

LATE



March 16, 2009

To: Sen. David Ige, Chair  
Sen. Josh Green, Vice Chair  
Committee on Health

From: Paula Arcena  
Legislative and Community Liaison

Re: HB808 Relating to Health

AlohaCare is pleased to submit this testimony in strong support of HB808.

AlohaCare is a non-profit, Hawaii based health plan founded in 1994 by Hawaii's community health centers to serve low-income families and medically vulnerable members of our community through government sponsored health insurance programs. We serve beneficiaries of Medicaid and Medicare on all islands.

HB808 makes amendments to clarify the support and expansion of new technology in the use of telemedicine and clarifies that telehealth is within the scope of a physician's practice.

As a health plan that provides insurance coverage for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations, the poor and elderly, AlohaCare believes it is important that the State of Hawaii support efforts to increase patient access to medical care. The use of technology for telemedicine services can help to improve access to medical care, especially for residents in the rural areas of our State. The use of telemedicine also offers the benefit of preventing inappropriate use of emergency room services and better utilization of our limited supply of physicians.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide this testimony.

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