

**CLAUDINE M. TOMASA, RN  
1268 MOKAPU BOULEVARD  
KAILUA, HAWAII 96734  
PHONE: 808-783-5396**

TESTIMONY OPPOSING SB 2146 SD#1 RELATING TO THE CENTER FOR NURSING

To: Chair Baker and Vice Chair Tsutsui  
Senate Ways and Means Committee

From: Claudine M. Tomasa, RN

Date: February 21, 2008

Re: SB 2146 SD#1 Relating to the Center For Nursing

Good morning Chair Baker and Vice Chair Tsutsui.

My name is Claudine Tomasa. I am a Registered Nurse and I am testifying against SB 2146 SD#1 – particularly in relation to 1) the extension of the sunset clause from 2009 till 2014- allowing the Center for Nursing to be funded five more years- by imposing a \$40.00 surcharge/tax upon nurses whenever we renew our nursing license, and 2) the changing of the effective date to 2050.

As mentioned in the prior committee hearing:

- I do not believe that the Center for Nursing has complied with Act 198 (which created the Center) in terms of ensuring that better data about nurses is available to improve health care in Hawaii as well as improving working conditions for nurses. Nor do I believe that the Center has conducted research on best practices and quality outcomes for nurses practicing in acute care facilities. Please note that a large portion of Nurses in Hawaii, who are funding this Center, are employed in acute care facilities -working at the bedside.
- There is a great need to retain qualified, seasoned nurses at the bedside to care for Hawaii's seriously ill patients in the Acute Care Setting. Unfortunately seasoned nurses continue to leave bedside nursing or cut their hours of work, because of the working conditions and its impact upon their ability to practice safe, quality, nursing care - adding to the nursing shortage.
- I am unclear as to what the Center For Nursing has been doing the last three to four years to help stop these nurses from leaving the bedside in the acute care facilities. There has been discussion about the ANA Staffing Principles but no action-plan or research on whether the principles have been applied in the work place. It appears that more time and research is focused on programs that take

nurses away from the bedside -where the RN's professional assessment, critical thinking, and nursing care is needed - adding to the nursing shortage in the Acute Care Facilities.

Perhaps an audit should be conducted to determine whether the mandatory surcharge is being utilized appropriately to meet the intent of Act 198 – address the nursing shortage and the retention of qualified, seasoned nurses.

It is for the above reasons that I urge you to hold SB 2146 SD#1 in Committee. Do not compel hard working professional nurses to continuously fund a Center that I believe has not been accountable.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in opposition to SB 2146, SD#1.

Luanne H. Long, RN  
91-942 Pahuhu Street  
Ewa Beach, Hawai'i 96706  
Phone: (808) 685-6121

TESTIMONY OPPOSING SB2146 SD#1 RELATING TO THE CENTER  
FOR NURSING

To: Chair Baker and Vice Chair Tsutsui  
Senate Ways and Means Committee

Date: February 21, 2008

Good morning, Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tsutsui, and Honorable  
Committee Members,

My name is Luanne Long. I am a Registered nurse in Hawai'i for over 15 years, and the elected President of the Hawai'i Nurses' Association. I strongly oppose SB2146, which allows for continued funding of the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing by imposing a \$40.00 surcharge/tax upon nurses each time we renew our nursing license.

In 2003, the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing was created with the objective of gathering data from the various healthcare facilities within the State, to shed light on the continuing nursing shortage; to use this data to find possible resolutions, and to make recommendations to legislators and healthcare proponents on best practices towards the recruitment of new nurses and the retention of seasoned bedside nurses, which then alleviates this continuing nursing shortage.

It is my understanding that the data has been collected over these past five years, and presented to this Legislature, including but not confined to the following:

- the number and frequency of patient falls with resulting injury, due to short staffing or due to increased patient care requirements disproportionate to the number of nurses,
- the frequency of mandatory overtime, or even the frequency of voluntary overtime, all of which still points to the need for more nurses at the bedside,
- the number/frequency of musculoskeletal injuries incurred by direct patient care nurses, taking them out of the workforce,
- the exodus of nurses leaving the profession for various reasons, to include working conditions, and all of the above cited situations.

Whether the State Center for Nursing has met its mandate as it was originally set out to do is not for debate at this time. However, the above situations clearly illustrate that the nursing shortage is, and should be, everyone's concern as it clearly affects everyone within the community. At some point in time, each of us, or someone we know – family, friends – would eventually require some type of health care. So ask yourselves, why then should the nurses continue to be the primary revenue supporting this Hawai'i State Center for Nursing? Why does the State continue to impose this \$40.00 penalty charge on nurses each time they renew their licenses?

Looking at this from a different perspective, if a bill were to be introduced calling for a study on the effectiveness of legislators in the State of Hawai'i, and mandating that all expenses incurred on behalf of this bill/study be levied on each legislator, I sure would be curious to know how many legislators would jump up and vote in favor of this (theoretical) bill.

Hawai'i is not the only State with a Center for Nursing. There are other State Centers for Nursing throughout the United States. However, I am hard pressed to find another State that penalizes its own nursing populace by singling them out to be the means of revenue to sustaining their Centers for Nursing.

It may be helpful to look into the funding mechanisms of all other State Centers for Nursing to find alternate funding for the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing.

It is for the above reasons that I urge you to defer this bill.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in opposition to SB2146.

Wilmalee Kimble, RN  
Treasurer  
Hawai'i Nurses' Association  
677 Ala Moan Blvd., Suite 301  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

February 21, 2008

Re: Opposing SB 2146 Relating to Source of funding for the Hawaii  
Center of Nursing

Aloha Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tsutsui, and Honorable Committee  
Members,

My name is Wilmalee Kimble. I am a Registered nurse, and the elected  
Treasurer for the Hawai'i Nurses' Association. I strongly oppose  
SB2146.

The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing was created to, among other  
directives, collect data to determine whether there is a nursing shortage  
in Hawai'i, much like the existing nursing shortage in the rest of the  
country. Another directive is to determine why there continues to be a  
nursing shortage, and to research possible resolution, and make  
recommendations to the State relating to this escalating healthcare  
crisis. This State Center for Nursing has since generated "committees"  
and "studies", and recommendations, which to me does not help to  
solve the nursing shortage in Hawai'i. Perhaps there are not enough  
bedside nurses on the current Board of Directors for this State Center  
for Nursing. The current composition of this Board is predominantly  
nurse managers, nurse executives, and/or non-nursing Board members,  
none of whom have any idea of the many challenges faced by staff  
nurses who do the bedside care.

To add insult to injury, the primary funding for this State Center for  
Nursing is placed on the nurses whenever we renew our nursing  
licenses. This continuing shortage of nurses affects everyone in the

community. So ask yourselves, why is it that only the nurses have to pay this \$40.00 surcharge/tax? Why are employers exempt, when the nursing shortage is as much a problem to them as it is to the rest of the community? This brings us back to the current composition of the Board of Directors for the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing. Clearly, it is an advantage that there are only two Staff Nurse positions on this Board, versus all others on this Board who are either nurse managers, nurse executives, and non-nursing personnel. The greater majority of this Board are more able to serve their own interests, versus the interests of the larger constituency of staff nurses, as evidenced by their testimony in support of this bill.

It is for the above reasons that I urge you to HOLD this bill in Committee.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in opposition to SB2146.

## testimony

---

**From:** Kenneth K Obayashi [kenobayashi@mac.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 21, 2008 2:44 AM  
**To:** testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony opposing SB2146

TESTIMONY OPPOSING SB2146 RELATING TO THE CENTER FOR NURSING

TO: Rosalyn Baker, Chair; Shan Tsutsui, Vice Chair; Carol Fukunaga (my Senator); and Honorable WAM Committee Members

FROM: Kenneth K. Obayashi  
1448 Young St Apt 207  
Honolulu, HI 96814

I'm testifying against SB2146 because for 5 years we nurses have been the sole support for the Center for Nursing.

The \$40.00 tacked on to our license renewal fees every two years is an unfair tax, we never agreed to it. The health care industry and the government should be supporting the Center, not the nurses. I have been a bedside nurse for 16 years and I think we are losing bedside nurses because our working conditions are worsening. I see more work place injuries and I see more nurses going out on disability. We also work in very dangerous environments where we are exposed to debilitating contagious diseases and if we caught the disease, we would have to step down from patient care.

Thank you for allowing me to testify against SB2146. The Center for Nursing should seek other funding sources and stop picking on the bedside nurses.

Mahalo,  
Ken Obayashi, RN  
I work at Hawaii Medical Center East and I am a board member for the Hawaii Nurses Association.

Joan Craft RN  
Vice-President Hawaii Nurses Association  
Vice-President United American Nurses AFLCIO  
Board Member Hawaii Center for Nursing  
535 A Kuaaina Way  
Kailua, HI 96734

February 20, 2008

Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair  
Senator Shan S. Tsutsui, Vice-Chair

Re: Opposing SB 2146 Relating to Source of funding for the Hawaii  
Center of Nursing

Aloha Chair Baker, Vice-Chair Tsutsui and Honorable Committee  
Members;

I'm writing to express my strong opposition to SB2146. As the VP of the Hawaii Nurses Association and on behalf of the 4,000 registered nurses I represent, it is my opinion that a more appropriate funding source than adding \$40 on to nurses registration fees should be implemented.

When I was appointed to the Center for nursing two years ago, I and Vicky Poland the only other staff nurse on the CFN, raised the issue of funding. We suggested that the employers should pay a fair share. The response we got was, that the employers would not agree to it, well it should be noted that the nurses do not agree with being the source of funding either.

I randomly polled other state's Centers for nursing regarding how they are funded. The responses I got included: earmark funding, start up funding, infrastructure funding by the government and hospital



corporations and other grants. None of the Centers I called said that nurses funded it.

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (representing in their words the entire spectrum of health care), Kapiolani medical Center, Straub clinic and Hospitals, Wilcox Health, The Queen's Medical Center, Hawaii Health Systems Corporation-Leahi Hospital all have submitted testimony in support of eliminating the sunset clause because "the Center for Nursing has clearly proven its value" my question is, to whom?

The 4000 Staff nurses that I represent do not want to see the sunset clause extended and do not want to continue to subsidize this center . The above self identified stake holders should be considered as an alternate source of funding. May I suggest amending the bill to the following: For every RN employed at a health care facility a \$40 dollar fee, will be paid every two years, by their employer to fund the Center for Nursing.

While the Center for Nursing claims to be a balanced voice for the nursing profession in Hawaii, with the majority of working nurses in Hawaii being staff nurses, of the fourteen CFN board members only two are staff nurses. The majority of the board are health care administrators and former health care administrators.

It is for the above reasons that I urge you to defer this bill until an alternate source of funding can be identified,

On behalf of HNA's 4,000 nurses I thank you for allowing me to testify in opposition to SB2146.

Respectfully,

Joan Craft RN

**testimony**

---

**From:** Elayne Schwartz [shamokin51@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 20, 2008 6:29 PM  
**To:** testimony  
**Subject:** SB 2146 SD #1 Extension of the Sunset Clause

February 20, 2008

To Ways and Means Committee Chair Rosalyn Baker and Vice Chair Shan Tsutsui:

I am sending you testimony in opposition to SB 2146, My name is Elayne Schwartz, I have been a nurse for 34 years, 20 of those years working in Hawaii. I am a direct care, bedside ICU nurse. I am proud to be a union nurse and a member of Hawaii Nurses Association.

I am writing in opposition to the extension of funding to the Hawaii State Center for Nursing because I believe the HSCN has not fulfilled their duties as described in the original bill. I oppose the funding lying solely with the nurses of Hawaii. The vast majority of nurses are not even aware the HSCN exists, let alone that the \$40.00 added to their license renewal is funding the Center. The nurses I have had discussions with regarding this fact are angry about it and are not in favor of continuing financially supporting the HSCN.

The HSCN has not, after 5 years, come to any sound conclusions on alleviating the nursing shortage here in Hawaii. I have seen no results of their surveys published and distributed to bedside nurses. And yet the nursing shortage continues to grow, the bedside nurses continue to grow frustrated with their working conditions and their employers lack of concern for their well being. If the healthcare administrators and managers were truly concerned about the nursing shortage, they should be the source of funding for the HSCN. Because this shortage of nurses is in essence a managerial problem. It is the healthcare administrator's responsibility to have a well staffed facility to assure the safety and well being of their patients. The direct care nurses of Hawaii should not be penalized with a tax/fee to fund an entity that is not working diligently to alleviate the bedside shortage of nurses.

I sincerely hope that you will not extend the Sunset Clause any longer.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in opposition to SB 2146.

2/20/2008

Respectfully,

Elayne Schwartz, RN CCRN