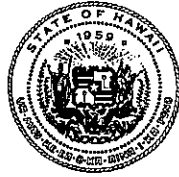


LATE

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



LORETTA J. FUDDY, A.C.S.W., M.P.H.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

Senate Committee on Health

S.B. 2145, Relating to Mental Health

**Testimony of Loretta J. Fuddy, A.C.S.W., M.P.H.
Director of Health
February 10, 2012**

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health (DOH) understands the intent of the bill offers
2 amendments for the Committee's consideration.

3 **Fiscal Implications:** To expand the eligibility criteria for AMHD services back to pre-2009 status
4 would result in a significant increase of expenditures to the DOH by several millions.

5 **Purpose and Justification:** Fiscal year 2009 was the year before the department implemented
6 modifications to its eligibility criteria. That year, overall average annual expenditures for services
7 provided by the Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD) were approximately \$7,467 per consumer and
8 2,164 new consumers were deemed eligible for services. Over the next 2 years, with fewer budgetary
9 resources available, the eligibility criteria were narrowed to a smaller cluster of conditions with
10 psychosis as the prominent symptom, such as Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder. In fiscal year 2011,
11 the second year of the new criteria, annual expenditures were about \$5,250 per consumer and 1,010 new
12 consumers became eligible for services.

13 Expanding the eligibility would increase the number of consumers meeting the criteria by
14 approximately 1,154 per year, based on FY 2009 and FY 2011 data.

15 An increase of 1,154 consumers entering each year will result in an annual increase of
16 expenditures for the DOH. The increase is likely to be in the vicinity of \$6 million dollars each year.

Promoting Lifelong Health & Wellness

1 This number is calculated by multiplying the estimated additional number of consumers who would
2 have entered the system under the previous eligibility criteria by the average annual expenditure per
3 consumer receiving AMHD services in FY 2011. It is understood that there are reasons consumers
4 become eligible other than diagnosis, so these figures are approximate.

5 The annual increase in expenditures will be incremental, as individuals in services stay a number
6 of years. The dollar amount will increase proportionally each year by the number of entering consumers
7 and those continuing services, less the expenditures for those discharged or leaving the system. So, the
8 amount of increased appropriation should be anticipated to increase a similar amount each year.

9 If this bill was enacted, new revenues would be needed to fund and to maintain current service
10 levels because of expanded eligibility.

11 As with other service expansion bills, we understand and appreciate the legislative support and
12 interest for those in need. Our testimony is given in a spirit of cooperation balanced with stewardship
13 over limited resources.

14 We are concerned that setting eligibility criteria in statute will bind future operational decisions
15 and compliance challenges especially in times of economic downturn.

16 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

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... **HELPING HAWAII LIVE LIFE WELL**

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MANAGER

February 9, 2012

RE: SB2145

Chair Green and Members of the Committee

Mental Health America of Hawai'i **strongly supports** SB2145. Three years ago, the Department of Health eliminated several psychiatric diagnoses as qualifying an individual for services from the Adult Mental Health Division – *in spite of* overwhelming (and unanimous) opposition testimony at a public hearing.

As a result of the Department's decision to reduce eligibility, diagnoses of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other anxiety disorders such as obsessive compulsive disorder, personality disorders, and several types of serious depression, were eliminated as qualifying an individual to receive AMHD services. This has resulted in many seriously mentally ill individuals not being able to obtain any assistance for their mental health needs. The consequences of this restriction of services to individuals in need can be tragic.

AMHD provides an array of services – psychiatric care, case management, supported housing such as group homes, clubhouses programs – which are now unavailable to these individuals.

On behalf of Mental Health America of Hawai'i, I urge you to strongly support SB2145.

Sincerely yours,

Marya Grambs
Executive Director

LATE

United Self Help, a consumer run non-profit with 600 members in support groups, 350 graduating from Bridges classes and a consumer network of 1500 consumers, is in strong support of SB 2145.

Current practices discriminate against those who save the government money by paying taxes and medical insurance -- you get better services if you show that you cannot afford it.

One parent I know has a son with paranoid schizophrenia. He cannot go to clubhouse, get a case manager and meet new friends, because he has private insurance. They are considering becoming indigent for his and their safety. How much better Hawaii would be and they would be if he were given a few hours a week by a treatment team.

This doesn't save the government money; it is a disincentive to pay for services, it is an incentive to stop being a taxpayer to get better treatment.

The current practice eliminates treatment for those who have illnesses that can become just as serious as the ones now covered .

Schizophrenia (1.1% of the population) and Bi Polar (.75 to 3.4 %) are covered by AMHD, but Depression (10% of the population), and the five anxiety disorders -- (12-20%) of the population are not covered.

90% of suicides are from depression, but current practices don't allow treatment for that illness, anxiety or personality disorders. They are just as dangerous and deadly!! It is equivalent to hospitals treating cancer and heart disease patients only, with persons without means not treated for gall bladder, tooth decay, kidney problems, and other ailments equally as deadly if left untreated.

Yet we wouldn't think of refusing treatment for anyone with a physical problem; mental health problems can be just as deadly.

Imagine our outcry if the VA refused treatment for troops with PTSD because it "wasn't serious enough as an illness." Remember all the violence caused by untreated persons with this killer? The VA would save a lot of money, the burden would go to the rest of the country.

Yet AMHD is doing the same thing.

During this period, I have seen more suicides and attempts than ever before. I recently lost a good friend who lost her job (and her insurance), was told that she couldn't have help because Adult Mental Health didn't cover her because "it was only depression" and felt more isolated than ever. She found her solution by jumping from a 24th Floor balcony.

I know of another who checked himself into a private hospital emergency room with severe depression, let go hours later, and committed suicide – no one could give him enough help without insurance, and his illness wasn't severe enough according to the AMHD standards.

Depression is the most treatable illness we have, and the most deadly mental illness yet we choose to ignore it.

These are people that needed help and were denied it, because they had only depression and/or could support themselves.

More People have a mental illness than Cancer, Diabetes, Heart Disease or Arthritis combined. In fact 70-90% of people with a physical illness, have a mental illness too.

Let's treat mental illness as equally as physical illnesses

Bud Bowles, MSW, CPRP
Executive Director, United Self Help.

SUPPORT

UNITED SELF HELP

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Testimony for HTH 2/10/2012 1:30:00 PM 5B2145

Conference room: 229

Testifier position: Support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Kathleen Hasegawa

Organization: NAMI Hawaii

E-mail: kathi@namihawaii.org

Submitted on: 2/9/2012

Comments:

LATE

Testimony for HTH 2/10/2012 1:30:00 PM SB2145

Conference room: 229

Testifier position: Support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: kevin furutani

Organization: consumer,familyandyouthorganization

E-mail: imrambo9@yahoo.com

Submitted on: 2/9/2012

Comments:

providing services and getting reimbursed is an important need for consumers and service providers . I am in support of sb2145 .

LATE

February 10, 2012

To: Senator Josh Green, M.D., Chair, and Members
Senate Committee on Health
Twenty-Sixth Legislature, Regular Session 2012

From: Mike Pablin

Re: Senate Bill 2145: Relating to Mental Health

I am a mental health consumer and have worked for the Adult Mental Health Division and the Department of Human Services' QUEST behavioral care carve-out.

I strongly support this measure and urge the Committee on Health to pass it out.

At a time when the state's general fund revenues are declining and resulting in budget cuts across the board including that of the Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD), it is imperative that the Department of Health and AMHD locate new sources of funding to maintain its current level of services.

Further, AMHD needs to develop a broader base of funding sources in order to implement its mission and serve Hawaii's mental health needs well into the future.

I believe that this private/public collaboration will serve Hawaii's mental health consumers better and further expand the state's network of resources and services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

LATE

Testimony for HTH 2/10/2012 1:30:00 PM SB2145

Conference room: 229

Testifier position: Support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Gwen Kekaula

Organization: United Self Help

E-mail: gkekaula@aol.com

Submitted on: 2/10/2012

Comments:

I believe Mental Health Organizations such as United Self-Help do so much to help those with mental illness problems where many health agencies seem to drop the ball. More support needs to be given to our non-profits as well.

LATE

Testimony for HTH 2/10/2012 1:30:00 PM SB2145

Conference room: 229

Testifier position: Support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Sylvia Ching

Organization: United Self Help

E-mail: sching35@gmail.com

Submitted on: 2/10/2012

Comments:

I support the restoration of treatment for bipolar, anxiety, and personality disorders.

Good afternoon Senators:

Thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of myself and my fellow mental health consumers.

I am a person with a long standing diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder. I have faced this struggle daily since my 14th year. I am now 71 and still fighting I will not give up!

For many years I did not receive proper care. My doctors either could not find the right medication for me or they were more interested the money they received from my company paid health insurance.

Because of this I needed to be hospitalized at least four times with severe depression.

Bipolar disorder and depression run in my family. All my siblings deal with it at some level. I think that I'm the most serious one of my generation. But these disorders took a toll on the previous generation, two of my uncles committed suicide.

With a great deal of help from my primary care physician, my psychiatrist, my case worker, my family, and most of all my colleges at United Self Help I'm still alive, still fighting my fight. I have a long way to go and the way is not always smooth.

With the help of those I mentioned and many others, I have a meaning full life, a productive life. I have been able to bring forth the skills and talents I used in my former employment. I have been able to pass some of those skills to others in this community. Some have been mental health consumers. Others have not.

I'm a story teller. I spent over thirty years as a technician in theater, television, and movies. Because of this I have been able to speak out and tell others how painful it is to have a mental disorder

I do this not for fame or fortune but because I can. I do it to payback all the people who have helped me. I feel that I owe them a life debt because without that help I would not be here today. I would have committed suicide long ago.

Most importantly I do this as a way to pay it forward to help to insure that the help I received will be available when those who come after me need a hand up.

But let us consider what might have happened if that help had not been there for me. Where would my contribution to our community here in Hawai'i. What young people would I have taught the skills of many years of work in my craft. What help could I have given to those other consumers around me,, to those consumers who will need it in the future.

I was lucky in the last budget crisis; I had other means of health care as a veteran. I have a decent pension and I do alright on my Social Security payments too.

But what about those who did not have the opportunity to earn the money I did? Where is their safety net?

When they were cast adrift, many lost the progress they had worked so hard to establish. Many of them regressed in their disorders. Some are no longer with us.

There for I urge you to approve this bill and save so many who have so much to contribute to our community.

Mahalo and thank you for the opportunity to speak before you to day.

Grayson

Grayson Linnel Wideman

Advocacy & Technology Chair

United Self Help

27 Ohua Ave.

Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815

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Testimony for HTH 2/10/2012 1:30:00 PM SB2145

Conference room: 229

Testifier position: Support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Gregory N Godwin

Organization: Individual

E-mail: greggodwin@aol.com

Submitted on: 2/9/2012

Comments:

As a former consumer and disabled voting senior, I'm writing to support SB2145. This is way overdue, and calculations show me that we were robbed of 58% or \$75+ million so far in Federal reimbursement. Makes us distrust legislative wisdom. Care, jobs, health etc were lost as a result.

Mahalo,

Greg Godwin, Maui Hi

LATE

Testimony for HTH 2/10/2012 1:30:00 PM SB2145

Conference room: 229

Testifier position: Support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Gwen Kekaula

Organization: Individual

E-mail: gkekaula@aol.com

Submitted on: 2/10/2012

Comments:

Mental Health Organizations such as United Health Self Help, do so much for mental health consumers where health organizations seem to drop the ball. There needs to be more support for our non-profit organizations.

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Testimony for HTH 2/10/2012 1:30:00 PM SB2145

Conference room: 229

Testifier position: Support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Moana

Organization: Individual

E-mail: mighty10mo@yahoo.com

Submitted on: 2/10/2012

Comments:

I am hoping my testimony helps in supporting this bill. This is a serious matter to a lot of people and without help lives could easily and quickly fall to pieces. No matter what the diagnosis be, each patient should be treated equally and able to get help they need. I visited one of the workshops over at the Waikiki Health Center and was very impressed with the support and encouragement the group session provides. I haven't felt that good in a long time, being able to release and get feedback from people going through similar struggles is very comforting. I'm not sure what other types of assistance this center provides but was truly looking forward to seeking more of it. Please don't discontinue assistance for these types of programs, they provide much more than meets the eye.

LATE

Testimony for HTH 2/10/2012 1:30:00 PM SB2145

Conference room: 229

Testifier position: Support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Barbara Leigh Cooney

Organization: Individual

E-mail: barleigh2@yahoo.com

Submitted on: 2/10/2012

Comments:

Please ensure services are provided to those in need who seek help.