

HB 343

HMSA



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

April 6, 2009

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
The Honorable Shan S. Tsutsui, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: HB 343 HD1 SD1 – Relating to Rural Primary Health Care Training

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Tsutsui and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments in support of HB 343 HD1 SD1.

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 'JD' followed by a flourish.

Jennifer Diesman
Assistant Vice President
Government Relations