



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 13, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
House Committee on Health

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: **S.B. 1142, S.D. 1 – RELATING TO PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS**  
Hearing: Friday, March 13, 2009, 9:30 A.M.  
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to authorize physician assistants to sign certain documents; to provide emergency medical care without supervision; to administer immunizations; to prescribe medications for patients suffering from human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome without preauthorization; limit liability of physician assistants under good Samaritan laws.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) takes a mixed position on this bill. DHS does support efforts to expand provider access to patients, particularly to Med-QUEST program clients, however, provided that quality of care and patient safety is ensured.

DHS supports physician assistants providing unsupervised care only in the situations of emergencies, including Good Samaritan situations, public emergencies, mass casualty events, and disaster conditions. In these cases of critical public health importance, DHS supports the physician assistant having all hospital privileges and liability limits that are afforded to physicians

in the same situations. We also support limitations in liability as specified for the usual supervising physicians and the acting supervising physician in the emergency situation.

DHS also supports the expansion of physician assistants' roles in non-emergency situations only under the supervision of a physician as specified within a physician assistant's scope of practice and as the activities are clearly of net benefit to an individual's or the public's health. These roles include the following as specified in the bill:

- Documenting trauma when caring for a child believed to have been harmed
- Reporting information to law enforcement regarding treatment of suspicious or violent injuries
- Taking blood specimens for alcohol or drug concentrations and administering tests at the direction of law enforcement
- Authorizing handicapped persons to use life jackets or flotation devices in public pools
- Administering immunizations
- Documenting immunizations for a child entering school

For the following roles, the individual or public benefit may not clearly exceed the potential harm, and DHS therefore does not support physician assistants:

- Prescribing medications for HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C, or transplant patients without prior authorizations
- Exempting anyone from immunizations
- Excusing a person from wearing a seatbelt
- Directing or administering care for persons taken into custody
- Documenting the need for self-administration of medicines at school by a student or administration of medicines to a student by a volunteer

The bill implies that all expansions of the non-emergency physician assistant roles specified are within a physician assistant's scope of practice and under a licensed physician's supervision; however, this should be explicitly stated for each role. In addition, for the expanded physician assistant roles supported by DHS, consideration should also be given to add Advanced Practice Registered Nurses who provide similar care in collaboration with licensed physicians.

We request comments that providers with any expanded roles as a result of this bill serve underserved areas and/or be accessible for Med-QUEST program clients.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



## DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 101 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814  
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V/TDD) • Fax (808) 586-8129

March 13, 2009

### TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

#### Senate Bill 1142, Senate Draft 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) is a statewide board with seventeen (17) members appointed by the Governor, thirteen (13) of whom are persons with disabilities or family members. The Board's mission is to advocate and promote full inclusion, independence, equal access, and quality of life for persons with disabilities in society. This testimony represents a position voted upon by the Legislative Committee of the Board.

DCAB offered comments on the original version of Senate Bill 1142 - Relating to Physician Assistants that authorizes physician assistants to sign certain medical certification forms for their patients. Senate Bill 1142, Senate Draft 1 addressed our concerns.

Another suggestion we offer is that Section 17 on page 20, line 13 through page 21, line 2 is obsolete, with protections provided under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and should be repealed. However, if the Legislature chooses not to delete it entirely, language should be changed to reflect "people-first" terminology:

"SECTION 17. Section 347-13, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (c) to read as follows:

"(c) Every [~~physically handicapped~~] person with a physical disability shall have the right to use a life jacket or other flotation device in a public swimming pool; provided that:

(1) The [~~handicapped~~] person [~~suffers from~~] a physical disability or condition which requires the use of a life jacket or other flotation device; and

(2) The [~~handicapped~~] person with a disability obtains a statement signed by a licensed physician or physician assistant attesting to the [~~handicapped~~] person's need to use a life jacket or other flotation device."

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES W. FLEMING  
Chairperson

FRANCINE WAI  
Executive Director



## 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 Senate Bill 1142, SD 1**  
**Relating to Physician Assistants**  
**Submitted by Beth Giesting, CEO**  
**March 13, 2009 9:30 a.m. agenda, Room 329**

The Hawaii Primary Care Association urges your support of this bill which would expand the scope of practice of physician assistants and make them much more useful as providers in primary care and other settings.

We find that physician assistants are excellent clinicians who earn very high marks for clinical quality and patient satisfaction. In addition, with shortages in physicians and financial resources, Hawaii would be well-served to expand the scope of practice for all licensed health professionals to include all services such professionals are qualified to provide.

Thank you for the opportunity to add our support to this measure.

Ryan I. Yamane - Chair  
Scott Y. Nishimoto - Vice Chair

**Health Committee**

Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants

March 13, 2009

Support of SB 1142 SD1: Relating to Physician Assistants

The Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants is in support of SB 1142 SD1. The bill assists supervising physicians extend care by including physician assistants (PAs) in the definition of health care provider, in certain instances, for the purpose of signing basic forms and certifications for the benefit of their patients. Physician assistants were not intentionally excluded from these definitions, but rather, these were unintentional omissions. All items addressed within the bill are within the current scope of practice for physician assistants licensed in Hawaii and practicing under the supervision of physicians. There are no controversial issues within the bill, but rather, it is a housekeeping issue to properly address the definitions of health care provider in the State of Hawaii.

The bill includes PAs as providers under the Good Samaritan Law and in the definition of those who may provide care in disasters. The earthquake on the island of Hawaii illustrated the importance of allowing all qualified providers to deliver care in emergency or disaster situations. In some rural areas of the Big Island, PAs may be the only providers available to provide care in such situation.

Passage of this bill will allow patients better access to health care in medically underserved areas, be it geographically or by medical specialty and allow physicians to better serve their patients.

We ask your support in passing SB 1142 SD1. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Fielding Mercer  
President  
Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants

**PRESENTATION OF THE  
HAWAII MEDICAL BOARD**

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE  
Regular Session of 2009

Friday, March 13, 2009  
9:30 a.m.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY**

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL NO. 1142, S.D. 1, RELATING TO PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS.**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on S.B. No. 1142, S.D. 1, Relating to Physician Assistants. The purpose of this bill is to authorize physician assistants to sign certain documents; to provide emergency medical care without supervision; to administer immunizations; to prescribe medications for patients suffering from human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome without preauthorization; and to limit liability of physician assistants under good Samaritan laws.

The Hawaii Medical Board ("Board") supports the intent of this bill.

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

**nishimoto2-Bryce**

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**From:** Fielding Mercer [mercercs@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2009 11:49 AM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 1142 SD1

Ryan I. Yamane - Chair  
Scott Y. Nishimoto - Vice Chair  
**Health Committee**  
Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants  
March 13, 2009  
Support of SB 1142 SD1: Relating to Physician Assistants

I, Fielding Mercer, PA-C, support SB 1142 SD1.

Passage of this bill will allow patients better access to health care in medically underserved areas, thereby allowing physicians and physician assistants to better serve their patients.

We ask your support in passing SB 1142 SD1.  
Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Electronically signed: Fielding Mercer  
3/11/2009 11:46:48 AM



**nishimoto2-Bryce**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2009 4:28 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Cc:** dand@punahealth.org  
**Subject:** Testimony for SB1142 on 3/13/2009 9:30:00 AM

Testimony for HLT 3/13/2009 9:30:00 AM SB1142

Conference room: 329  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Dan Domizio PA/MPH  
Organization: Puna Community Medical Center  
Address: 15-2662 Pahoia Village Rd, Ste 306  
Phone: 808-930-6001  
E-mail: [dand@punahealth.org](mailto:dand@punahealth.org)  
Submitted on: 3/10/2009

**Comments:**

We strongly support this bill; Physician Assistants are an important part of Hawaii's Health Care Work Force. This legislation is long overdue, and it will make PAs, working with physicians, even more useful in the service they provide to the people of Hawaii.

Thank you for this opportunity to support this legislation. I am only sorry that I could not be there in person.

Dan Domizio  
Clinical Programs Director  
PCMC  
Pahoia, Hawaii

## nishimoto2-Bryce

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**From:** gabe/lynette [gabenlynette1@earthlink.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2009 12:47 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Support of SB 1142 SD1

Ryan I. Yamane - Chair  
Scott Y. Nishimoto - Vice Chair  
Health Committee  
Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants  
March 13, 2009  
Support of SB 1142 SD1: Relating to Physician Assistants

I, Gabriel Merrill, MSPA-C support SB 1142 SD1.

Passage of this bill will allow patients better access to health care in medically underserved areas, thereby allowing physicians and physician assistants to better serve their patients.

We ask your support in passing SB 1142 SD1.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

GabrielMerrill, MSPA-C.  
WorkStar Injury Recovery Center  
HMC-West, CSS Suite 170  
91-2135 Fort Weaver Road  
Ewa Beach, HI, 96706  
(808) 676-5331

Ryan I. Yamane - Chair  
Scott Y. Nishimoto - Vice Chair

**Health Committee**

Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants

March 13, 2009

Support of SB 1142 SD1: Relating to Physician Assistants

I, Kanoi Roberson, P.A.-C., support of SB 1142 SD1.

The bill assists supervising physicians extend care by including physician assistants (PAs) in the definition of health care provider, in certain instances, for the purpose of signing basic forms and certifications for the benefit of their patients. Physician assistants were not intentionally excluded from these definitions, but rather, these were unintentional omissions. All items addressed within the bill are within the current scope of practice for physician assistants licensed in Hawaii and practicing under the supervision of physicians. There are no controversial issues within the bill, but rather, it is a housekeeping issue to properly address the definitions of health care provider in the State of Hawaii.

The bill includes PAs as providers under the Good Samaritan Law and in the definition of those who may provide care in disasters. The earthquake on the island of Hawaii illustrated the importance of allowing all qualified providers to deliver care in emergency or disaster situations. In some rural areas of the Big Island, PAs may be the only providers available to provide care in such situation.

Passage of this bill will allow patients better access to health care in medically underserved areas, be it geographically or by medical specialty and allow physicians to better serve their patients.

I ask your support in passing SB 1142 SD1. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely, Kanoi Roberson, P.A.-C.

**From:** Lindsay Chang [lchang79@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2009 1:04 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 1142 SD1

Ryan I. Yamane - Chair  
Scott Y. Nishimoto - Vice Chair  
**Health Committee**  
Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants  
March 13, 2009  
Support of SB 1142 SD1: Relating to Physician Assistants

I, Lindsay Chang PA-C, support SB 1142 SD1.

Passage of this bill will allow patients better access to health care in medically underserved areas, thereby allowing physicians and physician assistants to better serve their patients.

We ask your support in passing SB 1142 SD1.  
Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**From:** Paul Strauss [pstrauss@bayclinic.org]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2009 1:46 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony

Ryan I. Yamane - Chair  
Scott Y. Nishimoto - Vice Chair  
**Health Committee**

March 13, 2009  
Support of SB 1142 SD1: Relating to Physician Assistants

I, Paul Strauss support SB 1142 SD1.

Passage of this bill will allow patients better access to health care in medically underserved areas, thereby allowing physicians and physician assistants to better serve their patients.

We ask your support in passing SB 1142 SD1.  
Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**From:** Richard Smith [medex@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2009 2:32 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Support of SB 1142 SD1: Relating to Physician Assistants

Ryan I. Yamane - Chair [hltestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:hltestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Scott Y. Nishimoto - Vice Chair

**Health Committee**

Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants

March 13, 2009

Support of SB 1142 SD1: Relating to Physician Assistants

I, Richard A. Smith, M.D. support of SB 1142 SD1.

The bill assists supervising physicians extend care by including physician assistants (PAs) in the definition of health care provider, in certain instances, for the purpose of signing basic forms and certifications for the benefit of their patients. Physician assistants were not intentionally excluded from these definitions, but rather, these were unintentional omissions. All items addressed within the bill are within the current scope of practice for physician assistants licensed in Hawaii and practicing under the supervision of physicians. There are no controversial issues within the bill, but rather, it is a housekeeping issue to properly address the definitions of health care provider in the State of Hawaii.

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Passage of this bill will allow patients better access to health care in medically underserved areas, be it geographically or by medical specialty and allow physicians to better serve their patients.

I ask your support in passing SB 1142 SD1. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Richard A. Smith, M.D.

666 Prospect Street #610

Honolulu, HI 96813-1933

## nishimoto2-Bryce

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**From:** Richard Bidleman [rbidleman@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2009 3:30 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** SB1142 SD1

I am on the board of the Puna Community Medical Center (a community based, non-profit 501(c)(3) endeavor). We opened our doors for business only last month. It has been three years in the making, including the build-out of the clinic at the Pahoia Marketplace. It would have been virtually impossible to build the clinic without the assistance of a PA. Our PA is not only vital to providing medical care to our underserved population, but he wears a second "hat" as the clinical director. We do have physicians on staff. However, if we could hire more PA's, we could be open longer hours and more days. At the moment we are open through the weekend (Thursday - Tuesday). We are the only medical care provider in Puna on the weekends. Until we opened our doors, Pahoia residents had to drive 22 miles to Hilo for medical care.

Please support this bill.

Mahalo nui loa,

Richard Bidleman  
Treasurer, PCMC

Ryan I. Yamane - Chair  
Scott Y. Nishimoto - Vice Chair  
**Health Committee**  
Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants  
March 13, 2009  
Support of SB 1142 SD1: Relating to Physician Assistants

I, Amber Payne support SB 1142 SD1.

Passage of this bill will allow patients better access to health care in medically underserved areas, thereby allowing physicians and physician assistants to better serve their patients.

We ask your support in passing SB 1142 SD1.  
Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

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**From:** Anne Biedel [abiedel@mauimedical.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2009 3:37 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 1142

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am a family physician on Maui and am very supportive of our PA's having prescriptive authority at Maui Memorial Medical Center. The hospital physicians count on help from these professionals and we in the community are better served by having physician assistants. Please support SB 1142.

Respectfully,

Anne E. Biedel, MD  
Maui Medical Group

## nishimoto2-Bryce

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**From:** John [warp11@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2009 4:29 AM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** support for SB 1142

Ryan I. Yamane - Chair

Scott Y. Nishimoto - Vice Chair

### **Health Committee**

Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants

March 13, 2009

Support of SB 1142 SD1: Relating to Physician Assistants

I, John Lee, PA-C, support of SB 1142 SD1.

The bill assists supervising physicians extend care by including physician assistants (PAs) in the definition of health care provider, in certain instances, for the purpose of signing basic forms and certifications for the benefit of their patients. Physician assistants were not intentionally excluded from these definitions, but rather, these were unintentional omissions. All items addressed within the bill are within the current scope of practice for physician assistants licensed in Hawaii and practicing under the supervision of physicians. There are no controversial issues within the bill, but rather, it is a housekeeping issue to properly address the definitions of health care provider in the State of Hawaii.

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Passage of this bill will allow patients better access to health care in medically underserved areas, be it geographically or by medical specialty and allow physicians to better serve their patients.

I ask your support in passing SB 1142 SD1. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

John Lee, PA-C  
Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Module 3D  
Kaiser- Moanalua Medical Center  
3288 Moanalua Road  
Honolulu, HI 96819

**nishimoto2-Bryce**

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**From:** joseph morris [jwmorris58@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2009 12:23 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 1142

Ryan I. Yamane - Chair  
Scott Y. Nishimoto - Vice Chair  
**Health Committee**  
Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants  
March 13, 2009  
Support of SB 1142 SD1: Relating to Physician Assistants

I, Joseph W. Morris, PA-C support SB 1142 SD1.

Passage of this bill will allow patients better access to health care in medically underserved areas of Hawaii, thereby allowing physicians and physician assistants to better serve their patients and provide the needed care they deserve.

We ask your support in passing SB 1142 SD1.  
Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully;

Joseph W. Morris, PA-C