

**William P. Kenoi**  
*Mayor*



**William T. Takaba**  
*Managing Director*

**Walter K.M. Lau**  
*Deputy Managing Director*

## County of Hawai'i

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January 29, 2009

The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
and Members of the House Committee on Health  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

RE: HB 343, Relating to Rural Primary Health Care Training  
Testimony of William P. Kenoi, Mayor, County of Hawai'i,  
in Support

Dear Chair McKelvey and Representatives:

Hawai'i County strongly supports HB 343, which would re-appropriate \$1,500,000 in fiscal year 2010 and \$2.5 million in fiscal year 2011 to provide rural primary health care services by expanding the family medicine residency program at the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine's department of family medicine and community health.

The County of Hawai'i is experiencing extreme shortages of physicians, and this rural residency program is a proven strategy for attracting physicians to the communities where their skills are needed most. When physicians train in rural areas, they are more likely to consider rural areas of our islands as a place to establish their practice. At the same time, they are delivering care to medically needy and underserved rural populations.

The Centers for Medicaid and Medicare provided a grant to the John A. Burns School of Medicine to temporarily operate a rural residency program on the Big Island, and that effort has allowed 18 individuals to train on our island in one or more rotations each. Three of those physicians then went on to establish practices in Hilo, which is just what we all had hoped. This program works.

Unfortunately, funding for the demonstration grant that financed this program ends on June 30. This has been a collaborative effort that involved funding and support from U.S. Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, HMSA Foundation, Hilo Medical Center, the John A. Burns School of Medicine, local physicians, local businesses and Hawai'i County. We now need the State to step in and support this as well.

The Legislature wisely appropriated funding for rural residency in Act 277 in 2007, and we thank you for that contribution to this critical effort. Unfortunately, that funding was never released, and we now ask the Legislature to once again appropriate money for this program to give the badly needed Big Island residency program another chance.

Thank you for your consideration.

Aloha,

William P. Kenoi  
Mayor



THE LEAGUE  
OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HAWAII

TESTIMONY OF HB 343 RELATING TO RURAL PRIARY HEALTH CARE  
TRAINING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Committee on Health  
Friday, January 30, 2009  
8:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 329

Testifier: Joy A Marshall RN, Health Committee Chair, League of Women Voters  
of Hawaii

Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Nishimoto, members of the Committee on Health

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports HB 343 which would  
appropriate funds to: (1) develop a statewide rural primary health care training  
program, and (2) support the family medicine residency program of the University  
of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine's department of family medicine and  
community health. Effective 7/1/2009

We are aware of the increasing numbers of physicians that are departing from  
the Big Island and as editorialized in the October 8, 2008 issue of the Honolulu  
Star Bulletin as well as additional losses from all other islands; in fact the state in  
general.

It is well recognized that where physicians participate in their residency program,  
a significant amount of them will stay, become a part of the community and  
continue to provide health care in the place where they received their training.

This bill and its plan could begin to alleviate the loss of health care in the Big  
Island at the inception of the program, and provide cutting edged health care in  
the community where this program will be innovated, Hilo. We would anticipate  
that the success of this program will drive the addition programs as planned to  
be duplicated on Kauai and Maui.

We urge passage of HB 343

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 343



Hawaii Medical Association  
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January 30, 200

To: House Health Committee  
Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

From: Hawaii Medical Association  
Dick Botti, Government Affairs Liaison  
Lauren Zirbel, Government Affairs Liaison

Re: HB343 RELATING TO RURAL PRIMARY HEALTH CARE  
TRAINING

Chairs & Committee Members:

HMA supports HB 343 as a good long range solution to our rural health crisis we are currently facing. While the effects will not be felt for months or years, it is a vital link in providing our Neighbor Islands with access to medical care.

Email Testimony to:  
[hlttestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:hlttestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Health  
January 30, 2009, 8:30 a.m.

By

Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor  
and

Jerris R. Hedges, MD, MS, MMM  
Dean and Professor

John A. Burns School of Medicine  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### HB 0343 RELATING TO RURAL PRIMARY HEALTH CARE TRAINING

Chair Ryan Yamane, Vice Chair Scott Nishimoto, and members of the House Committee on Health, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, John A. Burns School of Medicine wishes to convey its strong support for the intent of HB 343, provided it does not adversely affect our UH priorities as set in our budget request, most notably in health and safety and repairs and maintenance issues. Addressing these urgent needs is critical to our ability to perform our core mission for the State of Hawai'i. We recognize that you have many priorities and issues to weigh for the state, and certainly one of these is the critical shortage of medical care on our Neighbor Islands.

Recent evaluations of workforce need demonstrate that the big island of Hawai'i is currently SHORT 18 primary care physicians based upon current population and health care demands. Equally important is that on the Big Island, 55% of the present primary care physicians are in or close to retiring age.

The scope and intent to develop the rural primary care workforce pipeline remains critically important to the state. If funded, this bill is likely to improve short and long term primary care access in rural areas by training medical students and residents in areas of need.

This bill will allow the medical school to develop a clinical "footprint" on the neighbor islands leading to opportunities for improved access to specialty services.

This measure will allow collaborative interdisciplinary training including nursing, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, and other allied health professionals.

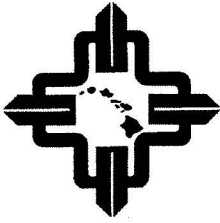
The placement of faculty physicians in neighbor island settings is likely to act as an economic stimulus to both the local hospitals and the surrounding communities. Research has found that each new physician generates an annual \$1,000,000 downstream benefit to the community from hiring staff and opening a practice site.

The needs on the Big Island will not be fully met until we can establish a sustainable post-graduate educational program there as part of the medical school's educational portfolio.

Establishment of such a program is dependent upon initial state investment in educators and (post-medical school, graduate medical school) resident salaries. Once established, generally in 3-4 years, the clinical activity of the faculty and resident practitioners should sustain the majority of the practice and most educational expense. Given such a resident education program, additional medical student education can take place on the Big Island.

These experiences will enhance general medical student interest in neighbor island practice by demonstrating the value of connecting with smaller neighbor island communities in Hawai'i. As demonstrated on the mainland, this exposure to practice outside of the larger urban communities leads to career and practice site choices favoring the neighbor islands by medical students.

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.



**HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS**  
C O R P O R A T I O N

*"Touching Lives Every Day"*

**The House of Representatives  
Committee on Health  
Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair**

January 31, 2009  
8:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 329  
Hawaii State Capitol

**HB 343 RELATING TO RURAL PRIMARY HEALTH CARE TRAINING**  
Appropriates funds to: (1) develop a statewide rural primary health care training program; and (2) support the family medicine residency program of the University of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine's department of family medicine and community health.

By Boyd P. Murayama  
Medical Group Practice Director  
Hilo Medical Center  
Hawaii Health Systems Corporation (HHSC)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 343 to appropriate funds to: (1) develop a statewide rural primary health care training program; and (2) support the family medicine residency program of the University of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine's department of family medicine and community health.

As the Medical Group Practice Director at Hilo Medical Center, my responsibility is to work with University of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine's department of family medicine and community health by developing the clinical space and the rural primary health care training program. Your support is needed to help secure funding for 23 additional physicians to be placed in our community by 2012. These 23 family medicine physicians will have the capacity handle over 200,000 patient visits per year in a community that struggles to find a physician who is taking new patients.

Much progress has been made to establish this program thus far and Hilo Medical Center is fully committed and has a large stake in bringing this program fruition. Construction of the clinical space is set for completion on February 25, 2009. Dr. Jim Donovan, the first physician hired by University of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine's department of family medicine and community health, is scheduled to start seeing patients on March 16, 2009. Each year the program will maintain 23 physicians on the Big Island, graduate 6 physicians and welcome 6 more when fully operational. Your support for HB 343 is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

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HILO • HONOKAA • KAU • KONA • KOHALA • WAIMEA • KAPAA • WAILUKU • KULA • LANAI • HONOLULU  
[www.hhsc.org](http://www.hhsc.org) <<http://www.hhsc.org>>

# HMSA



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

January 29, 2009

The Honorable Ryan Yamane, Chair  
The Honorable Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Health

**Re: HB 343 – Relating to Rural Primary Health Care Training**

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Nishimoto and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of HB 343 which would expand the family medicine residency program of the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine's Department of Family Medicine and Community Health to assist in the provision of rural primary health care services.

As you may know, the HMSA Foundation has supported the development of the University of Hawaii's family medicine training program in Hilo through a three year grant of \$535,000 beginning in 2007. We believe that programs such as these enhance physician recruitment for Neighbor Island practices by exposing students to Neighbor Island life, culture and communities. Studies have shown that oftentimes individuals remain to practice medicine in the area where they have completed their residency training. The expansion of this program to other Neighbor Islands will only increase the likelihood that physicians will stay to practice in the more remote areas of our state.

HMSA is working to ensure that our members have access to the services they need wherever they may reside in the State. This includes working with community partners to facilitate recruitment of physicians as well as supporting programs such as the rural residency program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Diesman".

Jennifer Diesman  
Assistant Vice President, Government Relations





## **Hawai'i Primary Care Association**

345 Queen Street | Suite 601 | Honolulu, HI 96813-4718 | Tel: 808.536.8442 | Fax: 808.524.0347  
www.hawaiipca.net

To: **The House Committee on Health**  
The Hon. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
The Hon. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

### **Testimony in Support of House Bill 343** **RELATING TO RURAL PRIMARY HEALTH CARE TRAINING**

**Submitted by Beth Giesting, CEO**

**January 30, 2009, 8:30 a.m. agenda, Room 329**

The Hawaii Primary Care Association urges your support for this bill. Encouraging an increased family practice workforce is vitally important if we hope to improve the health of Hawaii's residents and reduce health care costs. We believe expanding the family practice residency to rural areas will be a good step.

We would like to ask that the bill include collaboration between the residency and federally qualified health centers wherever possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.