

LATE

HAWAII HEALTH AUTHORITY

To: Senate Committee on Health
Friday, January 27, 2012, at 2:45 P.M., Rm. 229
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96789

FROM: Marion F. Poirier, M.A., R. N.
Member, Hawaii Health Authority

SUBJECT: STRONG SUPPORT OF S.B. 2344
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE HAWAII
HEALTH AUTHORITY

GOOD DAY CHAIR GREEN, VICE CHAIR NISHIHARA AND
MEMBERS OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH:

My name is Marion Poirier, and I am testifying as a member of the Hawaii Health Authority. I have 30 years of Hawaii experience as a nurse administrator, and my education includes a graduate degree in management/healthcare administration.

This testimony is in STRONG SUPPORT of S.B. 2344 Making an appropriation for the Hawaii Health Authority. We are appreciative that last year this legislature, in its wisdom, passed a bill that became law to create the Health Care Authority. Our membership was appointed by the Governor, with both the House and Senate moving names to the Governor for consideration. The members of the Authority have a variety of perspectives and experiences. There is one vacancy, which will be filled shortly.

We were selected as professionals who welcome the Authority's charge to create and maintain a universal health system in Hawaii. In a practical sense, this means that all Hawaii citizens will have the access and means, financial and otherwise, to have medically necessary treatment and health care. Although we are fortunate to be ahead of most states in the number people insured and/or covered by government programs, there is a tremendous challenge to make that health care more accessible, and more equitable, throughout the entire state. In addition, our charge is to create and cause implementation of efficiencies to

LATE

Page 2
Poirier-1/27/12
HHA

reduce costs and cause people to live more healthfully from day one.

The Authority members have been meeting twice monthly since being organized, and we have studied the approximately 21 states who have stated similar goals. We did not receive any funds last year, and have but one part time dedicated graduate student who has made herself available to us in the form of a practicum. Now that we are poised to dig more deeply into our task, we believe that the \$100,000 requested is clearly of a critical nature and an investment that will be able to reduce certain costs. It is important to note that there are federal interfaces, as well as ambiguities, that challenge states. The Authority will have to make recommendations specific to Hawaii, and for that we need \$100,000.

The \$100,000 appropriation will be used for the necessary costs of accountant, legal, research, and health care delivery experts. I personally would embrace a 10 percent administrative cost. The authority should move swiftly this year in order to ensure that we are prepared to handle the complexities of keeping all Hawaii's citizens healthy and with medically necessary health treatment and care. We will take steps to note duplicative and inefficient procedures and policies.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support for this bill and for your attention to this important undertaking.