



# Hawaii Association of Health Plans

February 23, 2010

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
The Honorable Shan Tsutsui, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

**Re: SB 2529 SD1 – Relating to Healthcare Claims**

Dear Chair Kim, Chair Tsutsui and Members of the Committee:

My name is Howard Lee and I am President of the Hawaii Association of Health Plans (“HAHP”). HAHP is a non-profit organization consisting of seven (7) member organizations:

AlohaCare  
Hawaii Medical Assurance Association  
HMSA  
Hawaii-Western Management Group, Inc.

MDX Hawai‘i  
University Health Alliance  
UnitedHealthcare

Our mission is to promote initiatives aimed at improving the overall health of Hawaii. We are also active participants in the legislative process. Before providing any testimony at a Legislative hearing, all HAHP member organizations must be in unanimous agreement of the statement or position.

HAHP appreciates the opportunity to testify on SB 2529 SD1 which would establish a system under the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs to collect, analyze and distribute health care information. HAHP supports the intent of this measure.

Transparency seems to be a buzz word this session with many bills attempting to accomplish similar goals. Many of the HAHP member plans have been meeting with other stakeholders in the health care system to begin to sort out the myriad issues and potential regulatory and privacy concerns revolving around the sharing of information. While we appreciate the intent behind the measure before you today we believe that even more comprehensive efforts need to be undertaken in order to make the sharing of data relevant. We look forward to working together to accomplish the goal of greater transparency throughout the health care system.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Sincerely,

Howard Lee  
President



**HAWAII MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

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**Tuesday, February 23, 2010, 10:05am, Conference Room 211**

To: COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Shan S. Tsutsui, Vice Chair

From: Hawaii Medical Association  
Gary A. Okamoto, MD, Legislative Co-Chair  
Linda Rasmussen, MD, Legislative Co-Chair  
April Donahue, Executive Director  
Lauren Zirbel, Government Affairs  
Dick Botti, Government Affairs

RE: SB2529 RELATING TO HEALTHCARE CLAIMS

In Support

Chairs & Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Association supports SB2529 as a measure to help provide comprehensive, accurate health insurance claims data collection for Hawaii. This can allow greater public awareness of the costs of health care, allow insurers and providers the ability to compare claims data across the state, and eventually help identify ways to stem the continued rise of health care expenses. This data collection is critical to allowing stakeholders to develop plans for improving the quality and cost-efficiency of health care in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**OFFICERS**

President - Robert Marvit, MD President-Elect - Morris Mitsunaga, MD Secretary - Thomas Kosasa, MD  
Immediate Past President - Gary Okamoto, MD Treasurer - Stephen Kemble, MD Executive Director - April Donahue



**Testimony by:**  
**Patti Taira-Tokuuke, PT**

**SB 2529,sd1, Relating to HealthCare Claims**  
**Sen WAM, Tues. February 23, 2010**  
**Room 211, 10:05 am**                      **Position: Support**

Chair Mercado Kim and Members of the Sen WAM Committee:

I am Patti Taira-Tokuuke, P.T., Co-Chair of the Reimbursement Issues Committee and member of HAPTA's Legislative Committee. HAPTA represents 250-300 physical therapists and physical therapist assistants employed in hospitals, nursing homes, the Armed Forces, the Department of Education and Department of Health (DOH) systems, and private clinics throughout our community. Physical therapists work with everyone, from infants to the elderly, to restore and improve function and quality of life. We are part of the spectrum of care for Hawaii, and provide rehabilitative services for infants and children, youth, adults and the elderly. Rehabilitative services are a vital part of restoring optimum function from neuromusculoskeletal injuries and impairments.

We appreciate the collaborative work of the organizations and individuals who have developed this bill that seeks to establish a uniform claims reporting system that will facilitate transparency and accountability of health care insurance plans as well as providers of care.

I can be reached at 808-969-3811 if you have any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

February 23, 2010

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
The Honorable Shan Tsutsui, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

**Re: SB 2529 SD1 – Relating to Healthcare Claims**

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Tsutsui and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify on SB 2529 SD1 which would create a database consisting of information provided by health plans' claims information. HMSA supports the intent of this measure.

This legislative session has already seen a plethora of measures aimed at gaining more transparency in the health care system. Unfortunately, at this time many of these bills have only targeted a single aspect of the system, such as the one before you today. We appreciate the intent of this measure as it attempts to work towards providing potentially useful information to consumers.

Despite the fact that health care reform is no longer in the spotlight on the national level, there are many discussions taking place locally aimed at facilitating change in our health care system. One of the cornerstones of that effort is to create more transparency within the entire system; more transparency for providers, facilities and health plans to reengage and empower consumers. This bill represents a step in the right direction and provides some basic building blocks with which to expand on in order to accomplish widespread transparency.

With more transparency, reports could be published, widely accessible to consumers, such as an annual guide to assist consumers in selecting health care providers and health plans. The use of clinical data could be used to empower consumers in choosing their health care based on the quality of that care. Consumers would have more information at their fingertips in clear language to assist them when facing chronic illness or just to find an appropriate primary care physician. The opportunities are endless when all stakeholders can come together to work towards the common goal of improving the health care system.

We understand that this is a big challenge, but believe there is much that can be done to promote transparency, and SB 2529 SD1 just scratches the surface. Health care reform, if it is to be meaningful, needs to accomplish long term gain which usually does not happen without short term pain. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Diesman  
Vice President  
Government Relations