

SB 3081

Measure Title:

RELATING TO THE HAWAII PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM.

Report Title:

Hawaii Public Health Emergency Surveillance System

Description:

Requires hospital participation with the department of health in an electronic health surveillance system to benefit the public health and safety of the people of Hawaii.

Package:

Governor

Companion:

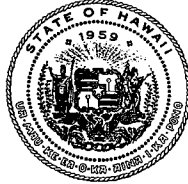
HB3159

Introducer(s):

HANABUSA (BR)

Current Referral:

HTH/JDL, WAM



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378
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In reply, please refer to:
File:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR
SB3081, RELATING TO THE HAWAII PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY
SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM

Testimony of Chiyome Leinaala Fukino, M.D.
Director of Health
February 13, 2008
1:30 PM

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health strongly supports this Administration-sponsored
2 measure.

3 **Fiscal Implications:** None

4 **Purpose and Justification:** The Department of Health proposes to establish a public health emergency
5 surveillance system. The unique characteristic of this system is that it will be use hospital data that
6 precede confirmed diagnosis to provide an early warning of potential disease outbreak. For example,
7 prior to the laboratory confirmation of an infectious disease, ill persons may exhibit behavioral patterns,
8 symptoms and signs. Syndromic surveillance can detect these outbreaks days earlier than conventional
9 laboratory and diagnostic surveillance.

10 An operational syndromic surveillance system would greatly support the Department of Health
11 (DOH) in its mission to protect and improve the health and environment for all people in Hawai'i. The
12 DOH seeks to enhance its health information systems and health surveillance processes to (1) provide
13 early detection and warning of community health threats that may be related to an influenza pandemic,

1 communicable, or other disease or a terrorist incident using nuclear, biological, or chemical agents; and
2 (2) provide DOH staff with an early warning of syndromic health disorders so that they can take
3 appropriate actions to isolate the health issue and safeguard the wellness of unaffected members of the
4 community.

5 In order to implement such a system, hospitals across the state would need to provide patient
6 admission records on a near real-time basis to the Department. The measure allows the Department to
7 electronically collect protected health information for the purpose of epidemiological investigation,
8 response monitoring, and other disease intervention activities. The Department would be required to
9 maintain the confidentiality of the data and to ensure that adequate measures are taken to provide system
10 security for all data and information. The Department understands that not all hospitals are able to
11 comply with the electronic transfer requirements and will stage the participation based on the
12 technological capacity of the institutions.

13 The Department in conducting the feasibility study for the syndromic surveillance system
14 interviewed many of the hospitals in the state. Amongst the leadership and management there was
15 overall support for developing an early detection system to enable appropriate actions to isolate health
16 threats. Through the discussions the Department also found that a measure such as this would be
17 beneficial to participating hospitals by providing immunity for data sharing for the stated purpose of the
18 public health emergency surveillance system.

19 Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Senator David Ige, Chair

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & LABOR
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Conference Room 016
February 13, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.

Testimony in support of SB 3081

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 support of SB 3081, which requires the Director of Health to establish a syndromic surveillance program for the early detection of epidemics, terrorist incidents involving nuclear, biological, or chemical agents, or other similar community health threats.

A syndromic surveillance program will enhance the mission of the Department of Health to protect and improve the health and environment for the people of Hawaii. Traditional disease surveillance protocols depend upon physician or laboratory diagnosis before alerting public health officials to a potential outbreak. These activities can delay an investigation by several days, which are often critical in controlling an outbreak. The goal of a syndromic surveillance system is to detect an outbreak and stop the spread of illness without having to wait for a clinical diagnosis.

The bill contains sufficient protections for hospitals that participate in the program. First, it assures hospitals that data collected by the Department of Health will be confidential. Second, it creates an immunity from liability for actions arising from the submission of data to the syndromic surveillance program. Hawaii's hospitals will eagerly participate in this program designed to maintain community health.

For the foregoing reasons the Healthcare Association supports SB 3081.