

Testimony for HUS 3/22/2012 10:30:00 AM HR108

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Margo R. Bare
Organization: Individual
E-mail: sproctor@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 3/21/2012

Comments:

I would like to testify in support of HCR 146. I am a social work educator (currently at Hawai'i Pacific University), having taught both undergraduate and graduate social work students for nearly 30 years. I strongly advocate for passage of this resolution.

I view this as a public safety and consumer protection issue. The vast majority of states require continuing education units as a prerequisite for maintaining social work licenses. Requiring CEUs of social workers in Hawai'i will result in elevated levels of confidence by Hawai'i consumers of social services. Requiring CEUs will provide assurance to consumers and clients and social worker employers of the credentials and competence of social work practitioners.

Passage of this resolution will incentivize social workers licensed by the State of Hawai'i to further educate themselves about best practices. Social workers will recognize that education does not end with the granting of a degree and passage of a licensure exam, but rather sets them on a path of lifetime learning. We need CEUs to protect citizens from practitioners who have not remained current with the latest social work theories and best practices. Citizens and consumers should have the assurance that social workers providing services to them can and will apply the latest knowledge in their practice.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on behalf of this most important resolution, which will benefit not only the social work profession, but also the many consumers who are served by agencies and organizations throughout the State of Hawai'i.

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LATE
Testimony

Conference room: 329

Testifier position:

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Dara Carlin, M.A.

Organization: Individual

E-mail: breaking-the-silence@hotmail.com Submitted on: 3/21/2012

Comments:

Good Morning Representatives and my apologies for not being able to testify in-person about this very important piece of legislation.

Ongoing education and training for social workers is CRITICAL since they are often the first responders to crisis situations; they especially need training on the many issues tied to domestic violence.

When I obtained my Masters degree in Marriage & Family Therapy, I had been taught essentially NOTHING about domestic violence and child abuse. Considering that 1 out of every 4 women will experience DV sometime in their life, there is NO WAY anyone in the counseling profession cannot come across a DV victim or survivor sometime during their career, yet I was given a degree that officiated my "expertise" over subject matter I knew relatively nothing about (and quite truthfully, I'm STILL learning).

Social workers deal with life and death situations and directly impact lives every day - shouldn't they have the tools and training to be able to do such important work? Physicians deal with life and death situations and directly impact lives every day too but they HAVE to have ongoing annual training. Put another way, you probably wouldn't feel too good knowing that the last time your physician received any training was the year they graduated from medical school, right? Information in the field is constantly evolving the more we learn and social work is no different.

Please support this legislation to ensure that those on the frontline are properly trained to work with the population they've been entrusted with - our most vulnerable.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Dara Carlin, M.A.

Domestic Violence Survivor Advocate

Rep. John M Mizuno, Chair
Committee on Human Services

HR #108 (Support)

Hearing: Thursday, 03-22-12
10:30am Conference Room 329

Dear Committee on Human Services

My name is Rebecca Stotzer, and I am an Associate Professor and Director of Distance Education at the Myron B. Thompson school of Social Work at the University of Hawaii, Manoa, though I am writing as a resident of Hawaii. I am writing in support of HR108.

I am supporting HCR146 because ensuring an up-to-date and well trained workforce is a critical issue for consumer protection in the state. In a state with so many unique needs as the crossroads of the Pacific, the needs of Hawaii's citizens are constantly changing, and social service professionals need to be experts in that changing landscape. Given the various places in which social workers are placed throughout the state, the move to plan for continuing education requirements for social workers will help improve services across the entire social service sector in Hawaii.

In prior years, there were some stated concerns about the inability to offer trainings to rural and remote areas of the state as a cause for concern in adopting a continuing education mandate. This is less a concern now as technology has improved to the point where Hawaii Interactive Television and variety of web conferencing tools allow trainings to be broadcast statewide. The state has many institutions or agencies which can meet the demand for trainings, and can easily reach social workers throughout the state with cost effective web-based training tools. With the advent of these advanced technologies, and the collaboration needed among providers in the state who can develop and implement these trainings, I feel that this is a critical time to move forward in developing a plan to mandate continuing education for social workers. Thus, I support HR108.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important resolution.

Rebecca Stotzer
House District 24

LATE Testimony

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Conference room: 329
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Stephanie Batzer
Organization: Individual
E-mail: swbatzer@hawaii.edu
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:

Ladies and Gentlemen of the House of Representatives:

I am a Masters of Social Work candidate at the University of Hawaii, and a student member of the National Association of Social Workers. I have had the great fortune to travel and live across the globe during the course of my adult life, finally settling in this great state for the past 14 years. Three years ago, I chose to make a mid life career change, moving from information technology to social work in order to give back to the communities that have supported me over my career. I have come to see Hawaii as a great melting pot, filled with different cultures, which have unique perceptions as to their needs and beliefs.

Today you are hearing of a bill requiring continuing education credits for licensed social workers in the state. As you can see it the resolution's body, Hawaii is one of only three states that do not currently have post-licensing continuing education requirements. Given the diverse population that we service here in Hawaii, it is reprehensible that there is no requirement for learning different methodologies and techniques to apply with our different clients.

There are several core values rooted in the mission of social work. They include:

- Service

- Social justice
- Dignity and worth of the person
- Importance of human relationships
- Integrity, and
- Competence

Competence is the key core value driving the need for continuing education.

Ethically, social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise. Our code of ethics from the NASW states:

“Social workers should strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions. Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant social work.

Social workers should routinely review the professional literature and participate in continuing education relevant to social work practice and social work ethics.” I

believe that the practice of continuing education stimulates the day-to-day practice of social workers by exposing them to new ideas and techniques. It also keeps social worker skills sharp, avoiding obsolescence. We don't know what will be important in 10 years. We don't know what research will be published, what concepts will make a difference in our clients' lives. Continuing education is vital in providing services across our diverse population.

I support these resolutions, HR 108 and HCR 146, directing the DCCA and NASW to work together to develop requirements for continuing education. By keeping current, we will better serve our client population.