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LATE

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, Dr. Steven King DPM 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.
