

January 21, 2008



SUBMITTED BY: RICHARD BETTINI
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
WAIANAE COAST COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CENTER

TESTIMONY TO: JOSH GREEN, CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

HEARING: JANUARY, 23, 2008
8:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 329

BILL NUMBER: HB 1993

COPIES: 5

In 2006, the Health Center provided services to 26,936 individuals through 139,210 encounters. Despite a proactive approach in supporting uninsured patients by assisting them in completing the QUEST application process, there has remained a constant uninsured population of 16% - 19% annually over the past 5 years. In 2006, 18% of patients were uninsured and 48% were covered under the Medicaid/QUEST program.

Besides being an economically distressed community, the Waianae Coast has a higher rate of residents who have, or are at-risk for, serious health conditions. According to the 2005 Department of Health Primary Care Needs Assessment Databook, that ranks 28 service areas throughout the state, the Waianae Coast ranks highest on the island of Oahu for:

- Percentage of the population below 100% and 200% of Federal Poverty Level
- Unemployment rate
- Households receiving financial aid and food stamps
- Infant mortality
- Teen births
- Adult population with diabetes
- Percentage of obese adults
- Chronic heart disease mortality

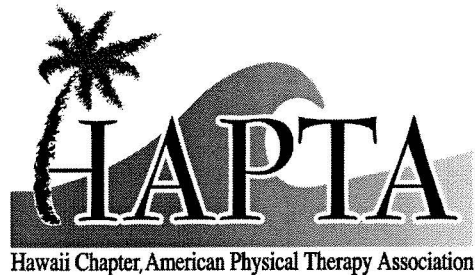
The Health Center's mission is "to make available to all residents of the Waianae District complete comprehensive health and related human services". During the past 35 years, the Health Center has evolved a unique model of health care delivery that addresses not only an individual's health care needs, but that of the family and the community. The Health Center is a safety net for uninsured, medically underserved patients.

Uninsured funding is extremely important to the healthcare of our uninsured population on the Waianae Coast. We ask for your support of HB 1993.

Mahalo.

**Testimony by:
Jennifer Simpson, PT**

**HB1993, Health
House Health Committee
January 23, 2008 - 8:00 am
Conference Room 329**



Position: Support

Chair Green and Members of the House HLT Committee:

I am Jennifer Simpson, P.T., and member of the Hawaii Chapter – American Physical Therapy Association’s Legislative Committee. The Hawaii Chapter – American Physical Therapy Association (HAPTA) is comprised of 300 member physical therapists and physical therapist assistants employed in hospitals and health care facilities, the Department of Education school system, and private practice. We are part of the spectrum of care for Hawaii, and provide rehabilitative services for infants and children, youth, adults and the elderly. Rehabilitative services are a vital part of restoring optimum functioning from neuromusculoskeletal injuries and impairments.

HAPTA supports this measure that appropriates funds to provide care for Hawaii’s uninsured population. As therapists we often see the after-effects of inadequate preventative care and ongoing health care for chronic conditions. For example, undiagnosed hypertension and cholesterol can leave consumers with higher risk of strokes and heart attacks; and undetected or lack of diabetes management will increase consumers’ complications such as renal failure, chronic non-healing wounds and heart problems. Absence from work can also be impacted by lack of timely or adequate treatment in which minor musculoskeletal injuries result in chronic pain and disability.

Continuity of care and establishing and having access to a complete medical record greatly facilitates the best care for patients. It is difficult to manage chronic conditions - medical records let providers monitor health over a long period of time, and spot trends or declines in health that may not be readily noticeable without comparing lab values or other hard data over time. Having follow-up care available within the same facility also increases the chances that patients will complete treatment for an injury or illness.

Consumers without health insurance over utilize the Emergency Room. Such consumers are at risk of not having access to needed services such as PT/OT, case managers/DSS, mental health services and support groups, and medical specialists. Skilled therapy and mental health services are expensive to pay out of pocket and it is very difficult to provide ongoing care for patients who do not have a primary care physician or facility. There is often no way to renew prescriptions for therapy services, or get refills of necessary medications without an established relationship with a physician or primary care facility.

Please support this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Hawai'i Primary Care Association
345 Queen Street, Suite 601 Honolulu, HI 96813
Tel (808) 536-8442 Fax (808) 524-0347

To: **House Committee on Health**
The Hon. Josh Green, MD, Chair
The Hon. John Mizuno, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1993
Relating to Health

Submitted by Beth Giesting, CEO
8:00 a.m. January 23, 2008
Room 329

The Hawai'i Primary Care Association strongly endorses this measure. Hawai'i is fortunate to have a network of 14 independent nonprofit Community Health Centers that serve 100,000 individuals per year at 46 sites on six islands. Community Health Centers (also known as "Federally Qualified Health Centers") are a significant part of the health care safety net, meeting the needs of people who have the most complex mixes of social, economic, and health problems. These include people who are homeless, impoverished, uninsured, enrolled in Medicaid and Medicare, who have special language, cultural, or mental health needs, and residents of rural areas.

Community Health Centers provide primary medical, behavioral health, and dental services, and use a model of care that maximizes resources while addressing the multiple needs of patients and their families. CHCs intensively manage the care of patients chronically ill with diabetes, asthma, and hypertension and bring their conditions under control. They work with families to link them to needed public insurance and other programs. They make sure patients get prescription drugs through free and discounted pharmaceutical programs like the 340B program. By offering accessible alternatives, Community Health Centers serve to ease emergency room overcrowding and are ideal settings for training students of the health professions because they offer valuable and diverse experiences.

Uninsured Funding. The number of uninsured people in Hawai'i is variously estimated to be between 110,000 and 130,000 people. Uninsured people are most likely to be non-elderly low-income working adults who do not qualify for employer-sponsored coverage or public benefits and either cannot get or cannot pay for private health insurance.

Hawai'i's Community Health Centers served nearly 30,000 uninsured individuals in 2006, a notable achievement but one that still leaves at least 80,000 people without appropriate care. In Hawai'i we should be able to ensure access to important basic health care for all residents - it just makes sense to keep people healthy and productive and to reduce uncompensated costs for avoidable emergency room use and hospitalizations. Due to facility, staffing, and funding challenges CHCs cannot currently promise to be the safety-net for all uninsured people in the state; however, restoring the \$2 million appropriation for the uninsured granted in past years' sessions would keep the Community Health Centers from running out of uninsured funding in FY 2009 as will happen during the current year. Please note that the \$2 million requested should be added to the \$3.5 million for the uninsured already in the Department of Health budget because \$3.5 million falls short of covering all the health centers' uninsured services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of this measure which is one of the most important actions the Legislature can take to support Hawai'i's safety net health care system.



Hawai'i Primary Care Association

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS:
Hawai'i's Essential Health Care Provider

Community Health Centers (CHCs) are a vital part of Hawai'i's health care system. They provide care for 100,000 people who otherwise would not get services at all or would end up in over-burdened emergency rooms (ERs), suffering from preventable conditions that end up requiring hospitalization.

Who: CHCs are the safety net provider for people who, for a variety of reasons, are not cared for by the private healthcare system. CHCs in Hawaii take care of:

- **30,000 uninsured residents.**
- **70,500 people living in poverty.**
- **10,700 homeless individuals.**
- **38,500 low-income Medicaid enrollees.**
- **7,200 elderly Medicare beneficiaries.**
- **27,600 Native Hawaiians at high risk for chronic conditions and in need of culturally compatible care.**
- **14,400 people who need language interpreters.**

What: CHCs provide primary medical, dental, and mental health services for all age groups. Equally important, CHCs help patients: get the economic and social assistance they need in order to get well; manage their care; provide health education; and offer interpreters and transportation.

Where: CHCs operate only where there are a lot of people not getting the care they need. These are areas without enough doctors, or communities where there are high rates of poverty, homelessness, and cultural differences.

Why they're important: CHCs are essential to Hawai'i for several reasons:

- A growing number of people — 100,000 in 2006 — rely on them for all their health care needs. As noted above, these are Hawai'i's most vulnerable residents whose challenges are not accommodated by private doctors.
- If CHCs were not there to provide cost-effective preventive care, ERs and Hospitals, already struggling with uncompensated costs and high demands, would be burdened to the point of collapse. ERs and Hospitals were never intended to take on this kind of safety net role.
- CHCs offer access to high quality care for the whole community. As community-based nonprofit corporations, meeting strict federal guidelines for quality of care, they offer stable primary care services in areas where the supply of private doctors doesn't meet population needs.

Economic Benefits: CHCs are also essential to the economic health of their communities. In 2006, Hawai'i's CHCs contributed \$84 million to the State's economy and employed 1,044 people. Further, their presence produced a ripple effect, stimulating \$168 million in economic activity and supporting 1,768 jobs. CHCs improve the health of both the people and the economies in their communities.

The Hawai'i Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a nonprofit organization, funded largely by the Bureau of Primary Health Care. Our mission is to strengthen systems of care in Hawaii for communities in need. Among the activities of the HPCA are training, technical assistance, and peer networking; marketplace analysis and statewide strategic health planning; the Hawai'i Immigrant Health Initiative; Hawai'i Covering Kids; community development; telehealth and health care technology; and community health worker training. For more information, contact:

Beth Giesting, Chief Executive Officer
Hawai'i Primary Care Association

345 Queen Street, Suite 601 • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813-4718
808-791-7820 (Tel), 808-524-0347 (Fax) • bgiesting@hawaiipca.net • website: www.hawaiipca.net

The Twenty-Fourth Legislature
Regular Session of 2008

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Committee on Health
Rep. Josh Green, M.D., Chair
Rep. John Mizuno, Vice Chair

State Capitol, Conference Room 329
Wednesday, January 23, 2008; 8:00 a.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON H.B. 1993
RELATING TO HEALTH**

The ILWU Local 142 supports H.B. 1993 to appropriate funds to provide care for uninsured Hawaii residents.

The bill provides funding to support federally qualified health centers that provide primary health care. These centers are on the "front lines" and already provide needed services to patients who do not have health insurance. However, their existing revenue sources, including limited insurance reimbursements, are often insufficient to meet the need.

Federally qualified health centers are operating on all islands and ensure that those in need will be served. Their goal is to provide preventive care and screening to treat conditions and illnesses that, if not treated, could require more costly interventions. The appropriation of \$2 million should be seen as an investment in the community.

The ILWU urges passage of H.B. 1993. Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this matter.



*West Hawaii
Community
Health Center*

Ola Ke Ola Waena O Hawai'i Komohana

Date: 01/23/08

To: House Committee on Health,
The Honorable Josh Green, MD, Chair
The Honorable John Mizuno, Vice Chair

From: Mary Louise Arford/LPN
West Hawaii Community Health Center

**Testimony in Support
House Bill 1993, Relating to Health**

I strongly support this bill which will restore money my community health center needs to continue to provide excellent health care to people who are uninsured. The West Hawaii Community Health Center (WHCHC) helps keep people from needing emergency room services by providing medical and behavioral health care, and supplying prescription drugs. It also offers health education and helps patients get other services they need to be healthy. At WHCHC, people who are uninsured cannot afford to purchase private insurance and don't qualify for Med-QUEST. They also cannot afford to pay for the full cost of their health care so we rely on this funding from the State.

I am a nurse here at WHCH. One uninsured patient in particular comes to mind. She had been nursing herself for 2 months because she did not have health insurance. She got to be so ill that she was having a difficult time just getting out of bed. She finally got our phone number from Kona Hospital. She came to us in November of last year with a cough, fever, extreme weakness, and a sore throat. Our physician diagnosed her with acute bronchitis and pneumonia. She was given an injection of antibiotics, as well as oral antibiotic and cough syrup samples. When she returned for a follow up visit, she kept telling us that we saved her life. She feels that without our services, she didn't know what would have happened to her.

I am proud of the high quality and compassionate care that the West Hawaii Community Health Center provides all its patients. It also contributes to making our community a better place to live by providing health care, jobs, training, and a focus for bringing residents together. But there are more people in the community we serve who need health care. We ask you to help us help them by increasing funds to care for the uninsured.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.



*West Hawaii
Community
Health Center*

Ola Ke Ola Waena O Hawai'i Komohana

Date: 01/23/08

To: House Committee on Health,
The Honorable Josh Green, MD, Chair
The Honorable John Mizuno, Vice Chair

From: Sheryl Hauler/Receptionist
West Hawaii Community Health Center

**Testimony in Support
House Bill 1993, Relating to Health**

I strongly support this bill which will restore money my community health center needs to continue to provide excellent health care to people who are uninsured. The West Hawaii Community Health Center (WHCHC) helps keep people from needing emergency room services by providing medical and behavioral health care, and supplying prescription drugs. It also offers health education and helps patients get other services they need to be healthy. At WHCHC, people who are uninsured cannot afford to purchase private insurance and don't qualify for Med-QUEST. They also cannot afford to pay for the full cost of their health care so we rely on this funding from the State.

I am a receptionist here at WHCHC. Every day, I receive calls from patients and the Kona Community Hospital (KCH) ER staff remarking how wonderful it is to have our facility in Kona. They are so appreciative that we never turn a patient away, whether the patient has insurance or not. Many times, patients have remarked that we have saved their lives! The KCH staff loves the fact that they have a facility to send their patients for follow up care after they've been seen at the ER.

I am proud of the high quality and compassionate care that the West Hawaii Community Health Center provides all its patients. It also contributes to making our community a better place to live by providing health care, jobs, training, and a focus for bringing residents together. But there are more people in the community we serve who need health care. We ask you to help us help them by increasing funds to care for the uninsured.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.



WAIKIKI HEALTH CENTER

REACHING OUT FROM THE HEART OF WAIKIKI.

Date: January 23, 2008

To: House Committee on Health,
The Honorable Josh Green, MD, Chair
The Honorable John Mizuno, Vice Chair

From: Sheila Beckham
Executive Director

Testimony in Support House Bill 1993, Relating to Health

I strongly support this bill which will restore money my community health center needs to continue to provide excellent health care to people who are uninsured. Waikiki Health Center helps keep people from needing emergency room services by providing medical, dental, and behavioral health care, and supplying prescription drugs. The Center also offers health education and helps patients get other services they need to be healthy.

- At Waikiki Health Center, many people are uninsured, because they cannot afford to purchase private insurance and don't qualify for Med-QUEST. Likewise, these folks cannot afford to pay for the full cost of their health care so we rely on this funding from the State. Waikiki Health Center serves residents of Waikiki and East Honolulu but also has an outreach clinic serving gap groups on the North Shore and in Windward Oahu.
- One third of Waikiki Health Center's patients are uninsured.
- Waikiki Health Center serves more than 4,000 homeless individuals annually through over 25,000 encounters.
- Nearly 97% of homeless individuals utilizing Waikiki Health Center's mobile medical vans are uninsured at their first visit.
- 42% of youth participating in the Youth Outreach Project are uninsured at their first visit.

Waikiki Health Center has unique programs targeting uninsured individuals such as the Youth Outreach Project, which offers a drop-in center and street outreach services for homeless, runaway, and street identified youth; and Care-a-Van Health Care for the Homeless program that provides drop-in and mobile primary health care and social services throughout the island of Oahu.

I am proud of the creative, dedicated Waikiki Health Center staff, striving to provide high quality and compassionate care for all our patients. Waikiki Health Center contributes to making our community a better place to live by providing health care, jobs, training, and a focus for bringing residents together. But there are more people in the community we serve who need health care. We ask you to help us help them by increasing funds to care for the uninsured.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.

Date: January 23, 2008
To: House Committee on Health,
The Honorable Josh Green, MD, Chair
The Honorable John Mizuno, Vice Chair
From: Christina Lee, MD, Medical Director

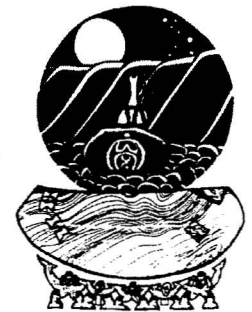
**Testimony in Support
House Bill 1993, Relating to Health**

I strongly support this bill which will restore money for Community Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) to continue to provide excellent health care to people who are uninsured. Waimanalo Health Center (WHC) helps keep people from using expensive emergency room services by providing medical and behavioral health care, and supplying prescription drugs. We also offer health education and help patients get other services they need to be healthy. At WHC, people who are uninsured cannot afford to purchase private insurance and do not qualify for QUEST (Medicaid). They also cannot afford to pay for the full cost of their health care so we rely on this funding from the State.

WHC, which serves a Medically Underserved Population (MUP) in a Health Professions Shortage Area (HPSA), is a vital part of Hawaii's health care system providing quality preventive and primary health and social services to our Ko'olaupoko communities targeting Waimanalo's 10,000 residents. We served nearly 4,000 people in 13,000 visits this past year; 30% of our patients have no health insurance. Another 45% have QUEST Medicaid. Not only do we serve the uninsured and underinsured, but also the poor, elderly, at-risk youth, homeless, and many others with financial, cultural, social and other barriers to care. In addition, we serve a large population of Native Hawaiians who have the worst health indicators (hypertension, diabetes, obesity, etc.) compared to other ethnic groups. About 45% of our patients are Native Hawaiian and we're seeing an increasing number of Pacific Islanders. While we continue to grow and expand, our community still has unmet health care and social service needs.

Because 30% of our patients have no insurance, the State Department of Health's Comprehensive Primary Care funds is one of our major sources of funding. With so many growing demands and very few resources, we need to rely on State policy and funding decisions that support us to serve the indigent and those with no insurance. It makes a lot of economic sense to support this bill. If upfront, primary care is provided to Hawaii's people, we will save on the costly Emergency Room and hospitalizations that will, inevitably, be utilized when primary and preventive health care is not sought. I am proud of the high quality and compassionate care that WHC provides all our patients. In addition, we are committed to make our community a better place to live by providing not only health services, but also jobs, training, and bringing our community together.

We appreciate the long-term, unwavering support that the Legislature has given our FQHCs, our patients, and our communities. We urge your support for **HB 1993**, which makes an appropriation for health care for the uninsured. Mahalo and Aloha!



Waimanalo Health Center

Ph. (808) 259-7948 Fax: (808) 259-6449
www.waimanalohc.org

41-1347 Kalaniana'ole Hwy
Waimanalo, Hawaii 96795

Date: January 23, 2008

To: House Committee on Health,
The Honorable Josh Green, MD, Chair
The Honorable John Mizuno, Vice Chair

From: May Akamine, RN, MS, Executive Director

**Testimony in Support
House Bill 1993, Relating to Health**

I strongly support this bill which will restore money for Community Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) to continue to provide excellent health care to people who are uninsured. Waimanalo Health Center (WHC) helps keep people from using expensive emergency room services by providing medical and behavioral health care, and supplying prescription drugs. We also offer health education and help patients get other services they need to be healthy. At WHC, people who are uninsured cannot afford to purchase private insurance and do not qualify for QUEST (Medicaid). They also cannot afford to pay for the full cost of their health care so we rely on this funding from the State.

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We appreciate the long-term, unwavering support that the Legislature has given our FQHCs, our patients, and our communities. We urge your support for **HB1993**, which makes an appropriation for health care for the uninsured. Mahalo and Aloha!



Waimanalo Health Center

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www.waimanalohc.org

41-1347 Kalaniana'ole Hwy
Waimanalo, Hawaii 96795

Moana DeMello
41-1517 Inoa St.
Waimanalo, HI 96795

Date: January 23, 2008

To: House Committee on Health,
The Honorable Josh Green, MD, Chair
The Honorable John Mizuno, Vice Chair

From: Moana De Mello, 2nd Vice-President, Board of Directors and patient of
Waimanalo Health Center

Testimony in Support
HB 1993, Relating to Health

I strongly support this bill which will restore money for Community Health Centers to continue to provide excellent health care to people who are uninsured. There are too many uninsured people who need help. Let's help people at the home level take care of their illness not at the Hospital Emergency Room. Pass bill HB1993 please, to help the Community Health Centers care for the ill. Hospitals are going into financial cardiac arrest. Please we need help. Mahalo Nui Loa for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.

Jim Kastner

41-829 Kakaina Street

Waimanalo HI 96795

Date: January 23, 2008

To: House Committee on Health,
The Honorable Josh Green, MD, Chair
The Honorable John Mizuno, Vice Chair

From: Jim Kastner, Vice President, Board of Directors, Waimanalo Health Center

Testimony in Support

House Bill 1993, Relating to Health

I strongly support this bill which will restore money my community health center needs to continue to provide excellent health care to people who are uninsured. The Waimanalo Health Center (WHC) helps keep people from needing emergency room services by providing medical and behavioral health care, and supplying prescription drugs. It also offers health education and helps patients get other services they need to be healthy. At WHC, people who are uninsured cannot afford to purchase private insurance and don't qualify for Med-QUEST. They also cannot afford to pay for the full cost of their health care so we rely on this funding from the State.

Waimanalo Health Center serves an area with more about 10,000 residents, many of whom are Native Hawaiian. Our windward Oahu community has a high rate of poverty and residents have multiple complex health problems.

While we continue to grow and expand, our community still has unmet health care needs. About 45% of our patients are Native Hawaiian and we're seeing an increasing number of Pacific Islanders and people whose incomes are below 100% of poverty.

I am proud of the high quality and compassionate care that the Waimanalo Health Center provides all its patients. It also contributes to making our community a better place to live by providing health care, jobs, training, and a focus for bringing residents together. But there are more people in the community we serve who need health care. We ask you to help us help them by increasing funds to care for the uninsured. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.

**TESTIMONY OF ROBERT TOYOFUKU ON BEHALF OF THE CONSUMER
LAWYERS OF HAWAII (CLH) IN SUPPORT OF H.B. NO. 1993**

January 23, 2008

To: Chairman Josh Green and Members of the House Committee on Health:

My name is Bob Toyofuku and I am presenting this testimony on behalf of the Consumer Lawyers of Hawaii (CLH) in support of H.B. No. 1993.

CLH agrees with and supports the purpose of the bill to look to alternatives to provide health care for the uninsured. We recognize that it is not without substantial cost that the needs of the uninsured need to met but do support the concept of funding community health centers as one alternative to address the health needs of the uninsured.

As to the actual funding in this bill CLH does not have enough information to comment on the amount of funding that would be deemed adequate for this undertaking and does not take a position on the amount of funding in this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Philip H. Kinnicutt
341 Iliaina Street
Kailua, Oahu, HI 96734-1807
808-254-4534
LEAFISHING@AOL.COM

Date: January 23, 2008

To: House Committee on Health,
The Honorable Josh Green, MD, Chair
The Honorable John Mizuno, Vice Chair

From: «GreetingLine»,
The Honorable John Mizuno, Vice ChairHealth Center

Testimony in Support
House Bill 1993, Relating to Health

I strongly support this bill, which will restore money to Hawaii's community health centers so that they may continue to provide excellent health care to people who are uninsured.

I serve on the board of directors of the Waikiki Health Center. Our center helps keep people from needing emergency room services by providing medical and behavioral health care, and supplying prescription drugs. It also offers health education and helps patients get other services they need to be healthy. At Waikiki Health Center, people who are uninsured cannot afford to purchase private insurance and don't qualify for Med-QUEST. They also cannot afford to pay for the full cost of their health care so we rely on this funding from the State.

More than 2/3rds of Waikiki Health Center's patients are uninsured. This is because Waikiki Health Center specializes in caring for low-income people who are not likely to get either public or private insurance, including the homeless and adults rather than families.

Waikiki Health Center serves more than 2,000 homeless individuals annually.

Waikiki Health Center serves residents of Waikiki and East Honolulu but also has outreach clinics serving gap groups on the North Shore and in Windward Oahu.

I am proud of the high quality and compassionate care that Waikiki Health Center provides all its patients. It also contributes to making our community a better place to live by providing health care, jobs, training, and a focus for bringing residents together. But there are more people in the community we serve who need health care. We ask you to help us help them by increasing funds to care for the uninsured.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.

Date: 1/23/08

TO: *House Committee on Health,
The Honorable Josh Green, MD, Chair
The Honorable John Mizuno, Vice Chair*

FROM: *David Peters
Chief Executive Officer
Ho`ola Lahui Hawai`i*

**Testimony in Support
HB 1993, Relating to Health**

Wednesday, 01-23-08 at 8:00 am in House conference room 329

I strongly support this bill which will restore needed funding to the only community health center on Kaua`i. This funding is needed for Ho`ola Lahui Hawai`i to continue to provide exceptional health care to people who are uninsured. Ho`ola Lahui Hawai`i helps keep people from needing emergency room services by providing medical, dental, and behavioral health care, and supplying prescription drugs. It also offers health education and helps patients get other services they need to be healthy. At Ho`ola Lahui Hawai`i, people who are uninsured cannot afford to purchase private insurance and don't qualify for Med-QUEST. They also cannot afford to pay for the full cost of their health care so we rely on this funding from the State.

Ho`ola Lahui Hawai`i serves the entire island of Kauai which has nearly 62,000 residents, many who have a variety of health problems but no health insurance. There is also a shortage of physicians here and none are able to take care of very many people who don't have health insurance.

Ho`ola Lahui Hawai`i is not only Kaua`i only Community Health Center but is also the Native Hawaiian Health Care System for Kaua`i County.

We have grown steadily since we started the CHC in 2001 and have two sites in two of the neediest areas of the island: Waimea and Kapa`a. However, we still don't come close to meeting all the needs in the communities we serve.

More than a third of our 6,500 patients in 2007 were uninsured and 85% were below 200% of poverty.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.

May Mizuno

From: namioahu [namihawaii@hawaiiintel.net]
Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2008 10:14 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: H.B. 1993 Testimony

Submitted by Marion Poirier, M.A., R.N.
Executive Director
NAMI HAWAII
808.591.1297

House Committee on Health
Wednesday, January 23, 2008
Conference Room 329@8 a.m.
State Capitol

H.B. 1993 Relating to Health-Testimony in SUPPORT

Dear Chair Green and Members of the House Health Committee:

My name is Marion Poirier, and I am the Executive Director of the newly merged NAMI OAHU and NAMI HAWAII organizations. We serve the general public, and have a membership of approximately 1,500 persons/organizations. Our national NAMI is also a grassroots organization, and has over 1,000 such affiliates nationwide. NAMI stands for the National Alliance on Mental Illness. We all provide programs of support, education, and advocacy, and emphasize the important of research-until a cure is found.

We SUPPORT H.B. 1993 Relating to Health because it appropriates funds to provide care for uninsured Hawaii residents. We support the particulars embodied in the bill, and strongly believe that healthcare access is critical to Hawaii. Chair Green, thank you for introducing this measure. We very much appreciate the opportunity to SUPPORT this important legislative bill.

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