



the
**Drug Policy
Forum**
of hawaii

March 28, 2008

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To: Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Senator Shan Tsutsui, Vice Chair
And Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

From: Jeanne Ohta, Executive Director

Re: HB 2881 HD2 SD1 Relating to Perinatal Care
Hearing: March 28, 2008, 9:30 a.m., Room 211

Position: Strong Support

The Drug Policy Forum of Hawaii supports this measure which makes the perinatal clinic program permanent and requests program funding. The perinatal clinic provides prenatal care and other services for pregnant, substance-using women.

Without the clinic, services that provide appropriate health care to substance using pregnant women to ensure the birth of a healthy baby are either extremely limited or unavailable.

The clinic's programs provide both substance abuse treatment, prenatal care, and follow up services in a supportive environment rather than a punitive one. One of the barriers to women seeking perinatal care is fear of prosecution. This type of program recognizes the importance of a public health approach to the issue of pregnant drug-using women.

The clinic would be cost-effective as it would help prevent low-birth weight babies and premature births. It would also encourage mothers to become the nurturing mothers that their children need.

In the short time it has been operating, the clinic has already had terrific results. We hope the clinic will be permanent so that it can serve more women and babies.

Please pass this bill and extend funding for the clinic. It is a good investment for the state and would in the long run save the state money. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM
Legislative Testimony

**Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means**
March 28, 2008 at 9:30 a.m.

by

Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
and
Dr. Gary K. Ostrander
Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB2881 HD2, SD1- Relating to Perinatal Care

Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tsutsui, 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 Hawai'i. 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.