

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: hoapt@earthlink.net
Subject: Testimony for SB2310 on 2/28/2012 9:00:00 AM
Date: Monday, February 27, 2012 9:08:53 AM
Attachments: [Testimony in Support of SB 2310.doc](#)

Testimony for WAM 2/28/2012 9:00:00 AM SB2310

Conference room: 211
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Charlotte Nekota
Organization: Hawaii Optometric Association
E-mail: hoapt@earthlink.net
Submitted on: 2/27/2012

Comments:

February 27, 2012

Senator David Ige, Chair, Senate Committee Ways and Means
Senator Michelle Kidani Vice Chair, Senate Committee Ways and Means

RE: Testimony in Support of SB 2310

Dear Senators Ige, Kidani and members of the Committees:

On behalf of the Hawaii Optometric Association thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2310. Healthy eyes are important to an individual's overall health.

Early detection of an eye disease is detrimental to the patient's overall quality of life and health. Diseases such as glaucoma and diabetic eye complications can have devastating affects on individuals, including blindness. There are instances where an eye care provider, an Ophthalmologist or Optometrist, is the first to diagnose diabetes in a patient.

The elimination of adult visions services may have an adverse financial impact on the health care system.

We urge your support in passage of SB 2310

Respectfully,

Charlotte Nekota
Executive Director
Hawaii Optometric Association



Waimānalo Health Center
Ola Hāloa
The Sustaining of Life

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The Committee on Ways and Means:

The Honorable David Ige, Chair
 The Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2310
Relating to Human Services

February 28, 2012 at 9:00 a.m., Room 211
 Submitted by Elizabeth Martinez, Director, Board

As a member of the consumer Board of the Waimānalo Health Center (WHC) I strongly support SB 2310 which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services (DHS) to match federal funds allocated to the State for Medicaid benefits dedicated to adult vision services.

As noted in the bill, vision is an important aspect of health. Without proper vision, adults won't be able to get jobs, pay bills, and be productive members of society, which may increase the burden to the State to support these individuals. Furthermore, advanced eye disease can cause partial to complete blindness and, eye diseases, such as glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, cataracts, etc., are primary indicators of diseases with high morbidity and mortality rates. These eye diseases can be detected and addressed with regular eye exams which can minimize the risk of morbidity/mortality and the future costs of treatment associated with these diseases.

According to the 2007 CDC data, vision disability is one of the top 10 disabilities among adults ages 18+ years with prevalence of <=200% of the federal poverty level at more than 10 times that of the general population, i.e. 26% as compared with 2-3% respectively. In addition, CDC has expressed a growing concern that the prevalence of age related eye diseases is expected to double by 2030 with the prevalence of glaucoma among people with diabetes expected to increase twelve fold by 2050. Because many eye diseases and disorders have no symptoms or early warning signs, dilated eye examinations should be performed at regular intervals to detect changes in the retina and/or optic nerve. Optometrists can view the eye for subtle changes and initiate treatment at the right time, if needed, to decrease morbidity/mortality and associated costs.

WHC, which serves a Medically Underserved Population (Native Hawaiians) in a Health Professions Shortage Area, is a vital part of Hawaii's health care system providing quality preventive and primary health care for Waimānalo, Ko'olaupoko, and beyond targeting the poor, uninsured, etc. We served 4,083 people in 22,275 visits in 2011; 26.4% of all our patients had QUEST Medicaid. We are planning to initiate vision services if start-up expenses can be subsidized. Continuation of vision services is a must for this to occur.

We appreciate the long-term, unwavering support that the Legislature has given community health centers (CHCs), patients, and communities. We urge your continued support of CHCs, WHC, and **SB2310** which provides vital funds needed for essential vision services for QUEST patients. Mahalo nui loa for this opportunity to show our full support of this measure. ALOHA!

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: tazman030303@aol.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2310 on 2/28/2012 9:00:00 AM
Date: Monday, February 27, 2012 10:46:45 PM

Testimony for WAM 2/28/2012 9:00:00 AM SB2310

Conference room: 211
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Frank Del Cristo III
Organization: Individual
E-mail: tazman030303@aol.com
Submitted on: 2/27/2012

Comments:
Hi everyone,

I am writing to support SB2310, a bill that will keep eye care benefits for medicaid quest.

I have seen in my own family how a yearly eye exam can save lives as well as give you good vision. My aunty went to update her gasses because she could not see well and decided to see her eye doctor. When the doctor performed the tests, it was discovered that she had a type of artery disease that could potentially kill her or at least make her have a stroke or a serious of strokes.

After seeing this through a simple eye exam, she eventually went to see a different doctor who did a surgery of her arteries that restored her vision and very likely saved her life. These general health problems were first seen during a yearly eye exam.

In our family, we will always be thankful for her eye doctor. He saved my aunty's vision and identified a serious problem that she didn't even know she had.

Please support this bill that covers the funding for these very needed medical tests and check up.

Thank you for your attention,

Frank Del Cristo III

The Committee on Ways and Means:

The Honorable David Ige, Chair

The Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2310

Relating to Human Services

February 28, 2012 at 9:00 a.m., Room 211

Submitted by Kamahanahokulani Farrar

I strongly support SB 2310 which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services (DHS) to match federal funds allocated to the State for Medicaid benefits dedicated to adult vision services.

As noted in the bill, vision is an important aspect of health. Without proper access to vision care, the negative impact on adults' increases and the ability to be productive members of society decreases or may be delayed. This in turn will increase the burden to the State to support individuals. Health data indicates that eye disease can cause partial to complete blindness and eye diseases, such as glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, cataracts, etc., are primary indicators of diseases with high morbidity and mortality rates. These eye diseases can be detected and addressed with regular eye exams which can minimize the risk of morbidity/ mortality and the future costs of treatment associated with these diseases. [See the 2007 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data].

The CDC has expressed a growing concern that the prevalence of age related eye diseases is expected to double by 2030 with the prevalence of glaucoma among people with diabetes expected to increase twelve fold by 2050. Because many eye diseases and disorders have no symptoms or early warning signs, eye examinations should be performed at regular intervals to detect changes in the retina and/or optic nerve. Optometrists can view the eye for subtle changes and initiate treatment at the right time, if needed, to decrease morbidity/mortality and associated costs.

I am a patient and consumer board member of the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center. I appreciate the long-term, unwavering support that the Legislature has given community health centers (CHCs), patients, and communities. I urge your continued support of Community Health Centers and **SB2310** which provides vital funds needed for essential vision services for QUEST patients.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony and support of this measure!

Kamahanahokulani Farrar

85-101 Kaulawaha Road

Waianae, HI 96792

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: mealiinanid@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2310 on 2/28/2012 9:00:00 AM
Date: Monday, February 27, 2012 10:14:41 PM

Testimony for WAM 2/28/2012 9:00:00 AM SB2310

Conference room: 211
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Mealiinani Duarte-Hernandez
Organization: Individual
E-mail: mealiinanid@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/27/2012

Comments:
Aloha Kakou,

I am writing in support of SB2310, a proposed bill that will greatly affect vision care services for Quest/Medicaid patients in the State of Hawai`i. I strongly urge you to pass this bill and preserve these much-needed medical services for low-income Quest/Medicaid patients.

As an optometric physician on Hawai`i Island, I know first hand how important it is for the underserved rural communities of this island to have access to healthcare. There is much more to an eye examination than just updating an eyeglass prescription. Every single day at my practice I come across at least one (usually much more than one) Quest/Medicaid patient whom I need to refer to another medical specialist for treatment of a previously undiagnosed serious condition.

Many times, patients will come to see me for an eye exam because they have no choice. Good vision is a requirement for obtaining or renewing a driver's license and good vision is just a necessity for everyday life. For this reason, patients will seek out vision care despite rarely visiting a general physician. Commonly, a comprehensive routine eye exam is the only opportunity to screen patients for serious medical conditions. Besides screening patients for serious sight threatening eye diseases such as glaucoma, cataracts, uveitis, diabetic and hypertensive retinopathy, macular degeneration, retinal detachments, etc., routine eye exams can also identify such serious systemic health conditions as are diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, different types of cancer including brain tumors, and many others.

It is bad enough that patients on Hawai`i Island are faced with the challenges of an overburdened health care system and doctor shortage where they oftentimes need to wait one or two months before they can get an appointment. If this bill does not pass and funding is not appropriated for these services, now Quest/Medicaid low-income patients will find themselves completely locked out of receiving these important benefits. Please stand behind these people in great need who statistically are at highest risk of the aforementioned medical problems. Do the right thing and approve funding for these medical services.

Mahalo nui for standing behind the people of Hawai`i through your support of SB2310.

Dr. Meali`inani Duarte-Hernandez, OD

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: sandorhernandezod@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2310 on 2/28/2012 9:00:00 AM
Date: Monday, February 27, 2012 10:34:14 PM

Testimony for WAM 2/28/2012 9:00:00 AM SB2310

Conference room: 211
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Sandor Hernandez
Organization: Individual
E-mail: sandorhernandezod@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/27/2012

Comments:

Aloha,

As a concerned citizen of the Big Island of Hawai`i, I am writing in support of SB2310, a bill that will preserve vision care services for Quest/Medicaid patients. I ask you to pass this bill in order to make sure that poor and struggling people of this `aina will have access to good quality health care.

Eye care services are very important to everyday life. Not only does an eye exam make sure that we can all see well enough to function in our day to day activities, but an eye exam can help you by figuring out if you have eye diseases and even serious health problems. In a state like Hawai`i where local people suffer from so many health problems, it is very important to make sure that we detect these health problems early on. The sooner we detect health problems, the more options we have to treat these issues. Vision services that are currently covered for quest and medicaid people detect such health problems and therefore help in bettering the odds of overcoming the negative effects of these health issues. If this bill is not passed, this funding will be lost and the people of Hawai`i that need these services most will greatly suffer.

Please support the local people of this great state by passing this bill and approving these funds for medical care of our fellow citizens. Just because quest and medicaid patients are poor does not mean that they deserve to be forgotten. Do not cut off these benefits that help so many people and that often save vision by preventing blindness and also save lives by early detection of serious health problems.

Mahalo,

Sandor Hernandez

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: Brenda.Kosky@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2310 on 2/28/2012 9:00:00 AM
Date: Monday, February 27, 2012 8:04:00 PM

Testimony for WAM 2/28/2012 9:00:00 AM SB2310

Conference room: 211
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Brenda Kosky
Organization: Individual
E-mail: Brenda.Kosky@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/27/2012

Comments: