



**LATE
Testimony**

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Thursday, February 2, 2012

To: The Honorable John M. Mizuno
Chair, House Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane
Chair, House Committee on Health

From: 'Ohana Health Plan

Re: House Bill 2189-Relating to the Medicaid

Hearing: Thursday, February 2, 2012, 10:00 a.m.
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 329

'Ohana Health Plan is managed by a local team of experienced health care professionals who embrace cultural diversity, advocate preventative care and facilitate communications between members and providers. Our philosophy is to place members and their families at the center of the health care continuum.

'Ohana Health Plan is offered by WellCare Health Insurance of Arizona, Inc. WellCare provides managed care services exclusively for government-sponsored health care programs serving approximately 2.4 million Medicaid and Medicare members nationwide. 'Ohana has been able to take WellCare's national experience and that of our local team to develop an 'Ohana care model that addresses local members' health care, long-term care and care coordination needs.

We appreciate this opportunity to respectfully submit these comments on House Bill 2189-Relating to Medicaid. The purpose of this bill is to require Medicaid home and community-based waiver programs to allow family members hired and directed by the waiver program individual to provide specific approved in-home care services to the individual.

We believe this bill is unnecessary as Medicaid home and community-based waiver programs already allow family members to be hired and directed by the waiver program individual to provide specific approved in-home care services to the individual. This is what is more commonly known as the "self-direct program".

'Ohana supports the utilization of Family members or significant others to perform certain Medicaid funded care in the home. 'Ohana currently offers the option for our membership to self-direct certain types of services in the home. Once a member is assessed as needing services such as Personal Assistance level 1 (Chore or Homemaker services), Personal Assistance level 2 (help with Activities of Daily Living or ADLs like bathing or grooming) or Nursing types of services (G-tube feedings, trach care), the member is offered the choice of having an agency provide the care or opting for the Self-Direction program. If the member selects Self-Direction, the members is electing to utilize a lay person of their choosing to perform the authorized services.

'Ohana assist the member with the hiring process and any requested background checks or training. Once the caregiver is hired, 'Ohana acts as the Fiscal Intermediary- essentially we process payroll and maintain the proper employment paperwork. The member is technically the "employer" of the caregiver.

'Ohana has offered this program since our initial go live three years ago. It is a very popular program and we have increased the number of participants from a few hundred to over 800 members today. Many of our members hire family members or significant others to be their paid caregiver. 'Ohana does not, nor have we ever, restricted family members or significant others from being paid care givers. 'Ohana will only intervene in the member's choice of caregiver if there is a safety or quality of care issue.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit these comments.