

SB1309

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

WRITTEN ONLY

CHIYOME LEINAALA FUKINO, M.D.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

In reply, please refer to:
File:

Senate Committee on Health

**S.B. 1309, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE WAIANAEO COAST
COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CENTER**

**Testimony of Chiyome Leinaala Fukino, M.D.
Director of Health**

February 10, 2010

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health respectfully opposes this measure.

2 **Fiscal Implications:** Requests \$332,000 each in fiscal year 2009-2010 and fiscal year 2010-2011 for a
3 grant pursuant to Chapter 42F, HRS.

4 **Purpose and Justification:** The purpose of this measure is to request an appropriation of \$332,000 for
5 a grant pursuant to Chapter 42F, HRS for the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center as
6 supplemental funding for emergency services.

7 The Department of Health currently has a contract of \$1,468,000 per fiscal year with the
8 Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center to provide emergency room services between the hours of
9 midnight to 8:00 a.m., 365 days a year. The request of \$332,000 for fiscal years 2009-2010 and 2010-
10 2011 is to supplement this contracted amount.

11 The Department appreciates the intent of this measure; however, given the current fiscal
12 difficulties, it would not be prudent to pursue appropriating these funds at this time.

13 Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this measure.



Hawai'i Primary Care Association

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Senate Committee on Health

The Hon. David Y. Ige, Chair

The Hon. Josh Green, MD, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 1309

Making an Appropriation to the Wai'anāe Coast Comprehensive Health Center

Submitted by Beth Giesting, Chief Executive Officer

February 10, 2010, 2:45 p.m., Room 016

The Hawaii Primary Care Association requests your support for this bill. The Leeward Coast needs this critical service which has been provided so well by the Wai'anāe Coast Comprehensive Health Center for many years. Without a subsidy, WCCHC may have to restrict its hours and staffing, which could result in tragic circumstances for residents of the area.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this measure.

To: **Senate Committee on Health**
Senator David Y. Ige, Chair
Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara
Senator Will Espero, Member

Senator Rosalyn H. Baker
Senator Fred Hemmings

RE: **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 1309: MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE WAIANAE COAST COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CENTER**

Hearing: February 10, 2010 @ 2:45 p.m. in Room 016

Submitted by: Richard P. Bettini, MPH, MS, Chief Executive Officer
Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center
Contact – 697-3457 or wcchc@wcchc.com

The Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center must budget at least \$1.8 million to operate its emergency services between the hours of midnight to 8:00 am, 365 days a year. With recent budget cuts and other economic downturns, the Health Center is unable to support the cost to make up for its financial losses. **The financial loss for 2010-2011 is expected to be at least \$332,000.**

These emergency services are outpatient services provided to Waianae patients to address the numerous urgently needed medical care that may be presented at all hours of the day or night. It is costly for the Health Center to extend its normal workday hours into late evening or overnight. This subsidy, along with facility fees paid by insurance companies, allows these extended hours. These services have also proved essential to the Statewide EMS system as the Waianae Coast is frequently isolated from the State's network of hospital based emergency departments.

The Health Center is requesting support from the Legislature to enable emergency services to be available 24 hours a day to service the community.

As the primary medical provider on the Waianae Coast, the Health Center fills a major role in providing health services to the community, which allows the State to focus its limited resources in other areas.

Background on the Health Center's Emergency Services:

The State has provided subsidy funding for the Health Center's emergency medical services since 1976, and from 1986, through an increase in State funding, we have been able to provide emergency services 24-hours a day, 365 days a year. The ongoing support from the State is testament to their recognition of the value of emergency services to residents on the isolated Waianae Coast.

Without the subsidy, the emergency services operate at a substantial loss. Other rural communities receive a large State subsidy for such services through the State Hospital System. Our emergency services do not get proportionate support.

The necessity for 24-hour emergency medical services on the Waianae Coast has never diminished. Tragic and crisis episodes in the past few years, in particular those that close off access into and out of Waianae and the loss of the MAST helicopter medivac assistance demonstrate how crucial a role the Health Center plays by having 24-hour emergency medical services available in Waianae.

The Health Center's emergency services are some of the most heavily utilized on Oahu, serving 14,334 patients through a total of 21,036 visits annually.

The majority of emergency service visits are for conditions related to asthma, upper respiratory infection, complications from insulin-dependent diabetes, cardiovascular conditions such as chest pains and heart attacks, threatened labor, and injuries and wounds, many which are violence related. Time is crucial in many of these situations.

The Health Center's emergency services are also used by the Honolulu Police Department and Child Protective Services. The Honolulu Police Department brings individuals in custody to the emergency services department for medical care. If HPD had to take the individual to Hawaii Medical Center West, or another emergency facility, that would decrease police protection in the community. Child Protective Services uses the emergency services department for pre-placement physical exams when children are removed from their parents/guardians.

Subsidy funding allows the Health Center to support the difference between fees collected from services rendered and the actual cost of providing the services. Funding supports uninsured visits, staffing of the emergency services department, lab, radiology and security services, as well as other operational costs related to providing services during the hours of midnight to 8:00 am Monday through Saturday and all day on Sundays and holidays.

Without additional funding, and with continued financial losses, the Health Center faces discontinuation of emergency services from midnight to 8:00 am.

Mahalo for considering our request to support SB 1309.