



SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator David Ige, Chair

Conference Room 211
February 24, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.

Commenting in support of SB 2227: Relating to Health

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii advocates for its member organizations that span the entire spectrum of health care, including all acute care hospitals, as well as long term care facilities, home care agencies, and hospices. In addition to providing quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 40,000 people. Thank you for this opportunity to comment in support of SB 2227, which appropriates funds to provide health care through nonprofit community health centers to people who are uninsured.

Hawaii's nonprofit community health centers operate throughout the state, constituting a vital component of Hawaii's health care system. These health centers serve more than 125,000 of the most needy people in the state, many of whom do not have health care insurance and would otherwise not have access to health care.

The uninsured population in Hawaii has increased in recent years due to the recession and its aftermath. Ten years ago the percentage of uninsured in Hawaii was in the low single digits, and Hawaii was proud of having the lowest proportion of uninsured in the nation. At that time, Hawaii was justifiably known as the "Health State." Since then there has been a troublesome increase in the numbers of uninsured people. Today the uninsured population stands at about 10%, and a number of other states now have smaller proportions of uninsured people than Hawaii.

Hawaii's nonprofit community health centers have proven to be effective in providing comprehensive primary care services to residents of poor and disadvantaged communities. In doing so, these health centers help to keep other components of the health care system viable. For example, they reduce the numbers of patients who go to emergency departments in hospitals and reduce the impact of uncompensated care on other providers. Hawaii needs our community health centers to keep its health care system financially viable.

For the foregoing reasons, the Healthcare Association expresses its support for SB 2227.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: mary@mauivortex.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2227 on 2/24/2012 9:00:00 AM
Date: Friday, February 24, 2012 4:40:20 AM

Testimony for WAM 2/24/2012 9:00:00 AM SB2227

Conference room: 211
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Mary Overbay
Organization: Individual
E-mail: mary@mauivortex.com
Submitted on: 2/24/2012

Comments:

I support helping Hawaii's poor with health care. In these economically hard times, the poor need increased services.