

Harry Kim
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January 22, 2008

Representative Josh Green, Chair
Representative John Mizuno, Vice-chair
Committee on Health
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HB 2287, Relating to Health Care Professionals

Dear Chair Green, Vice Chair Mizuno and Committee Members:

The County of Hawai'i is in support of HB 2287, Relating to Health Care Professionals, which will provide resident tuition repayment for five nonresident students of the medical education program at the John A. Burns School of Medicine.

Health care on the Island of Hawai'i is in a state of crisis. The entire Island of Hawai'i has already been designated as a health care professional shortage area by the State Department of Health and we are in dire need of health care professionals for primary medical, dental, and mental health care. With a significant proportion of the health care professional workforce on the island entering retirement age and an increase in the costs of being a private local health care professional, the situation is only going to get worse.

One of the challenges we face in this shortage is recruiting and retaining health care professionals, especially in rural communities that are isolated by the vast geography of our island. This bill can assist in resolving this situation in two ways. First, by providing financial incentives to practice in rural areas, this bill will encourage graduates to seek employment in rural communities that are in desperate need of health care professionals. Second, the commitments required by this loan program will give graduates of the John A. Burns School of Medicine the opportunity to experience not only the challenges of rural medicine but also the benefits of building long-lasting relationships with our local communities.

It is hoped that similar programs can be extended to cover shortages in other health care professions as well.

There is much work that needs to be done to address the health care crisis on our island and this bill is an important part of that process. The County of Hawai'i urges the committee to pass HB 2287.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Harry Kim".

✓ Harry Kim
MAYOR

May Mizuno

From: HMA Karla Sasser [karla_sasser@HMA-ASSN.org]
Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2008 9:24 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: Testimony

Text Box:

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January 23, 2008

House H
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Cont

To: Rep. Josh Green, M.D., Chair
Rep. John Mizuno, Vice Chair
House Committee on Health

From: Cynthia 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 Liaison

RE: HB1996 Relating to Health Care (establishes health enterprise zones in the state to provide incentives for health care providers to serve in health professional shortage areas of the state)

✓ HB2287 Relating to Health Care Professionals (resident tuition repayment for five nonresident students of JABSOM)

The Hawaii Medical Association (HMA) supports HB1996 and HB2287.

The HMA appreciates the effort to provide incentives for physicians to service underserved areas.

Hawaii is currently experiencing a patient access to medical care crisis due to an inadequate supply of physicians statewide.

Economic incentives that reduce the financial burden of a medical practice can serve as meaningful incentive to practice in rural areas.

Financial burdens include:

- Overhead that can be as high as 75% of gross income;
- Overhead includes, high medical malpractice insurance premiums (premiums vary by medical specialty);
- Overhead includes increasing manpower, office rent and other business expenses;
- Income is based on inadequate payment for services from private and public health plans; and
- For new physicians, typical student loan debt of \$150,000.

We would like to request the following amendments to HB1996.

Currently, the bill is limited to primary care providers. We request the bill be amended to benefit all physicians, regardless of specialty. Specialists such as Obstetrician/Gynecologists, Orthopedic Surgeons, Neurosurgeons, Anesthesiologists, and others are necessary to meet the medical needs of Hawaii's residents.

In our discussions with primary care physicians, they are frequently frustrated with the shortage of specialists. Without specialists they have no one to refer patients for needed specialty care.

In addition, we would like the committee to note that it will take many different kinds of incentives to make Hawaii competitive with other jurisdiction. The physician shortage is national and is expected to last for the next several decades. Medical liability reform, which establishes reasonable limits on non-economic damages (ie. pain and suffering, loss of consortium, loss of enjoyment of life) and puts no limits on economic damages (ie. past and future medical expenses, cost of living expenses, lost wages, etc.) has served as a powerful physician recruiting and retention measure for other states. Texas, in particular, has compelling data showing vast improvements in patient access to care since passing medical liability reform in 2003. Given Hawaii's remote location, high cost of living and other disadvantages, medical liability reform would help Hawaii to compete with other jurisdictions.

We encourage the committee to consider medical liability reform, in addition to HB1996 and HB2287, as a meaningful way to recruit and retain the physician workforce and meet Hawaii's need for physicians.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

May Mizuno

From: namioahu [namihawaii@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2008 10:40 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: H.B. 2287

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

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

H.B. 2287 Relating to Health Care Professional-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 importance of research-until a cure is found.

We SUPPORT H.B. 2287 because it provides for the resident tuition rates replacement of tuition for five nonresident students of the medical education program at the John A. Burns School of Medicine to encourage nonresident medical school graduates to remain in Hawaii. We support the particulars embodied in the bill, and strongly believe that this measure will ameliorate healthcare access issues in Hawaii.

Thank you for bringing this measure forward, and we very much appreciate the opportunity to SUPPORT this measure.

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**TESTIMONY OF ROBERT TOYOFUKU ON BEHALF OF THE CONSUMER
LAWYERS OF HAWAII (CLH) IN SUPPORT OF H.B. NO. 2287**

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. 2287.

CLH agrees with and supports the purpose of the bill which attempts to create a Hawaii physician loan program and provide incentives for health care providers to increase the access to health care in rural areas. CLH has always advocated for alternatives to provide health care in the underserved and rural areas especially on the neighbor islands.

CLH has submitted testimony in prior sessions advocating for alternatives such as this to create incentives to increase the number of physicians that would practice in our rural or underserved areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS
C O R P O R A T I O N

"Touching Lives Every Day"

House Committee on Health
Rep. Josh Green M.D., Chair
Rep. John Mizuno, Vice Chair

January 23, 2008

8:00 a.m.

Conference Room 329

State Capitol

Testimony Supporting HB 2287 Relating to Health Care Professionals

Provides for the resident tuition rates repayment of tuition for five nonresident students of the medical education program at the John A. Burns School of Medicine to encourage nonresident medical school graduates to remain in Hawaii.

By Thomas M. Driskill, Jr.
President and Chief Executive Officer

Good morning Chair Green, Vice Chair Mizuno and members of the Committee on Health. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2287, creating a resident tuition rates repayment of tuition program for nonresident students of the John A. Burns School of Medicine to encourage nonresident medical school graduates to remain in Hawaii.

It is very difficult to recruit and retain health care professionals, particularly in rural and underserved areas, and the condition is serious. HHSC operates the state authorized safety-net health care system of services and strongly supports consideration of programs and incentives directed to alleviating the shortage and distribution of health care professional in underserved areas of the state that would improve access to quality health care to all.

This measure proposes a tuition repayment incentive to encourage nonresident graduates of JABSOM to practice in Hawaii and provides for program rulemaking, administration and management by the Department of Health and the University of Hawaii, to whom we defer technical considerations. Thank you.

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