

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



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

February 26, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: **S.B. 1142, SD 1 – RELATING TO PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS**
Hearing: Thursday, February 26, 2009, 9:00 A.M.
Conference Room 016, 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 assured.

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 Nurse Practitioners who provide similar care in collaboration with licensed physicians.

We recommend that providers with any expanded roles as a result of this bill also be required to serve underserved areas and will be accessible for Med-QUEST program clients.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

From: Fielding Mercer [fmercercer@SportsStay.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2009 5:41 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Support for SB 1142

LATE

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair
Judiciary and Government Operations
Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants
Thursday, February 26, 2009
Support of SB 1142: Relating to Physician Assistants

The Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants is in support of SB 1142. 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. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Fielding Mercer
President
Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants

From: Sng Beow Leng [artemistar@pacific.net.sg]
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2009 4:09 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Simple%20supporting%20testimony%20SB%201142%20[1].jgo

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Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair
Judiciary and Government Operations
Thursday, February 26, 2009
Support of SB 1142: Relating to Physician Assistants

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

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.
Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

From: Jon Wilson [hawaiipa@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2009 6:32 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: SB 1142

LATE

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

Judiciary and Government Operations

Thursday, February 26, 2009

Support of SB 1142: Relating to Physician Assistants

I, Jon D. Wilson, MS, PA-C support SB 1142.

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.
Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

From: kathleen.elliott808@gmail.com on behalf of Kathleen Elliott [elliott2@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2009 9:30 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: SUPPORT of SB 1142

LATE

I am a physician assistant, a PA, and urge your support of SB 1142. I believe this will improve our patient's access to health care, and improve our ability to provide good health care.

aloha,

Kathleen Elliott, PA-C

From: Dave and Kathleen [jonellipacific@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2009 9:26 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: SUPPORT of SB 1142

LATE

I, Dr. David Jones, support SB 1142.

I am a physician and I believe that passage of this bill will improve our health care system.

I ask your support in passing SB 1142.

Sincerely,

David Jones, MD

Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center

From: John [warp11@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2009 10:20 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: in favor of SB 1142

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Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

Judiciary and Government Operations

Thursday, February 26, 2009

Support of SB 1142: Relating to Physician Assistants

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

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.
Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

John Lee, PA-C

Dept. of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Module 3D

Kaiser- Moanalua Medical Center

3288 Moanalua Road

Honolulu, HI 96819

Phone: (808) 432-8341

From: Rob Frankel [cdep79@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2009 11:11 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: in favor of 1142

LATE

I support the physician assistant concept in Hawaii and urge passage of SB 1142.

Robert Frankel
122A Ulupa St
Kailua, 96734

From: Anne Biedel [abiedel@mauimedical.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2009 9:08 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: SB 1142

LATE

Please help us keep Maui's residents served by supporting Physician Assistants in their much valued hospital work. As a physician in primary care I see how important it is to have these healthcare professionals working at their maximum capabilities. I fully support SB 1142. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely

Anne E. Biedel, MD
Maui Medical Group
Lahaina

From: Christine Pratt [physicianassistant@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2009 9:48 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Support of SB 1142

LATE

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair
Judiciary and Government Operations
Thursday, February 26, 2009
Support of SB 1142: Relating to Physician Assistants

I, Christine Pratt PA-C, MPAS support SB 1142.

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.
Thank you for this opportunity to testify.
