic procedures.

In Canada, thousands of wealthier Canadians head south to the U.S. for many needed services unavailable in Canada. In both UK and Canada, open heart surgery, kidney transplants, etc are unavailable to patients over the age of 65. In the UK, 40% of the population now purchase private health insurance, over and above the high taxes they pay for government health care, because necessary therapies are denied or delayed.

000185

1

If we adopt a government run system, we will have constant battles in the legislature about what benefits should be available, what reimbursements should be made, etc. and the whole health care delivery system will be politicized.

Millions of dollars are spent each year in Hawaii in the practice of defensive medicine because physicians & hospitals are fearful of medical lawsuits. Rather than create a government controlled healthcare system, we suggest this measure be redirected into something that will address the tort reform situation that is a major cause of the existing symptoms of our healthcare problems. Fixing our medical tort system will reduce costs and increase access to healthcare.

We conclude our testimony by stating that the laws of supply and demand apply to the delivery of health care. In health care we have unlimited demand for services but limited resources, and that we prefer that decisions be made by patients and their physicians, rather than insurance company clerks, or government.



**HAWAII MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**  
120 WEST WILSON STREET, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
TEL: (808) 536-7700 FAX: (808) 536-8220

000186





HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
Rep. Josh Green, M.D., Chair

Conference Room 329  
Wednesday, February 6, 2008 at 8:00 a.m.

Testimony in opposition to HB 1598

I am Rich Meiers, President and CEO of the Healthcare Association of Hawaii, which represents the entire spectrum of health care, including acute care hospitals, two-thirds of the long term care beds in Hawaii, as well as home care and hospice providers. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 1598, which establishes an authority to implement a single-payer health care system in Hawaii.

The Healthcare Association recognizes the well-meaning intent of this bill. Nearly 10% of Hawaii's population is estimated to be without health care insurance – a distressing statistic, especially considering that this figure was once as low as 3%.

There is broad agreement that efforts should be made to reduce the proportion of uninsured in Hawaii. However, even among those with considerable knowledge about the complex health care environment, there are considerable differences of opinion about how to expand health care insurance coverage. In order to gather these varied opinions, promote discussion, and resolve differences, the Legislature passed Act 223 in 2005. This Act created a task force to develop a plan to implement health care for all Hawaii residents.

The task force included broad representation from health care providers, consumers, and government agencies. It conducted a series of meetings for nearly a year, received testimony from the public and also contracted with a consultant to perform a cost analysis for a single payer system. In June of 2006 the task force issued a report that included findings and recommendations.

The recommendations included the following: (1) Develop a comprehensive health care provider map indicating the availability of various categories of providers; (2) Increase payments to providers by State insurance programs; and (3) Stabilize funding for community health centers and other providers that serve the uninsured. Bills were introduced to accomplish all of these objectives. However, not all the bills were passed.

The task force also recommended that resources be provided to continue its existence for an additional two years in order to continue its deliberations, particularly with regard to the single payer concept. The Healthcare Association endorsed all of these recommendations. However, the task force ceased to function in 2006.

The task force accumulated substantial information about single payer systems during its existence. Rather than create a new authority without any collective experience, as proposed by HB 1598, the task force created by Act 223, SLH 2005, should be revived as the appropriate vehicle for determining how health care insurance coverage should be expanded.

For the foregoing reasons, the Healthcare Association of Hawaii opposes HB 1598.

000187

REPRESENTATIVE JOSH GREEN, CHAIR  
REPRESENTATIVE JOHN MIZUNO, VICE-CHAIR  
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
PROGRESSIVE DEMOCRATS OF HAWAI'I

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY, 6, 2008

IN SUPPORT OF HB 1598, RELATING TO HEALTHCARE

The Progressive Democrats of Hawai'i (PDH) is a local organizational member of the national Progressive Democrats of America (PDA). Our mission is to build unity among progressive individuals and advance progressive values in the Democratic Party of Hawai'i. Our platform of priority issues includes healthcare for all and we are strong supporters of a Single Payer Healthcare system both nationally and in the State of Hawai'i. As such, we strongly support H.B. No. 1598, Relating to Healthcare, which would establish, in the State of Hawai'i, a universal single payer health insurance system, providing all residents of the State of Hawai'i uniformly delivered high-quality healthcare.

In Hawai'i today, there are well over 100,000 people who do not have any kind of health insurance, either because they do not have a full time job, they work several jobs, none of which are full time, or somehow fall between the cracks. Over 12% of those uninsured are children. Employers, in an attempt to cut health insurance costs, are hiring employees at just below the 20 hour threshold, forcing people to work multiple jobs, while still not receiving health insurance. What's more, the 1974 Prepaid Healthcare Act (PHCA) doesn't include in its mandate coverage for families and dependents. In our modern economy, often times both parents work, receiving coverage for themselves, as a result. This gap in coverage, however, accounts for a percentage of the roughly 12,000 children in the state who have no medical coverage. Some of these children may qualify for QUEST, or other Medicaid programs, though a gap still remains. The circumstances are even more dire for children with only one working parent.

When PHCA was passed, Hawai'i was leading way in caring for its residents. 30 years later, PHCA is no longer doing what was intended. Instead, the health insurance industry in Hawai'i more closely resembles that of a nationwide problem. And that problem extends beyond the ranks of the uninsured in Hawai'i. The system of private health insurers is a system in which insurance companies compete for the business of young, healthy, and wealthy customers and is a system in which large claims are challenged, or outright refused, in favor of greater profit margins. Despite the intention of a private, competitive insurance industry in Hawai'i to keep prices down, costs are spiraling out of reach of low and even middle income families. Rising insurance premiums under PHCA are a growing burden on both employer and employee.

Include in this, deductibles and co-payments, which become prohibitive, and those who can afford a monthly insurance premium are still not receiving the care they need. Co-payments and deductibles, which are meant to keep the premium cost down, are on the rise as well, and are acting as a deterrent for basic checkups and other types of preventative care. This in turn, actually raises the cost of treatment when serious medical conditions are later diagnosed. Even in Hawai'i, health insurance companies compete with each other to insure the healthy and wealthy,

while attempting to avoid those with any kind of preexisting condition. These insurance companies only make a profit when they can avoid paying claims. What's more, this competitive system actually contributes to higher premiums paid because these companies pay huge sums of money for advertising and marketing, money that could otherwise be spent on actual healthcare. Bloated corporate executive salaries are also a contributing factor to the rising cost of healthcare.

Research shows that a discussion of healthcare must include more than just the uninsured. Medical costs are one of the leading causes of personal bankruptcy nationwide. What's telling about these studies is that the majority of those who file for personal bankruptcy due to burdensome medical costs actually have medical insurance. Any discussion of correcting the healthcare system in this state must include costs for the insured, must include everyone, not just the uninsured.

A universal, single payer health insurance system would correct the problems and inequities that exist in the current system. By creating an insurance system, sponsored and administered by the government, the cost burden is removed from both employer and employee. Health insurance is no longer tied to employment status and becomes a right of every citizen living in the state.

A universal, single payer health care system would lower the cost of insurance for every Hawai'i resident in several ways. Eliminating private health insurance companies also eliminates much of the wasteful spending that currently costs a significant portion of our premiums. Eliminating private health insurance companies eliminates spending on marketing and advertising; that's money that can be spent on health care. Eliminating private health insurance companies eliminates bloated executive salaries and profit margins and that's money that can be spent on health care, as well.

A universal, single payer health insurance system would encourage, almost naturally, regular patient checkups and preventative care, raising the incidence of early detection of serious disease, thus lowering the cost of treatment. When the previously uninsured can see a doctor regularly, without fear of cost, they will be less likely to show up in an emergency room, requiring care paid for by tax dollars, further lowering the cost of health insurance.

A universal, single payer health insurance system would streamline medical record and claim reporting systems by creating a single filing system, patient database, claims filing process, and reimbursement process, thus reducing the time doctors and their staff will spend on paper work. As this is universal health insurance, not universal healthcare, doctors and hospitals would not be 'socialized,' as some single payer critics have claimed. Universal single payer health insurance would eliminate private health insurance companies, in favor of a government sponsored, government managed insurance system, much like Medicaid, which would be funneled into a state single payer system, further lowering the cost for residents. All in all, a universal single payer health insurance system could cost up to 50% less than the current system.

In creating a universal single payer health insurance system in Hawai'i, we will help raise quality of life for residents and remove a growing burden on employers, employees, and tax payers. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

000189



February 6, 2008

The Honorable Josh Green, M.D., Chair  
The Honorable John Mizuno, Vice Chair

House Committee on Health

**Re: HB 1598 – Relating to Healthcare**

Dear Chair Green, Vice Chair Mizuno and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rick Jackson and I am President of the Hawaii Association of Health Plans (“HAHP”). HAHP is a non-profit organization consisting of seven (7) member organizations:

AlohaCare  
Hawaii Medical Assurance Association  
HMSA  
Hawaii-Western Management Group, Inc.

MDX Hawai‘i  
University Health Alliance  
UnitedHealthcare

Our mission is to promote initiatives aimed at improving the overall health of Hawaii. We are also active participants in the legislative process. Before providing any testimony at a Legislative hearing, all HAHP member organizations must be in unanimous agreement of the statement or position.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 1598, which would establish an agency to operate a single-payer universal healthcare insurance system.

During the 2005 legislative session, HB 1304 was passed to create the Health Care Task Force made up of individuals representing all aspects of health care in the community including hospitals, physicians, the Insurance Commissioner and members of this Committee. The Task Force contracted with The Lewin Group to conduct a study of health care in the state utilizing information contained in the Vision 2000 Healthcare Congress and the Governor’s Blue Ribbon Panel on Cancer Care in Hawaii among other resources. The Lewin Group produced a lengthy 85 page report which examined the feasibility of implementing a single payer system in Hawaii.

One finding in the report stipulated that financing such a system in Hawai‘i would, at a minimum, require an additional 7-8% payroll tax on all Hawai‘i employers. Among the other problems identified was the likelihood that Hawai‘i would become the most

• AlohaCare • HMAA • HMSA • HWMG • MDX Hawaii • UHA • UnitedHealthcare •  
HAHP c/o Howard Lee, UHA, 700 Bishop Street, Suite 300 Honolulu 96813  
www.hahp.org

000190

attractive state in the US to live in...by those who were uninsured on the mainland and in need of care for catastrophic illness or injury.

The Task Force as a whole could not come to consensus on the recommendations and findings of the Report after lengthy debate at public meetings. We believe that this lack of consensus reflected the problems inherent in implementing a universal health care system in Hawaii.

We urge you to hold this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Jackson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Rick Jackson  
President

**mizuno1-Edgar**

---

**From:** Katalina [katalina@lava.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 05, 2008 2:03 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Support HB 1598

**State House Health Committee (Rep. Josh Green, Chair) on Wednesday,  
February 6th at 8 a.m. in Conference Room 329.**

I support HB 1598 and urge you to pass this universal health care bill.

Both from my personal experience and from being a member of the student health insurance committee at UH, I understand the need for universal health care for the people of Hawaii. There are many problems with the current system.

K. McGlone  
PO Box 235166  
Honolulu, HI 96823

2/5/2008

000192

## mizuno1-Edgar

---

**From:** Leslie Gise [leslieg@maui.net]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 02, 2008 2:53 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony Support H.B. 1598

>>Rep Josh Green, Chair  
>>Rep John Mizuno, Vice-Chair  
>>House Health Committee  
>>Physicians for a National Health Program  
>>  
>>Leslie Hartley Gise MD  
>>1035 Na'ala Road, Kula HI 96790-7741, (808) 878-3314,  
>>leslieg@maui.net  
>>  
>>Wednesday, February 6, 2008, 8 am, Room 329  
>>  
>>Support of H.B. 1598, Relating to Healthcare  
>>  
>>Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP) is a nonprofit  
>>organization of 15,000 physicians, medical students and health  
>>professionals who believe that access to high-quality health care is a  
>>right of all people and should be provided equitably as a public  
>>service rather than bought and sold as a commodity. The American  
>>College of Physicians has recently joined PNHP in supporting  
>>single-payer national health insurance.  
>>  
>>Many people agree that our health care system is broken, but there is  
>>not consensus on how to fix it. We already accept that health care for  
>>the poor and the old is a responsibility of our society.  
>>If we accept health care for all, then one risk pool is the only  
>>course. Insurance companies profit from insuring healthy people. We  
>>have to eliminate the profit from healthcare. As an example, we have  
>>decided that firefighting is a responsibility of the government. We do  
>>not expect the fire department to make a profit.  
>>They do not ask if you have paid your tax bill before they come put  
>>out the fire when your house is burning.

The four principles of health care financing reform are: 1) Everyone is covered, 2) You choose your own doctor, 3) No investor-owned facilities, 4) Medical decisions are made between the patient and the doctor. We do not have any of these now.

>One risk pool is the only way to have sustainable cost control. We are  
>already paying enough for universal health coverage but we are not  
>getting it because insurance companies' profits and billing eat up 31  
>cents of every health care dollar. With one risk pool there is enough  
>of money to cover everybody. Single-payer would not cost more and for  
>most people it would cost slightly less. H.R. 676, Medicare for All,  
>has over 85 co-sponsors in the US House of Representatives including  
>Neil Abercrombie and Mazie Hirono. "Health care is not just another  
>commodity. It is not a gift to be rationed based on the ability to pay.  
>It is time to make universal health insurance a national priority, so  
>that the basic right to health care can finally become a reality for  
>every American.", Ted Kennedy, US Senator.

Putting every citizen in one risk pool would eliminate the insurance companies who choose to insure only the low-cost, healthy. This leaves the state to pick up the bills for the expensive, sick.

Single-payer does not aim to eliminate private health care or private insurance. For-profit services, such as cosmetic surgery can continue. Private hospitals can still cater to the wealthy, although without any government support or subsidy.

>>Single-payer can be done state by state. It would take several years  
>>to transition, and if and when we have national health insurance, our  
>>state system would become part of that. Single-payer would not solve  
>>all our problems, like lack of doctors in rural areas, but it would  
>>help access by removing financial barriers to care. Single-payer is  
>>the only way to achieve universal health insurance because: 1)  
>>reducing the number of uninsured does not, and 2) mandates do not  
>>work. Health care is a right, not a privilege. Every other developed  
>>country provides healthcare for their citizens, we can do it too. We  
>>urge the committee to pass H.B. 1598. Thank you for this opportunity  
>>to testify.

Leslie Hartley Gise MD  
1035 Na'ala Road  
Kula HI 96790  
Home (808) 878-3314  
FAX (808) 878-2422  
Work (808) 984-2150



**mizuno1-Edgar**

---

**From:** Darrow Hand [doctordarrow@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 03, 2008 9:38 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** HB - 1598 - Support

**To:**  
**Rep. Josh Green, Chair**  
**Rep. John Mizuno, Vice-Chair**  
**and Members of State House Health Committee**

**From:**  
**Darrow M. Hand, ND**  
**2369 Gardenia Street, Honolulu, HI 96816, (808) 392-8774**

Aloha Rep. Josh Green, John Mizuno & Members of the State House Health Committee:

As a health care practitioner, I am writing in support of HB - 1598, single payer, universal health care.

Our health care system needs to be improved. Nearly 50 million Americans do not have health care, that's about 1 in 6 people. Many bankruptcy's are caused by an inability of Americans to pay their medical bills. The United States is the only major industrialized nation that does not have universal single payer health care, and its time that we did. Hawai'i can lead the way, with HB 1598. I urge you to support this legislation.

The cost of a single payer system will be less than what we currently are paying. One main reason for this is the substantial savings in administrative costs. Our current system spends around 28% for private insurance while only about 4 % for medicare. If we expand medicare to create a universal coverage there would be a savings of about 24%; this savings alone would cover the uninsured while saving the average citizen money. Furthermore, when people are covered, they will seek medical care earlier in their prognosis, which overall will decrease the amount and cost of treatment that they need. Earlier treatment will often result in better results. A healthier public, is a more productive public. Please support HB - 1598.

Signed,  
Darrow M. Hand  
Naturopathic Physician

House of Representatives  
Twenty-Fourth Legislature  
Regular Session of 2008

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
and  
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOUSING

Hearing  
Wednesday, February 6, 2008  
8:00 a.m.

Testimony by: Ralph C. Boyea, Legislative Advocate, Hawai'i County Council

**Testimony in favor of HB 1598 RELATING TO HEALTHCARE**

Chairpersons Green and Shimabukuro, and Honored Representatives,

On behalf of the Hawai'i County Council, I urge you to pass House Bill 1598. House Bill 1598 establishes an agency to operate a single-payer universal healthcare insurance system.

On January 23, 2008, the Hawai'i County Public Works and Intergovernmental Relations Committee passed Resolution 491-08 in support of HB1598. All nine [9] Council Members voted in favor of this resolution in committee. The full Council is meeting this morning. They will be voting on Resolution 491-08. We fully expect it to pass with another unanimous vote.

Hawai'i health care is fast approaching a crises situation. This fact was recently emphasized by Hawai'i County Mayor Harry Kim. Mayor Kim held a "Hawai'i Island Healthcare Conference" on Saturday, December 1, 2007. Over 300 people were in attendance. They included Mayor Kim, State of Hawai'i Director of Health Chiyome Fukino, physicians, nurses, other health care providers, representatives of the insurance industry, politicians, hospital executives and interested community members. The conference addressed shortages in providers, facilities and long term care. Participants formed work groups that continue to work on these issues.

One of the problems addressed at this conference was medical insurance. Uninsured, under-insured, insured but not covered. It is clear, something has to be done to provide all of Hawaii's residents with medical coverage. The situation as it currently exists adversely affects all of us.

The Hawaii County Council Public Works and Intergovernmental Relations Committee supports House Bill 1598. We fully expect the Council will reaffirm this vote today. In anticipation of that vote, we urge you to pass this measure.

Thank you.

000196

**mizuno1-Edgar**

---

**From:** John Bickel [jbickel15@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 03, 2008 6:13 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** HB1598

I wish to testify in favor of HB 1598 in support of single payer universal healthcare. There is a simple way to pay for increased medical coverage--cut out of the insurance industry advertising and profits. As a teacher of European history, I know that the Europeans see doctors more often and rate their experiences in health care more favorably than we in the for-profit system. Health care should be a right not a way to make an extra buck.

John Bickel  
2415 Ala Wa Blvd. #901  
Honolulu, HI 96815

---

Never miss a thing. [Make Yahoo your homepage.](#)

**mizuno1-Edgar**

---

**From:** shanti108@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 04, 2008 9:43 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in strong support of HB1598

Testimony in strong support of HB1598

House Health Committee  
Wednesday, February 6th, 8 a.m.  
Conference Room 329

Dear Rep. Green and Members of the Health Committee,

Thank you for bringing this bill up for consideration. It is an excellent statement of why Hawai'i (and the whole nation) needs single-payer health care. There is no reason why medical care should be a business, primarily benefiting insurance companies and HMOs, with multiple layers of bureaucracy. Please pass HB1598 and make Hawai'i once again the "health state."

Aloha,

Roberta & William Bailey  
2161 Puna St.  
Honolulu 96817  
447-9118

**mizuno1-Edgar**

---

**From:** patricia blair [cris6369@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 03, 2008 3:11 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Single Payer Universal Healthcare

State House Health Committee: Chair, Josh Green. Vice-Chair John Mizuno. I support HB 1598 which calls for single payer universal healthcare for our citizens. This bill is long over due to provide quality care for all citizens in the State of Hawaii. Thank you very much. Pat Blair, 522 Uluhala St., Kailua, Hawaii 96734. 261- 8499

## mizuno1-Edgar

---

**From:** Brien Hallett [brienhallett@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 03, 2008 1:32 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony House Health Committee

From: Brien Hallett  
To: House Health Committee  
Date: Wednesday, February 6, 2008  
Time: 8:00 a.m.  
Measure Number: HB 1598: RELATING TO HEALTHCARE.

I am writing to support HB 1598.

The principal reason all the other developed economies of the world provide universal health care is that they use an efficient and effective single payer system. This allows the other developed economies both to spend half as much on health care than the US and to achieve better health outcomes.

Passage of HB 1598 would make Hawai'i a health care leader and model for the rest of the country.

---

Looking for last minute shopping deals?  
Find them fast with Yahoo! Search. <http://tools.search.yahoo.com/newsearch/category.php?category=shopping>

mizuno1-Edgar

---

**From:** John Witeck [witeckj001@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 03, 2008 11:51 AM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Relating to Health Care--supporting HB 1598

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1598 Relating to Health Care.  
Please ensure that committee members receive this. Mahalo.**

**To: Rep. Josh Green, Chair, Rep. John Mizuno, Vice-Chair  
and Members of State House Health Committee**

**From: John Witeck, 2252 Puna Street, Honolulu, HI 96817  
(phone 347-3306)**

**Hearing: Wednesday, February 6, 2008, 8:00 am, Room 329**

**Aloha Chair Green, Vice Chair Mizuno, and Members of the House Health  
Committee,**

**Access to high-quality health care should be deemed a right of all people.  
Health care should be affordable and should be provided to all as a public  
service rather than bought and sold for profit as an insurance plan or  
program.**

**Our health care system is a hodge-podge of nonfunctional parts, though it  
does seem to work for the more affluent, and there are workable publicly  
provided health care coverage for the poor and the elderly. But health care  
should be equitable for all and be provided by the government using tax  
dollars.**

**Insurance carriers like HMSA and health insurance companies nationally  
have been profiting from excessive premium charges. Whenever national  
health insurance is on the national political agenda, then suddenly  
rates level out or go down slightly. After the "threat" of a more sane system  
passes (usually through Congressional inaction), rates begin to climb again,  
as in the present Bush-regime era.**

**We have to eliminate the profits made in the health care industry, which,  
along with the pharmaceutical industry, is the largest enterprise in the  
nation. Providing health care for all should be considered as similar to**

**providing ambulance services, lifeguard services, and firefighting assistance--and not be subject to what one can pay.**

**We need and deserve a health care system which covers everyone, allows a choice of doctor and/or clinic, and medical decisions are not made by institutional HMOs or health insurance bureaucrats, but, rather, are made by doctor and patient--and are not subject to the whims of profitability. This would be a single-payer system--with a large, single pool of those covered.**

**We do not now have this kind of sane, humane. and equitable system. Instead, insurance companies' profits and billing costs reportedly eat up 31 cents of every health care dollar. With one combined health services pool of citizens, there would be enough money to cover everyone. A single-payer system would not cost more, most studies show, and for most people it would cost less. Its great advantage is that it would cover ALL.**

**The U.S. Congress currently has a few versions of universal health care reform legislation before it. H.R. 676, Medicare for All, currently has over 85 co-sponsors in the U.S. House of Representatives, including Hawaii's own Congressman Neil Abercrombie and Congresswoman Mazie Hirono.**

**Putting every citizen in one risk pool would eliminate the insurance companies who choose to insure only the low-cost and healthy. Single-payer does not aim to eliminate private health care or private insurance. For-profit services such as cosmetic surgery can continue. Private hospitals can still cater to wealthier clients without government support or subsidy.**

**Single-payer can be achieved state by state. It would take several years to transition, and when we have national health insurance, our state system could then become part of it.**

**Single-payer is the best and probably the only way to achieve universal health insurance that is affordable and accessible.**

**Health care is a basic right, not a privilege. Every other developed country provides healthcare for their citizens and we can do it too. The Michael Moore's excellent documentary film "Sicko" showed the benefits and lower costs of health care in Canada, England, France, and Cuba. Japan and most European nations have more affordable and universally provided health care. It is a travesty that the United States, with such wealth and resources, does not have such a system and that over 30 to 60 million of our people are without health care services or insurance.**



**I strongly urge the committee to approve H.B. 1598 and get Hawaii behind a national single payer system of health care--with Hawaii being one of the pioneering pace-setters and initiators. Hawaii played that role on mandatory employer-provided health care for employees working 20 hours or more per week. It would be fitting for Hawaii to be one of the first states to adopt a single payer system of health care.**

**Thank you!**

mizuno1-Edgar

---

**From:** tom aitken [kamaainahaoleboy@mac.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 02, 2008 10:57 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Support of H.B. 1598, Relating to Health Care

**To:**  
**Rep. Josh Green, Chair**  
**Rep. John Mizuno, Vice-Chair**  
**and Members of State House Health Committee**

**From:**  
**Tom Aitken**  
**PO Box 800**  
**Kaneohe, HI 96744**

**Wednesday, February 6, 2008, 8:00 am, Room 329**

**re: Support of H.B. 1598, Relating to Health Care (single payer universal)**

**Aloha Chair Green, Vice Chair Mizuno and Members of the House Health Committee,**

**I applaud the Committee for hearing this issue.**

**One of the arguments against a single-payer system is that the services would be overwhelmed and we would have to wait in line to be treated. I have been treated in other countries with true universal health care and know that this is simply not true. Here in our own country, with the full coverage that the Hawai'i Employee Retirement System provides me, I waited from Nov. 5th until January 29th--85 days!--to have a colonoscopy. Sorry, our healthcare system is already broken and the "wait in line" argument is a lie perpetuated by profit-making interests that think nothing of making us wait in line.**

**I am not proud that my country cares more about the profits of insurance companies than it does taking care of its citizens. Hawai'i has the chance to lead the nation on an issue of of human caring and you have the chance to be heroes of people instead of corporations.**

**Please support of H.B. 1598, relating to health care!**

**Respectfully,**

2/3/2008

000204

**mizuno1-Edgar**

---

**From:** Denise Snyder [scott101@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 02, 2008 8:34 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1598 - support

**I support HB 1598. Healthcare is a right and we have a duty to provide healthcare for all our people. Most of the developed nations on this planet and a lot of the undeveloped nations already provide healthcare to all in their communities. One way or the other we all pay when someone is sick and unable to get the health services they need. We pay by having more sickness in our community, more despair and more crime.**

**Our current system is not working for the majority of the people. The only beneficiaries of this broken healthcare system are some of the insurance companies and the pharmaceutical companies that are making a lot of money. When I lived on the Big Island I had health insurance but finding a doctor was a challenge, at times impossible. Our healthcare system needs to be about doctors and hospitals not insurers and drug companies.**

**Let us set an example for the rest of the country. Please pass HB 1598.**

Denise Snyder  
scott101@hawaii.rr.com

**mizuno1-Edgar**

---

**From:** tomvish [tomvish@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 02, 2008 4:03 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Support H.B. 1598

Rep Josh Green, Chair

Rep John Mizuno, Vice-Chair

House Health Committee

Support for H.B. 1598, Relating to Healthcare

The fundamental principle of any healthcare system should be coverage for everyone without regard to age or pre-existing conditions. In other words, the United States needs a Medicare program to enroll every citizen and legal resident. Unfortunately, that is not on the horizon, but H.B. 1598 offers Hawaii a chance to take the lead.

Even while there is a growing national consensus on the issue, two objections recur. One is the well-funded cries about "socialized" medicine, although we do not hear the same voices calling for privatizing every public school, library, fire station and police department. The reason is obvious: Healthcare is lucrative.

The insurers and HMOs do well, and investor-owned medical facilities do well. It is the hapless ordinary people who are left out, especially those who have a medical condition in the family or who depend on self-employment. In their relentless pursuit of profit over all other considerations, insurers can be depended on to cherry-pick the young and healthy. Those who need care most are the least likely to receive it.

In a single-payer system, a patient could choose his/her own provider, and medical decisions would be made between them, not at the desk of a insurance bureaucrat thousands of miles away. If the wealthy choose private facilities, that would be their privilege, albeit without state assistance.

The other typical objection is the cost, even though current estimates suggest that as much as 30% of the nation's soaring medical bill goes to administration, payouts to CEOs, investor dividends and the like. By covering everyone, the total is apt to come down since most people will not wait until the problem has worsened and the treatment becomes much more expensive.

Should the United States ever wake up to it healthcare wreckage, the Hawaii program could be subsumed by a national system. Until then, Hawaii can pass H.B. 1598 and set the country on the path to making universal healthcare a human right, as it is in the rest of the industrialized world.

I urge the committee to pass H.B. 1598 and put the state, and perhaps the country, on the path to better health, sound fiscal management and common decency.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Thomas Vishanoff

760 Wainee St. D124

PO Box 427

lahaina, HI 96767

2/3/2008

Tel. No. 276-7760

000206

mizuno1-Edgar

---

**From:** Robert Aitken [rbaitken@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 03, 2008 11:28 AM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Support of H.B. 1598, Relating to Health Care

To:  
Rep. Josh Green, Chair  
Rep. John Mizuno, Vice-Chair  
and Members of State House Health Committee

From:

**Robert Aitken**  
**2747 Waiamao Road**  
**Honolulu HI 96816**

**Subject:**

Support of H.B. 1598, Relating to Health Care (single payer universal)  
Wednesday, February 6, 2008, 8:00 am, Room 329

Aloha: Chair Green, Vice Chair Mizuno and Members of the House Health Committee,

**I join your many other constituents in applauding the Committee for hearing this issue.**

**I am 90 years old, a lifetime citizen of Hawai'i, and am covered by Medicaid and by the 65 Plus Program of HMSA. This coverage cannot be compared with that received by citizens of European and Australasian nations. Many years ago I checked into the Emergency Room of a large hospital in Amsterdam with a bad cough. I was given a chest x-ray and diagnosed by two ER doctors as having a spot of pneumonia in my lungs.**

2/3/2008

000207

**They counseled me about how I should care for my condition and provided me with enough antibiotic pills for a course of treatment. When I asked for the bill, they only smiled indulgently. It would take a Yank to make such a dumb request! I had an almost identical experience in the office of an Australian physician. No charge for x-ray, consultation and a course of medication.**

**I am still ailing with lung problems. I have expensive caregivers around the clock and am faced with unconscionable delays in scheduling routine testing procedures. Of course medical services in civilized countries require higher taxes, but at least for me, that increase in taxes would be largely, if not completely offset by savings of care-giving, insurance and pharmaceutical costs.**

**Moreover, when we look at the statistics of how many people can't afford any health insurance at all, it is clear that passing H.B. 1598 and following through to make it Hawaiian law would strike an impressive blow for human decency. I urge the House Health Committee to do the right thing for our citizens by setting in motion this humane process.**

**Respectfully yours,  
Robert Aitken**

To: Rep. Josh Green  
Rep. John Mizuno  
House Health Committee

From: Renee Inq (524-3332, POB 23094)  
Hon 96823

Re: hb 1598 - Universal  
Healthcare

My testimony in support  
of hb 1598 is in the  
attached flyer (that  
I'll be going over).

# A SINGLE-PAYER SYSTEM

[like Canada's]

versus

# U.S. PRIVATE HEALTH FINANCE SYSTEM

[Insurance co.]

## CANADA'S SINGLE-PAYER SYSTEM

## VS U.S. PRIVATE HEALTH FINANCE SYSTEM

- ❖ **“ALL MEDICALLY NECESSARY CARE” GIVEN TO EVERYONE FOR LIFE** — for every Medical Condition that you need healthcare for
  - 1 **ALL EMERGENCY CARE IS GIVEN RIGHT AWAY** — Non-emergency health care is prioritized and given after emergencies are taken care of
  - 2 **NO CO-PAYS or DEDUCTIBLES** — Patients are not billed for the medical care they receive
  - 3 **NO CAPS ON AMOUNT OF CARE GIVEN** — Catastrophic health problems treated until they're cured

- ❖ **HUNDREDS OF PRIVATE HEALTH SYSTEMS** — with **ANNUALLY RENEWABLE PREMIUMS** usually only provide a **DEFINED BENEFIT PACKAGE** with:
  - 1 **EXCLUSIONS**—eg. for pre-existing conditions, etc. May need to prove you have health coverage to get care
  - 2 **CO-PAYS & DEDUCTIBLES RISING**--You pay more up front but coverage stays the same or is lessened
  - 3 **CAPS LIMIT AMOUNT OF CARE**, length of stays allowed yearly—even if the medical problem has not yet been cured (eg. Catastrophic illness like cancer)

### ❖ SINGLE-PAYER HEALTH SYSTEMS CONTROL HEALTHCARE COSTS

- 1 **ADMINISTRATIVE COST**= 16% [2003 Harvard study]
- 2 **NO PROFIT** in a publicly administered system — though medical providers are generally private
- 3 **ONE COMPUTER SYSTEM**= catch Duplication Patterns of Fraud & Malpractice = **Reducing Costs**
- 4 **NO NEED** for **MARKETING** Costs, High CEO PAY
- 5 **PREVENTIVE CARE = Huge Cost Savings**
- 6 **ONLY PAY ONCE** for healthcare—No need for other Private Health Insurance, nor Work Comp, etc.

### VS ❖ HUNDREDS OF U.S. PRIVATE HEALTH ENTITIES MAXIMIZE HEALTH COSTS

- 1 **ADMINISTRATIVE COST**= 31% [2003 Harvard study]
- 2 **PROFITS**
- 3 **MALPRACTICE COSTS**
- 4 **PR/ MARKETING** Costs, large CEO compensations, High **PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS** paid by patients
- 5 **UNTREATED ILLNESS becomes serious & costly**
- 6 **MULTIPLE PAYMENTS** for care—Private Health Insurance + Medical in auto insurance + Work Comp, etc

❖ **SINGLE-PAYER HEALTHCARE**—with one government entity collecting health premiums and paying the health bills maximizes money for care, minimizes money wasted, costs

❖ **UNIVERSAL HEALTHCARE** created by having everyone get private health insurance will keep the huge waste in the U.S. health system—maximizing profitability. Healthcare now costs

**CANADA = \$ 3,500/per person/ per year VS UNITED STATES = \$ 7,000/person/ year**

HB 1598—A workable Single-Payer Universal Healthcare Law for Hawaii is in the 2008 Legislative session. KOKUA 5 4 5 -1 9 8 9  
■ HB 1598 includes a **RE-TRAINING FUND** to retrain employees (who now work in the health insurance industry) for other jobs ■



**mizuno1-Edgar**

---

**From:** Barbara Polk [ednbarb8@earthlink.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 04, 2008 9:15 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Support HB 1598

Testimony from Americans for Democratic Action-Hawaii in support of HB1598, for the hearing of the House Committee on Health, 8am, Wednesday, Feb. 6

TO: Chair Josh Green  
House Committee on Health

FROM: Barbara Polk, Legislative Chair  
Americans for Democratic Action/Hawaii

**SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR HB 1598 Relating to Health Care**

Chair Green, Vice-Chair Mizuno and members of the Health Committee. Americans for Democratic Action, Hawaii Chapter, urges you to support HB 1598. A comprehensive, single-payer health care system is increasingly urgent for Hawaii's people and for its businesses, both of which are struggling under the rapidly rising cost of health care.

Establishing the Health Planning and Financing Authority called for in this bill, charged to identify and negotiate means of financing the services called for in the bill would be a major step toward safeguarding the health of the residents of Hawaii.

We support this bill in principle, and urge you to make this the year Hawaii takes the first steps toward a universal, single-payer, health care system.

REPRESENTATIVE JOSH GREEN, CHAIR  
REPRESENTATIVE JOHN MIZUNO, VICE-CHAIR  
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Mary A. Guinger  
926A Kaipii Street  
Kailua, HI  
Phone: 808-261-9310

IN SUPPORT OF HB 1598, RELATING TO HEALTHCARE

Seven years ago I came to Hawaii as a retired teacher. I bought full medical insurance. I did not take drug coverage, because I only took vitamins. Two years ago I was diagnosed with Breast Cancer. After surgery, it was highly recommended that I undergo Chemotherapy treatment. Though they found it at an early stage, it was a Class 3, very aggressive type, of cancer that could quickly spread throughout my body. My insurance company classified Chemotherapy as a drug and was therefore not covered by my insurance plan. The cost for the Chemotherapy was said to be in the \$60,000-\$80,000 range.

I was looking at a choice; do I live in fear of this cancer for the rest of my life, or do I borrow to pay for the Chemotherapy and live in poverty for the rest of my life? Without the Chemotherapy, studies suggested the cancer would return within 5 years.

Nationally, cancer affects one out of 8 people. Healthcare costs affect everyone. In my opinion, no child, parent, worker, retiree, should have to choose between health and poverty. In truth, without healthcare there is a reduction of learning, productivity, profit, and stability. These lead to poverty with increased cost to taxpayers.

I am only one of many that have faced this life threatening situation. Please vote for a universal single payer healthcare system that will reduce cost by over 40% and will cover everyone.

Thank you for your consideration.