

Late Testimony

Hawaii State Legislature
Senate Ways and Means Committee
SB2490

Testimony of Kelley Withy, President of Hawaii State Rural Health Association
2010

2/23/2010

The Hawaii State Rural Health Association would like to express our strongest support for SB2490. We have conducted published research on the rural health care needs across the State and found that while all communities are unique, there are some themes that are common throughout the state. Needs that are commonly identified in our rural and underserved communities include:

1. Financial assistance (insurance coverage, medication, free services)
2. Expanding services that are available to rural communities (including telehealth, CHCs, community services)
3. Improving access to available services (Long term care, primary care, specialty care, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, health care training and other services)
4. Decreasing drug use
5. Increasing health education and training opportunities for community members
5. Increasing the number of health care providers working in rural areas
6. Increasing cultural sensitivity of providers

We need our health centers to provide care for those who can't get care elsewhere. Therefore the Hawaii State Rural Health Association fully supports SB2490 because we depend upon our community health centers to provide care in rural areas and thereby increase access to healthcare services throughout the State of Hawaii, particularly the rural areas.

Sincerely,
Kelley Withy, MD, PhD
President, Hawaii State Rural Health Association