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TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2009

Friday, January 30, 2009
8:30 a.m.

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 808 – RELATING TO HEALTH.

TO THE HONORABLE RYAN I. YAMANE, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE:

My name is J.P. Schmidt, State Insurance Commissioner (“Commissioner”),
testifying on behalf of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs
(“Department”). The Department supports this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to support the expanded use of telemedicine services
and technology in the state by adding a new section to Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”)
chapter 453 and amending HRS §§ 431:10A-116.3, 432:1-601.5, and 432D-23.5.

This bill is intended to address the state’s shortage of physicians and to improve
access to health care services and certain medical specialists, particularly in rural
areas.

Although it may not be appropriate for all medical situations, telemedicine
provides a cost-effective and convenient alternative to emergency room services.

Medical reports from telemedicine services include a documented patient
evaluation, which will become part of the patient’s health record and available to the
patient.

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This bill is consistent with the Legislature and Administration's efforts to enhance broadband capability, as reflected in House Bill Nos. 984 and 1077.

We thank this Committee for the opportunity to present testimony on this matter and ask for your favorable consideration.

**PRESENTATION OF THE
HAWAII MEDICAL BOARD**

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2009

Friday, January 30, 2009
8:30 a.m.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 808, RELATING TO HEALTH.

TO THE HONORABLE RYAN I. YAMANE, CHAIR,
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on H.B. No. 808, Relating to Health. The Hawaii Medical Board ("Board") has not had the opportunity to review this bill but will be discussing it at the next Board meeting on February 13, 2009. Therefore, the board is not able to take a position at this time.

The Board understands that there were prior legislation and laws enacted to amend the Insurance Code on telemedicine. However, the Board was not aware of these measures to amend the Insurance Code until December 2008, subsequent to an issue with telemedicine being brought to the Board in September 2008.

The Board is not opposed to telemedicine but is concerned with patient safety and the continuity of health care. It is the Board's belief

that community standards relating to safe practices call for a face to face meeting in which physicians take a patient's history, perform a physical examination and take vital signs. It is imperative that physicians be able to get a true read before treating a patient.

In line with this, the Board is in discussion with the entity who raised the telemedicine issue with the Board in September, to find a common ground in those areas in which a physician may treat a patient safely over the internet without having to perform a physical examination or take vital signs. All parties are committed to resolving the matter.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments on this bill.

HMSA



Blue Cross
Blue Shield
of Hawaii

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 808 – Relating to Health

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

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 808 which would ensure that Hawaii is able to remain a leader in the realm of telemedicine by adding statutory language that clarifies a physician's scope of practice in relation to the provision of telehealth services.

Hawaii is on its way to becoming a national leader in the field of health care technology. Our unique geographic location necessitates that cutting edge ideas and technologies are fostered to help overcome issues regarding access to medical care especially in rural areas.

Earlier this month, HMSA launched its Online Care program, aimed at improving access to care throughout the Islands. Residents can speak with a local physician from HMSA's network of credentialed participating physicians 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week. We believe that this program will benefit all the people of Hawaii and can serve as a model as we look for solutions to improve the health care system across the nation.

The language contained in HB 808 is meant to clarify existing state law that allows physicians to engage in telemedicine. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. We would respectfully urge the Committee to support HB 808.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Diesman
Assistant Vice President, Government Relations

Hawaii Pacific Health

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Friday, January 30, 2009
Conference Room 329
8:30am

The House Committee on Health

To: The Honorable Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair and
The Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

From: Steve Robertson
Executive Vice President
Revenue Management & Information Technology

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 808

My name is Steve Robertson, Executive Vice President of Revenue Management & Information Technology at Hawaii Pacific Health (HPH), which is the four-hospital system of Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children, Kapi'olani Medical Center at Pali Momi, Straub Clinic & Hospital, and Wilcox Hospital/Kauai Medical Clinic. In addition, HPH has 23 clinics and numerous outreach programs.

A challenge we are continually faced with in Healthcare is providing cost effective access to specialty health services for all people across the State of Hawaii, especially those who live outside of the Honolulu urban area. One of the ways to expand access to specialty health care to rural Oahu and the Neighbor Islands is through the use of tele-health technologies. We have been doing this successfully for over six years using real time video conferencing based communications.

This bill seeks to reinforce the legislature's support of online care services & encourage adoption of this technology by (a) clarifying that telemedicine is in a physician's scope of practice when authorized by a Hawaii licensed physician; and (2) provide further clarification on laws regarding tele-health.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. We ask that you pass HB 808 from this committee.

KAPIOLANI
MEDICAL CENTER
AT PALI MOMI



KAPIOLANI
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FOR WOMEN & CHILDREN



Straub
CLINIC & HOSPITAL



Wilcox Health