



HAWAII MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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Monday, February 14, 2011, 2:00 P.M., Conference Room 329

To: COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

From: Hawaii Medical Association
Dr. Morris Mitsunaga, MD, President
Linda Rasmussen, MD, Legislative Co-Chair
Dr. Joseph Zobian, MD, Legislative Co-Chair
Dr. Christopher Flanders, DO, Executive Director
Lauren Zirbel, Community and Government Relations

Re: HB 863 RELATING TO HEALTH

In Support

Chairs & Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Association supports HB 863, which extends by one year the deadline for the Hawaii health authority to submit to the legislature a comprehensive health plan for all individuals in the State.

We hope that the provider community will have a meaningful place in the discussion about which benefits are necessary for patients to lead healthy and productive lives and how we can improve access to affordable health insurance for self employed and part-time workers.

We need to look at holistic approaches to altering our healthcare sector. The current structure has rendered the practice of medicine uneconomical in rural neighbor island communities and has resulted in decreased life spans for these populations.

One of our members who is a Cardiologists was denied a small business loan to practice on the Big Island because the bank did not believe that practicing medicine was a viable business. She was forced to commute to Oahu to practice. This is a direct result of the high population of Quest patients on the neighbor islands. If we don't improve Medicaid, our system will collapse.

Farming out medical decisions to "Managed Care" by insurance administrators so they can deny care, deny payment, reject prescriptions and generally make Patients and Physicians lives miserable is not the answer to savings in medicine.

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-- STEPHEN KEMBLE, MD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR -- CHRISTOPHER FLANDERS, DO**

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TESTIMONY

HB 863

ROOM 329

2/15/1011

10:00 AM

House Health Committee

Chair Yamane and Members of the Committee:

I urge your support for HB 863, changing the end date for the work of the Hawaii Health Authority.

For over 20 years A. Q. McElrath (one of the authors of the Hawaii Prepaid Act) has been advocating for revisions in the way Hawaii delivers healthcare to residents of the State - to adapt to the socio/political changes that have transpired since 1974. She has emphasized the need to “rationalize” a system that has become splintered, unequal in application, unaffordable for small employers and the self insured, and fundamentally broken.

(A simple analogy is what happens to a five year old computer that has never been defragmented – it stops working, or works so inefficiently it is no longer useful or effective at doing its task.)

Our healthcare system needs to be “defragged”. A cohesive, coherent, affordable, data driven, and rational model needs to be implemented in Hawaii, and throughout the U.S. HB863 restarts the Hawaii Health Authority, a body charged with developing a plan to “defrag” Hawaii’s healthcare non-system. With your support Hawaii can look forward to a rational, affordable, benefit and beneficiary driven, comprehensive plan by July 1, 2012.

Jory Watland, Coordinator
Health Care for All Hawaii

An Organization of residents promoting universal health

morikawa2 - Grant

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 13, 2011 5:23 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: witeckj001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB863 on 2/15/2011 10:00:00 AM

Testimony for HLT 2/15/2011 10:00:00 AM HB863

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: John Witeck
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: witeckj001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/13/2011

Comments:

Please pass this bill and extend the Hawaii Health Authority and move toward making Hawaii a state with universal health care for all citizens--a single-payer state-run system. This is long overdue. People cannot afford the premiums being charged by private insurance companies--it's time to stop the rip-offs and do a simple system like Medicare, but run by the State of Hawaii and financed by progressive income taxes and modest contributions from the insured.

STEPHEN B. KEMBLE, M.D.

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To: COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

Re: HB 863, Relating to Health

I am testifying in support of HB 863, which postpones the due date for a report from the Hawaii Health Authority (HHA), with draft legislation, from January 2011 to January 2012.

The 2009 Hawaii Legislature passed Act 11 to create the HHA, tasked with designing and then managing a universal health care system for Hawaii that covers everyone in the State. As you know, then Governor Lingle refused to appoint the HHA, so the law was never implemented. The law is still in force, but the due date for the HHA's report to the legislature has passed, so all we need to begin the planning process is to postpone the due date for the report by a year. This is exactly what this bill does.

Time is of the essence in planning for health care reform, as most aspects of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) are scheduled to be implemented in January 2014, including creation of health insurance exchanges. If Hawaii intends to move forward with designing and implementing a universal health care system, as called for in Act 11-2009, then we need to develop a specific proposal and file for the necessary Federal waivers to allow it to be implemented in lieu of an exchange. Alternatively, if we are unable to secure such waivers we need to plan on implementing the Hawaii health insurance exchange in a way that provides a stepping stone toward universal health care, and not a more fragmented and expensive form of exchange that would have to be dismantled later in order to achieve cost-effective, sustainable, universal health care. Models for how to do this, using provisions in the PPACA, are already being developed in Vermont, Connecticut, and other States.

The worst-case scenario would be to do nothing and allow the Federal government to establish an insurance exchange for us that would bring in mainland style health insurance plans that undo all the advantages of our Prepaid Health Care law.

Stephen Kemble, MD
February 12, 2010