



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME LOCAL 152, AFL-CIO

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The Twenty Fourth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Health
Committee on Human Services and Housing

Testimony by
HGEA/AFSCME, Local 152, AFL-CIO
January 30, 2008

House Bill 2412- Relating to Health

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME, Local 152, AFL-CIO supports this bill. H.B. 2412 proposes to appropriate out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$5,774,340 for fiscal year 2008-2009 for the State's portion of the federal disproportionate share hospital allowance.

The State provides the "safety net" to ensure that the most vulnerable populations are provided adequate health care in Hawaii. Our senatorial delegation has secured a second federal Medicaid disproportionate share hospital (DSH) appropriation of \$7,500,000 and State funds are needed to match this grant. Both appropriations will ensure that continued health care is provided to our communities.

We respectfully urge the passage of H.B. 2412 from your committees. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nora A. Nomura
Deputy Executive Director

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THE QUEEN'S MEDICAL CENTER

1301 Punchbowl Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 • Phone (808) 538-9011 • FAX: (808) 547-4646 • www.queens.org

Representative Josh Green, Chair
House Committee on Health

Representative Maile Shimabukuro, Chair
House Committee on Human Services & Housing

Wednesday, January 30, 2008
9:30 a.m., Conference Room 329

RE: HB 2412 – Relating to Health - SUPPORT

Chairs Green and Shimabukuro, Vice Chairs Mizuno and Rhoads and Members of the Committees:

My name is Rix Maurer, and I am the Vice President of Finance at The Queen's Medical Center. I am testifying for The Queen's Medical Center in strong support for HB 2412 which appropriates \$5,774,340 to match federal funding of \$7,500,000 for the Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) allowance for Medicaid/Quest patients.

Medicaid/Quest is the cornerstone of health care for our most needy population. Hawaii's hospitals in particular have been detrimentally affected by the inadequacy of Medicaid/Quest reimbursements and payments, and have annually lost tens of millions of dollars because government reimbursement is far below the cost of providing medical care. In fiscal year 2007, The Queen's Medical Center treated over 4,100 inpatients and 27,000 outpatients who were covered by Medicaid/Quest. The November 2007 report "Financial Trends of Hawaii's Hospitals, Nursing Facilities, Home Care and Hospice Providers" by the Healthcare Association of Hawaii found that 2006 Medicaid/Quest losses for hospitals were approximately \$63,500,000.

The combined federal and state funding will provide an additional \$13,274,340 to Hawaii's hospitals to supplement the reimbursement shortfall for Medicaid/Quest patients. Without state matching funds, the federal funding will be lost. Your support and approval of HB 2412 is crucial toward enabling Hawaii's hospitals to continue to serve the needy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Hawaii Pacific Health

55 Merchant Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 • hawaiipacifichealth.org

[5 Copies]

Wednesday, January 30, 2008 – 9:30am
Conference Room 329

The House Committee on Health

To: The Honorable Joshua Green, M.D., Chair
The Honorable John Mizuno, Vice Chair

The House Committee on Human Services & Housing

To: The Honorable Maile Shimabukuro, Chair
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair

From: Virginia Pressler, MD, MBA
Executive Vice President

Re: Testimony in Strong Support of 2412 - Relating to Health

Dear Honorable Committee Chairs and Members:

My name is Virginia Pressler, Executive Vice President for Hawaii Pacific Health (HPH). For more than a century, families in Hawaii and the Pacific Region have relied on the hospitals, clinics, physicians and staff of Hawaii Pacific Health as trusted healthcare providers. Our non-profit integrated healthcare system is the state's largest healthcare provider and is committed to improving the health and well-being of the people of Hawaii and the Pacific Region through its four hospitals -- Kapi`olani Medical Center for Women & Children, Kapiolani Medical Center at Pali Momi, Straub Clinic & Hospital and Wilcox Memorial Hospital -- 18 outpatient centers and a team of 1,100 physicians on the islands of Oahu, Kauai and Lanai.

We are writing in strong support of HB 2412 which would provide an appropriation, enabling Hawaii to become eligible to receive Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) funding from the Federal Government in the amount of \$7,500,000. Congress established the DSH program in 1981 to help ensure that states provide adequate financial support to hospitals that serve a significant number of low-income patients with special needs. Since 1993, as part of the agreement when Med-Quest was established, Hawaii did not qualify for DSH dollars. This bill would authorize \$5,774,340 as the State's matching share.

The real problem facing all Hawaii Hospitals is inadequate reimbursement by Medicaid and Medicare for medical services. On average, Hawaii hospitals lose 20 cents on every \$1.00 spent to provide care for a Med-Quest patient and 21 cents on every Medicare patient. Hawaii Pacific Health provides care for thirty six percent (36%) of the total state Medicaid/QUEST discharges and loses tens of millions of dollars each year in order to provide care for these patients.

KAPIOLANI
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AT PALI MOMI



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CLINIC & HOSPITAL



Wilcox Health

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Rep. Josh Green, M.D., Chair

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND HOUSING

Rep. Maile Shimabukuro, Chair

Conference Room 329

Wednesday, January 30, 2008 at 9:30 a.m.

Testimony in support of HB 2412.

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 strong support of HB 2412, which appropriates State funds to match federal funding to support hospitals that provide care for low-income patients, many of whom cannot afford to pay for their care.

The Association would like to acknowledge the efforts of the current administration, Hawaii's Congressional Delegation, and the State Legislature in providing a series of DSH payments to Hawaii's hospitals. Several years ago this administration aggressively pursued and secured federal DSH funds. Subsequent funding was obtained through the assistance of Hawaii's Congressional Delegation. Federal DSH funds have been matched by the Legislature in the past, and we seek that again today.

Hospitals and other health care providers are suffering financially because of low payments by Medicare, Medicaid, and private health care insurers. DSH funding recognizes that hospitals provide care to a substantial number of patients who do not have the financial resources to pay for their care because they are poor and lack health care insurance. The \$5.8 million appropriation contained in this bill matches \$7.5 million in federal funds. However, the DSH funding covers only a small part of the costs of caring for patients who cannot pay for their care.

In addition to supporting Hawaii's hospitals, the federal funds represent an infusion of money into Hawaii's economy during these times of deteriorating economic conditions and suggestions of a national recession.

For the foregoing reasons the Healthcare Association strongly supports HB 2412.

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The status quo of inadequate reimbursement by government payers is unsustainable. As cumulative losses to Hawaii hospitals continue to grow, the real costs to the community of inadequate reimbursement are physician attrition, patient access to specialty care, and compromised quality of care. The only way to maintain the level of healthcare Hawaii's residents deserve is to ensure that the State pays its fair share of Medicaid costs.

Our Congressional representatives worked hard to ensure that Hawaii be eligible for receiving adequate DSH funds this fiscal year. HB2412 would be a significant step in helping to address the current healthcare crisis by ensuring that adequate resources are made available to cover the true costs of providing care.

Thank you for your time regarding this measure. We ask that you pass HB 2412.

