

# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



## HB 2881, HD1 Relating to Perinatal Care

Written Testimony for the  
House Committee on Higher Education

February 12, 2008 at 2:15 p.m.

by

Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor

and

Dr. Gary K. Ostrander

Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education &  
Interim Dean for the John A. Burns School of Medicine  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

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**HB 2881, HD1 Relating to Perinatal Care**

Chair Chang, Vice Chair Bertram, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. Unfortunately, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa can only support the intent of the bill at this time because of our pressing priorities, such as our tremendous need for repairs and maintenance and health and safety issues, which are critical to our ability to perform our core mission for the State of Hawaii. We are grateful to the Legislature's attention to these needs. We recognize that you have many priorities and issues to weigh for the state, so the following information on this program is provided to assist you in your decision-making process.

This program is currently underway with the involvement of the John A. Burns (JABSOM) faculty and staff. It addresses an important need in the state and preliminary assessment of our activities suggests we are having a positive impact.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, we appreciate all interest in the University, and want to emphasize that we will be able to perform better in all arenas and best serve the state with support of the current campus priorities approved by the Board of Regents.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 12, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Jerry L. Chang, Chair  
House Committee on Higher Education

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: H.B. 2881 H.D. 1 – RELATING TO PERINATAL CARE  
Hearing: Tuesday, February 12, 2008, 2:15 p.m.  
Conference Room 309, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to continue operations and services for the perinatal clinic within the John A. Burns School of Medicine University of Hawaii, Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Women's Health.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this bill to continue access to perinatal services. The Department will gladly collaborate with appropriate public or private agencies to continue the pilot project if we are given the authority to contract for these services, provided the funding for this clinic does not adversely impact nor replace the priorities in the Executive Supplemental Budget.

We support sustaining perinatal clinic and case management services to women on Oahu with a history of substance abuse. Last year, the Department was agreeable to being appropriated the funds to contract with the University Clinical Educational and Research Associates program at the University of Hawaii, Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and

## HEDtestimony

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**From:** Renee Schuetter [rschuetter@ucera.org]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2008 5:24 PM  
**To:** HEDtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 2881 testimony

Rep. Jerry L. Chang, Chair

Rep. Joe Bertram, III Vice-Chair

Committee on Higher Education

Lashelle Wyatt

Date of Hearing: February 12, 2008

Support of H.B. 2881

My name is Lashelle Wyatt. I am a patient of the PATH Clinic. I strongly support H.B. 2881, which would appropriate funds to continue operations and services of the PATH Clinic.

I support the PATH Clinic because it has been very beneficial for me and my unborn son. The staff here has been very supportive, and also my peers. I look forward to coming Monday through Thursday. I think the clinic should remain ongoing. Others could really benefit, especially mothers who have substance abuse issues. I know because I suffer from addiction. And it's also a good start for mothers who use during pregnancy, so their unborn child can receive early intervention. It's overall a very safe and supportive place to be, very warm.

I urge the committee to pass H.B.2881 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lashelle Wyatt



Date: February 12, 2008  
Committee: On Higher Education  
Bill: HB 2881, HD1; RELATING TO PERINATAL CARE

Honorable Chairperson Chang and Members of the Committee On Higher Education

My name is Jackie Berry, Executive Director of Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawaii. HMHB IS IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 2881, HD1, WHICH PROPOSES TO CONTINUE SUPPORT OF THE PERINATAL SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT CLINIC ON OAH'U (PATH Clinic). This perinatal clinic provides comprehensive prenatal, delivery, postpartum care, and social services to pregnant women with a history of substance use.

The clinic opened in April, 2007 and has served over 50 women, most pregnant or immediately postpartum. The goal of the comprehensive care and services provided by the clinic is to improve outcomes for both mother and infant. There is general agreement that supportive and respectful care that addresses the perinatal, substance use, mental health, and pediatric aspects of at-risk pregnancies is optimal to get substance using women in for needed services.

The Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs state "the threat of criminal prosecution prevents many women from seeking prenatal care and early intervention for their alcohol or drug dependence, .....dissuades women from providing accurate and essential information to health care providers. The consequence is increased risk to the health and development of their children and themselves."

We urge your support for the passage of this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration of this issue and our testimony.

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Rep. Jerry L. Chang, Chair  
Rep. Joe Bertram, III Vice-Chair  
Committee on Higher Education

Nancy Nakihei

Date of Hearing: February 12, 2008

Support of H.B. 2881

My name is Nancy Nakihei. I am a patient of the PATH Clinic. I fully support the PATH Clinic continuing their special services. The medical treatments from the OB/GYN and psychological area are vital and delicate in their professions. They take a thorough understanding evaluation of you. They are sensitive to your needs regardless of medical coverage.

Not only do they provide basic prenatal care, this clinic covers a variety of drug education classes, parenting workshops, healthy relationships, and also has a day out of the week to do activities such as sewing, hands-on care with children and free discussions with one of the healthcare professionals.

The clinic is unique in its own way. First, it is located in a house which is very warming for the women and children. Secondly, they have a generous incentive program for active participation in groups and other areas in the clinic. They will also provide cab rides to and from the clinic, if you don't have any transportation. It is wonderful, knowing that you're in for a comfortable ride especially during pregnancy. The PATH Clinic is providing things beyond its mission statement and calling; such as its social work, for instance if you don't have any housing they will work with you immediately to find a solution temporarily, until something more permanent turns out, which is more than I can say about other services that just gives you the wait and run arounds. A lot of women like me were lost in the system and didn't have any reliable answers or referrals to be directed to. Luckily for the PATH Clinic's outstanding social work they will make the time for you to get whatever help or concern it is that you need and make forward progress. Lastly, I would like to compliment their family-based environment. The staff here is very welcoming and supportive throughout all your needs. They are non-judgmental and confidential with any information you share, which makes it really less-discouraging. Being open and honest knowing that you are coming from a challenging background or presently being challenged and able to come to a place like this and have some peace are very encouraging and reassuring on your conscience. Sometimes they have family-like gatherings on the holidays and they provide food, fun, and games for the women and children and it's just a great feeling for people who don't have any family there for them.

I hope to see the PATH Clinic in the future still operating on its remarkable purpose. One day I seriously wanted to end my life because I didn't know what to do, who to turn to, and how to do, until I looked up when I was riding city bus and read the PATH Clinic's advertisement. They took care of me and other women and their families. This clinic needs to stay open for the sake of people like us in these trialing times of our lives; individually and specifically in REAL RESULTS for programs to help us become a productive member of society. I urge the committee to pass H.B.2881 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Nancy Nakihei