

ROBIN E. S. MIYAMOTO, PSY.D.
2226 LILIHA STREET, SUITE 306
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817
TEL (808) 531-5711 FAX (808) 531-5722

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2064
Relating to Juries

February 6, 2008

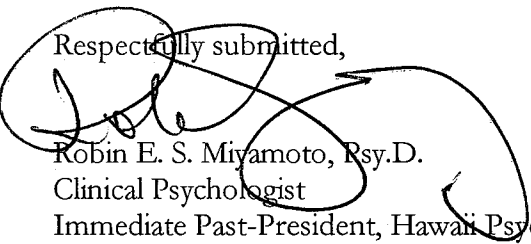
Honorable Chair Ige, Vice Chair Fukunage and members of the committee, my name is Dr. Robin Miyamoto, immediate past-President of Hawaii Psychological Association. I would like to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 2064.

Any type of Psychology practice, in urban or rural settings is frequently a one-person show. Given the sensitive nature of the work we do, it is very difficult to find locums tenens as physicians do, because most patients do not want to meet with a different provider in our absence. If one is able to find coverage, it is frequently for emergencies only, and the patient's care is disrupted. This is particularly a problem in O'ahu's rural areas and on the Neighbor Islands where a psychologist is frequently the only mental health practitioner for miles and caring for patients in crisis. Of course psychologists take vacations, but these can be planned for. And, for these very reasons psychologists typically limit their vacations both in length and in frequency. So, when a psychologist is called for jury duty, this adds another disruption to patient care. While a majority of Hawai'i psychologists surveyed feel jury duty is an important responsibility and that psychologists can play a unique role on a jury, this benefit is outweighed by the interruption in patient care.

Psychologists have been to the legislature many times in the past citing the shortage of mental health providers, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Despite the challenges in these settings we are honored to continue to be a part of the solution. As such, we are being asked to take on more severe cases of mental illness and regular treatment is a necessary step to avoid a patient decompensating or requiring hospitalization. Please give us this exemption to allow us to continue to serve the residents of Hawai'i.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony in support of SB 2064.

Respectfully submitted,



Robin E. S. Miyamoto, Psy.D.
Clinical Psychologist
Immediate Past-President, Hawaii Psychological Association