



SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Senator Josh Green, M.D., Chair

Conference Room 229
Feb. 9, 2011 at 2:45 p.m.

Commenting on SB 38.

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. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on SB 38, which requires hospitals to use advance practice registered nurses (APRNs) to the full scope allowed by their licensure.

Health care consumes about 17% of the gross domestic product, and the health care inflation rate is much greater than the overall inflation rate. Health care providers have been searching for alternatives that can hold down costs while maintaining the quality of care, and the increased use of APRNs is one way to do that. APRNs can provide certain kinds of care that were previously limited only to physicians. APRNs can also provide primary care in areas that are underserved by physicians.

APRNs are now responsible in many settings for direct patient care, including performing routine examination and review of medical histories, and they will also be increasingly involved in telephone triage, patient education, counseling and health awareness. In addition, APRNs may be utilized for pre-operative and post-operative care, assisting at surgery, hospital rounds, in-office procedures, as well as patient education and awareness.

Hospitals and other health care provider organizations are managing APRNs so that they are being used to a much greater degree than before. However, we feel that it is a management responsibility to determine how an APRN or any other employee is used. The Healthcare Association is willing to work with those who support SB 38 to develop a compromise that is acceptable to all.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 38.