

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



GARY L. GILL  
ACTING DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

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

In reply, please refer to  
File:

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**  
**HB1776 HD1, RELATING TO EDUCATION**

**Testimony of Gary L. Gill**  
**Acting Director of Health**

**February 7, 2014**  
**8:45am, Room 329**

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health (DOH) respectfully submits comments on House  
2 Bill 1776 HD1.

3 **Fiscal Implications:** None for Department of Health.

4 **Purpose and Justification:** The purpose of House Bill 1776 House Draft 1 (HB1776 HD1) is to  
5 connect adolescents back to their healthcare provider by expanding the school physical examination  
6 requirement. Currently, physical examinations are only conducted upon entry into the school system in  
7 kindergarten. HB1776 HD1 would establish a pilot program to expand the requirement for physical  
8 examinations to include entry into sixth and ninth grade in one complex area of the Board of  
9 Education's (BOE) choosing. The pilot program would begin in the 2015-2016 school year and the  
10 BOE is asked to submit a report of its findings, recommendations, and proposed legislation from the  
11 pilot program to the 2016 Legislature. This original HB1776 followed the lead of other states and  
12 Hawaii private schools who have multiple physical examination requirements throughout a child's  
13 educational journey.

1           The Department offers comments in the interest of the health of our students because increasing  
2 the physical exam requirement for school attendance provides a broader, systematic approach to  
3 connecting children back to their primary care physicians. The policy also promotes utilization of the  
4 covered preventive health benefits established by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). To achieve health  
5 equity the requirement should apply to all public schools and not be restricted to a pilot complex area.

6           The proposed increase in the physical exam requirements is congruent with the policy priority set  
7 forth by the Obesity Prevention Task Force. The Task Force, co-chaired by our late Director Loretta  
8 Fuddy developed and recommended legislation pursuant to Act 269 (SB2778 CD1), Session Laws of  
9 Hawaii 2012. The policy to expand physical examination requirements for public school students was  
10 proposed to help reinforce the adoption of a culture of wellness and preventive health care. Due to the  
11 ACA, annual well child examinations are a required covered benefit in all health plans. The  
12 requirements are in addition to the existing immunization requirements for grade seven which can be  
13 done within twelve months before first attending school.

14           The adoption of this measure will require parental and community engagement. The additional  
15 physical exam requirements provide physicians and healthcare providers together with parents and  
16 adolescents the opportunity to address developmentally relevant physical and mental health issues.  
17 Regular visits are preventive, so health needs can be assessed and addressed early. The policy change  
18 embraces the whole child to assure they are healthy and ready to learn.

19           Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 02/07/2014

**Committee:** House Health

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 1776,HD1 (HSCR30-14) RELATING TO EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Requires children to undergo a physical examination prior to attending kindergarten, sixth grade, and ninth grade beginning with the 2015-2016 school year. Makes an appropriation to the department of education.

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (Department) opposes HB 1776 HD1. While the Department appreciates the intent of this bill, the mandate to present results of a physical examination prior to sixth grade and ninth grade will serve as a deterrent to maintaining continuous enrollment and regular attendance, and may negatively impact student learning and achievement outcomes.

A pilot in a single complex may result in confusion among parents, particularly with respect to the current immunization requirements for students entering the seventh grade.

Also, this bill has significant programmatic impacts as it will place additional recordkeeping and accountability responsibilities on schools and increase workload of staff. As schools already have very limited staffing, additional resources will be required in order to implement this measure effectively. The department's current budget does not have the means to cover such additional expense.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

**LATE**

February 7,, 2014

The Honorable Della Au Belatti, Chair  
The Honorable Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

House Committee on Health

**Re: HB 1776 – Relating to Education**

Dear Chair Au Belatti, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify on HB 1776, HD1, which establishes a pilot program in one Department of Education complex area under which on child shall attend kindergarten, sixth grade, or ninth grade classes unless the child presents a report form a licensed physician or advanced practice registered nurse of the results of a physical examination performed within six months of the date of attendance. HMSA supports the intent of the Bill which reinforces the preventive health mandate under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) which assures medical examination coverage for children up to age 21.

Recognizing the sagacity of the old adage, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” a critical element of the ACA is a mandate for preventive care for infants and children, as well as for adults. Pursuant to rules promulgated to implement the ACA, children under the age of 21 are covered not only for their annual physical examination and immunizations; but also for vision and hearing screening; oral health risk assessments; developmental assessments to identify any developmental problems; screenings for hemoglobin level, lead, tuberculin, and other test; and screenings to detect, prevent, and treat problems such as obesity and depression.

HMSA believes that preventive health is the cornerstone of a more efficient and effective health care system. We applaud the intent of HB 1776, HD1, which reinforces the goal of the ACA’s focus on preventive health generally, and on well-child visits, specifically.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony today.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Diesman  
Vice President  
Government Relations



**LATE**

**House Committee on Health**  
The Hon. Della Au Belatti, Chair  
The Hon. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

**Testimony on House Bill 1776 HD 1**  
**Relating to Education**  
**Submitted by Robert Hirokawa, Chief Executive Officer**  
**February 7, 2014, 8:45 am, Room 329**

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA), which represents the federally qualified health centers/community health centers in Hawaii, supports the intent of House Bill 1776 House Draft 1, requiring the Board of Education to establish a pilot program in one complex area under which children are required to undergo a physical examination within six months of attending kindergarten, sixth grade, and ninth grade.

In Hawaii, public education is student centered and grounded in a commitment to equity. Part of that equity depends squarely on ensuring all children having the opportunity to pursue, and excel in, their education. The number one cause most often provided by parents of children experiencing chronic absenteeism from our public schools is healthcare. As a community, we must do more to ensure our students have access to health care, and utilize that access through wellness checkups and preventive visits so they can reduce their incidents of chronic absenteeism by identifying and addressing health issues early-on. Asthma, vision, hearing, depression, and many other health issues can be identified through screenings and physical examinations. If you can't see clearly, if you can't breathe well, or if you're experiencing depression...it can be overwhelming, perhaps impossible, for a child to succeed in school. A child's health undeniably affects their ability to attend and thrive at school. In addition, people in Hawaii with a high school degree or less are TWICE as likely to be OBESE and THREE times as likely to SMOKE. For the sake of our health and our future, our kids must stay in school . . . and in order to stay in school, our kids must have their health.

We ask the committee to consider amending this measure to create a program that requires a physical examination during the seventh grade year (currently immunizations are required in seventh grade.) In addition, the program should commence at the end of a student's sixth grade year with educating parents and students on: 1) the physical examination requirement for grade seven; 2) provider options; and 3) wellness visits and screenings as a health insurance covered benefit under the Affordable Care Act. Community stakeholders, including providers and health insurance plans, may be able to assist with the sixth grade educational component of the program in addition to implementation.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to testify.

**morikawa2-Joanna**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 06, 2014 12:16 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Cc:** hlee@uhahealth.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1776 on Feb 7, 2014 08:45AM



**HB1776**

Submitted on: 2/6/2014

Testimony for HLT on Feb 7, 2014 08:45AM in Conference Room 329

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Howard Lee	UHA	Support	No

Comments: UHA is a health insurer dedicated to improving the health of our community. We believe that a pilot program that early detects and treat health issues with children at a vulnerable age should be conducted to see if we can help reduce absentism in school and improve the child education experience. This could help to reduce cost downstream with early detection leading to early prevention.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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**LATE**

February 7, 2014

**TO:** House Committee on Health  
Representative Della Au Bellati, Chair  
Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

**FROM:** Dr. Vija Sehgal, Pediatrician and Chief Quality Office / Associate Medical Officer  
Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center / 697-3457 or wcchc@wcchc.com

**RE:** **HB1776: Relating to Education**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding HB1776 HD1 to establish a pilot program mandating a physical examination within six months of entering 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

The Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center is a Federally Qualified Health Center serving over 31,000 patients in Leeward Oahu. Our main campus in Waianae has a pediatric clinic that serves 8,485 of the school age children along the Leeward Coast. To better meet the dynamic physical, emotional and social needs of our adolescent patients, a new adolescent clinic at the Waianae Mall is under development.

It is during adolescence that youth can develop numerous health issues, the majority of which are preventable. High-risk health behaviors that contribute to the most common causes of morbidity and mortality among young adults are often established in childhood and adolescence. These include smoking, drinking/drug use, high-risk sexual practices, unhealthy nutrition, lack of sleep and physical inactivity. These behaviors are also intimately linked to academic achievement.

Establishing a health care home, where primary care practitioners, pediatricians, family physicians and nurse practitioners have a long-standing relationship with families, is a factor in preventing these problem behaviors. The adolescent well child visit creates a safe environment where adolescents can feel comfortable talking to their doctor about their health and wellness. They should receive appropriate screening and guidance for alcohol and drug use, depression and suicide, sexuality and reproductive health issues as well as obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. However, this cannot be done in a 10-minute sick visit for a cold. The Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center supports the American Academy of Pediatrics standard that regular "Well Child" physical exams should occur throughout childhood.

There are many reasons that adolescents are *only* seen by their primary care provider for the occasional sick visit. Prior to the Affordable Care Act, some health insurance policies did not cover preventive healthcare visits for children. The Hawaii Department of Education has mandated documentation of a comprehensive physical exam *only* at kindergarten entry. Thus, busy parents have not prioritized preventive healthcare visits. It should not be surprising then that many public school students have not had a comprehensive physical exam for years. It should also not be a surprise that depression, obesity, pre-diabetes and substance abuse too often go undiagnosed until a crisis occurs.

In a recent study of children seeking care at our Waianae Pediatric Clinic, 52% of the 11-14 year olds are overweight or obese and 55% of the 15-19 year olds are overweight or obese. We know that obesity is the primary risk factor for type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. And, studies have shown that 80% of children who are obese at 10-15 years become obese adults. This recent study indicates increasing rates of adult obesity on the Waianae Coast when compared to 2012 data (from the Hawaii Primary Care Needs Assessment Data Book, DOH.). This data on obesity alone is cause for alarm and a motivating factor for the health center to support mandatory physicals for adolescents.

This week, the Senate companion bill to HB1776 was amended to mandate a physical assessment during 7<sup>th</sup> grade, allowing twelve months for the exam to take place. The Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center supports this amended version because immunization updates occur at the same age, thus lessening the additional burden for parents. And, the amendment addresses the Department of Education (DOE) concern about creating a barrier to school entry by allowing the physical to occur within the 12 months surrounding the 7<sup>th</sup> grade school year.



WAIANAE COAST  
COMPREHENSIVE  
HEALTH CENTER  
www.wcchc.com

The Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center, along with our working group of healthcare stakeholders, will continue to discuss additional opportunities to address the barrier to entry concern raised by the DOE. We all can do a better job of reaching out to students and their parents to come in for a physical assessment throughout the school year. Bringing together health plans, medical providers, school health personnel, families, and others is exactly the model of wrap around services we've all been saying that our students need.

Reconnecting our adolescents with their primary care provider embraces the whole child to assure they are healthy and ready to learn. The suggested amendments to HB1776 HD1 will ensure that all youth attending public school in Hawaii have a well-child preventive health care visit during 7<sup>th</sup> grade. While we know this amended bill is just a start, we think it strongly supports our patient centered medical home model, optimal adolescent health and student achievement. **Most importantly, the bill strengthens the relationship between our health and educational systems, as well as adolescents and parents in Hawaii.**



HB 1776 HD1  
RELATING TO EDUCATION

House Committees on Health

Public Hearing – February 7, 2014  
8:45am., State Capitol, Conference Room 329

By  
Jay Maddock, Ph.D.



I am writing to **support** HB 1776. This bill requires a physical exam prior to entry into kindergarten and the 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade of DOE schools.

I am a professor of public health at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and have served as director of the Office of Public Health Studies since 2006. I also served as a member of the Childhood Obesity Taskforce that recommended physical exams for youth as part of our comprehensive approach to address obesity in Hawaii. My statement on this measure does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

Obesity is a major public health problem in Hawaii. It contributes to premature death and disease and contributes significantly to the health care costs in the state, which are paid for by businesses and taxpayers. Comprehensive approaches are necessary to combat the obesity epidemic. There is no one magic bullet or thing that can be done to change the doubling of the obesity rate over the past two decades. However, prevention of obesity especially in early childhood is much more effective than treatment of obesity.

In addition to childhood obesity, many other positive things come from requiring physical exams. Vision and hearing are screened, which can interfere with learning. Mental and sexual health issues can be addressed. The physical exam helps link the child back to their medical home, which has shown an improvement in health for a variety of outcomes. Under the Affordable Care Act, these physical exams would be done free of charge for all of Hawai‘i’s keiki.

The one thing this bill does not have is an electronic system for student health data to enhance surveillance and program development. This would greatly help target health funding to go to the schools with the most need and to help track the success of public health efforts. I would suggest adding this to the text of the bill.

**LATE**

Testimony for HB 1776 HD1  
From: May Okihiro, MD MS  
February 07, 2014

Thank you for an opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 1776, which will establish a policy mandating documentation of a physical examination, by a licensed physician or advanced practice registered nurse, at entry to 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

I am a pediatrician at the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center and an assistant professor at the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine. My area of interest and research has been childhood obesity and the early onset of chronic diseases such as diabetes. I am a member of the Obesity Taskforce, convened by the Department of Health and chair of the committee on student health assessment.

Almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  of all adolescent mortality is a result of motor vehicle accidents, homicide, suicide, and unintentional injuries (CDC, 2010). Unhealthy lifestyles and risk factors for chronic disease, such as smoking, poor nutrition, and mental health problems, begin in childhood and adolescence and track into adulthood. In 2011, among youth in Hawaii:

- 29.5% reported that they felt sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row
- 15% said they would attempt suicide in the past 12 months
- 1 in 4 are overweight or obese, and in some communities over 50% of adolescents are overweight or obese
- 37% of Hawaii youth reported that they ever had sexual intercourse

Academic success of Hawaii's youth is intimately linked to their health. Research shows that poor health such as mental health disorders, uncontrolled asthma, poor nutrition and sleep disorders are linked to poor academic outcomes. On the other hand, research shows that academic success is a primary predictor of adult health outcomes. For example, in Hawaii, the prevalence of diabetes among those who did not graduate from high school is 10.6%, twice that of those who graduated from college (4.8%).

Primary care providers are in a unique position to screen for chronic disease risk factors and behaviors and provide guidance, brief counseling and care coordination for the adolescent and his/her parents. In the ideal world, youth would see their physicians regularly throughout childhood for preventive health care. However, in today's busy world this often does not happen; physicians often only see children and adolescents when they are sick or injured.

We heard the testimony this past week by the DOE and understand their concerns. This week, the Senate companion bill to HB1776 was amended to mandate a physical assessment, for all students in Hawaii, during *7<sup>th</sup> grade, allowing twelve months* for the exam to take place. I support this amended version. It aligns with the Department of Health immunization requirement at 7<sup>th</sup> grade, thus lessening the additional burden for

parents and the DOE. The 12-month period also aligns with current recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics, that adolescents receive yearly physical exams. With these amendments, all youth attending public school in Hawaii will have at least one preventive health exam during adolescence.

We are working with healthcare stakeholders and will continue to discuss additional opportunities to address the barrier to entry concern raised by the DOE. We all can do a better job of reaching out to students and their parents to come in for a physical assessment throughout the school year. Bringing together health plans, medical providers, school health personnel, families, and others is exactly the model of wrap around services that experts, and the DOE, have said that students need for optimal academic outcomes.

While we know this is just the start, we think this bill strongly supports the medical home, optimal adolescent health and student achievement. In addition, the bill enhances the working relationship between adolescents, their parents, and the health and educational systems in Hawaii.

Hearing in Conference Room 329 at 8:45 a.m.

February 7, 2014

House Committee on Health

**Re: HB 1776 HD1 Relating to Education**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in **support of HB 1776 HD1 with an amendment.**

This measure creates a coordinated way to address the related problems of poor health and academic performance among school children in Hawaii and establishes a mechanism to use trained health care professionals more directly to help address these issues. I believe we need to take a more systems-oriented and coordinated approach to addressing children's health and related issues. HB 1776 HD1 will require two major systems—education and health care—to work together to address health issues early enough to prevent the onset of costly chronic illness, and in doing so, help youth to continue to be physically, mentally and emotionally prepared to learn. HB 1776 HD1 represents an opportunity to establish a more efficient, coordinated approach to addressing two problems for Hawaii. Because this issue is a significant one, and growing, I encourage the committee to amend this bill by **reinstating the requirement of additional physical exams for all public school students**, not just those in one school complex. With this amendment, I ask that you pass this bill on to the next committee.

Sincerely,

Stacy Evensen

