

HB 2074

RELATING TO VETERANS.

Authorizes the issuance of GO bonds for the construction of a long-term care facility for veterans contingent upon the receipt of federal funds. Effective July 1, 2014.

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2074
A BILL RELATING TO THE VETERANS

PRESENTATION TO
THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS (PSM)
AND
HEALTH (HTH) AND HUMAN SERVICES (HMS)

BY
MAJ GEN DARRYLL D. M. WONG
STATE ADJUTANT GENERAL AND DIRECTOR OF STATE CIVIL DEFENSE
March 18, 2014

Chair Espero, Chair Green, Chair Chun Oakland, and the members of the committees.

I am Maj Gen Darryll D. M. Wong, State Adjutant General and Director of State Civil Defense. I am testifying in **SUPPORT** of House Bill 2074.

This bill requests authorization to issue general obligation bonds to fund the State's share of the construction costs of a new long-term care facility. There will be no bond issue unless the federal government appropriates their share of the facility's construction costs.

After construction, there will be no operational costs to the State. Currently, the State owns and licenses the Yukio Okutsu State Veteran's home in Hilo. The Hawaii Health Systems Corporation manages the facility under contract. The new long-term care facility will operate in the same manner.

This new facility will mirror the success of the Okutsu facility built in 2004. It will be a step toward reducing the significant shortage of long-term care beds and services available to qualified veterans.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in **SUPPORT** of HB 2074.

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2074 (HSCR 577-14)
RELATING TO VETERANS

PRESENTATION TO THE

SENATE COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL &
MILITARY AFFAIRS; HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

BY

MR. RONALD P. HAN
DIRECTOR OF THE STATE OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

March 18, 2014

Chairs Espero, Green & Chun-Oakland; Vice Chairs Baker & Green and
Members of the Committees,

I'm Ron Han, Director of the State Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I
appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony **in support** of the concepts in
House Bill 2074, Relating to Veterans.

This measure authorizes the issuance of GO bonds for the construction of a
long-term care facility for veterans contingent upon the receipt of federal funds.
The offset is 35% state funding and 65% federal funding.

The State of Hawaii in partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
has an opportunity to fix an ever increasing critical need in our community: long-
term care resources and services for our veterans. With the success of the
Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home in Hilo, a second Veterans State Home is
needed to fill the 173 bed shortfall (verified by VA based on our Veterans
population State-wide) we are currently experiencing. OVS is expecting our State
Veteran population to grow due to the drawdown of troops in Iraq, the
forthcoming pullout from Afghanistan in 2014, and with defense budget cuts
targeting existing end strength. More military members are attaining Veteran
status. Additionally, there are growing numbers of aging World War II, Korean
and Vietnam War veterans in need of health care that a skilled nursing facility
would bring. This new State Veterans Home would also bring additional jobs and
provide training synergy with our current and future health care professionals and
providers stimulating our local economy.

The OVS supports the intent expressed in this measure as long as its
implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive
Budget for Fiscal Year 2015.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Hawaii's Veterans and their families in support of HB 2074.

Date: March 13, 2014

To: The Honorable Will Espero, Chair
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair
Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

The Honorable Josh Green, Chair
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair
Committee on Health

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair
Committee on Human Services

From: Mike Golojuch, Lt Col, USAF (Ret), Chair, Advisory Board on Veterans' Services

Subject: Strong Support for HB2074

As the Chair, Advisory Board to the Office of Veterans' Services representing over 170,000 Hawaii veterans, we strongly support HB2074. Our board received several briefings on the shortfall of 173 beds for our increasingly aging veteran populations.

There is the Yukio Okutsu state veterans home on Hawaii, but it is not sufficient for the needs of our veterans. With the increase in the number of aging veterans, it is fitting that a new state veterans' long-term facility be built. We need to move forward now so it is important to authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds for the construction of this facility for veterans. We realize that this is contingent upon the receipt of federal funds.

This facility is another positive way to repay veterans for the sacrifices they made. Although modified for current times, let us remember the words taken from Shakespeare's Henry V, "we few, we happy few, we band of brothers and sisters; for those to-day that shed their blood with me, shall be my brother and sister." Let us remember our band of few veterans who were willing to die for their fellow Americans and authorize the bonds so they can rest in respect and dignity during their senior years.

The Board strongly urges the passage of this bill to authorize bonds.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the views of the Advisory Board.



Hawaii Chapter, MOAA
P.O. Box 1185
Kailua, Hawaii 96734-1185

**Testimony of
Thomas Smyth
Military Officers Association of America, Hawaii Chapter
Before the
Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs
Committee on Health and Committee on Human Services
Tuesday, March 18, 2014, 2:45 pm, Room 224
HB 2074 Relating to Veterans
Chairs Espero, Green and Chun Oakland, Vice Chairs Baker and Green and
Committee Members**

Our chapter of 500 retired and currently serving officers of the Uniformed Services strongly support HB 2074. This important bill would allow issuance of General Obligation Bonds for construction of a veteran's Long-term Care Facility if federal funds are also provided.

We look forward to the opening of this important and much needed care program. With more and more veterans growing older and with many afflicted with PTSD and other mental illnesses, there is a very strong need for such a facility. Unfortunately Hawaii has a significant shortage of long-term care facilities across the state. This measure would allow a needed facility to be built and might well induce federal funding, not now available.

More and more of the increasing number of veterans, especially those who have served in the recent ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, are in need of these services.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Public Safety,
Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs, Committee on Health, and
Committee on Human Services**

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

2:45 PM

Conference Room 224

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 2074, RELATING TO VETERANS

Chair Espero, Chair Green, Chair Chun Oakland, and members of the committees.

My name is Charles Ota and I am the Vice President for Military Affairs at The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii (The Chamber). I am here to state The Chamber's *support* of House Bill No. 2074, Relating To Veterans.

The measure proposes to authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds for the construction of long term care facility for veterans contingent upon the receipt of federal funds.

The state will face a significant shortage of long term care facilities statewide to meet the demands of an ever-growing veteran's population. Across the nation, the Office of Veterans Affairs estimates that more than one million members of the armed forces will become veterans within the next five years. There are an estimated one hundred twenty thousand veterans in Hawaii, with forty-four thousand over age sixty-five.

We concur that no bond issuance should be made unless the federal government appropriates a percentage of funds needed to complete the facility.

We note that Hawaii's only veterans care facility, jointly funded by the federal and state governments, was completed in Hilo, HI in 2004 and has successfully operated at no operational or maintenance cost to the state.

In light of the above, we recommend approval.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS
C O R P O R A T I O N
Quality Healthcare For All

Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs
Senator Will Espero, Chair
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Health
Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 18, 2014
Conference Room 224
2:45 p.m.
Hawaii State Capitol

Testimony Supporting House Bill 2074, Relating to Veterans. Authorizes the issuance of GO bonds for the construction of a long-term care facility for veterans contingent upon the receipt of federal funds.

Alice M. Hall
Acting President and Chief Executive Officer
Hawaii Health Systems Corporation

On behalf of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation (HHSC) Corporate Board of Directors, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of HB 2074.

HHSC supports the intent of this bill which is to create a partnership between the state and the Veterans Association to build needed long term care facilities for veterans with no operational costs to the state or HHSC. At this time, we are waiting for the feasibility study before making final commitments on a project.

We appreciate the Committee's focus on improving healthcare for our island communities. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before this committee.

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www.hhsc.org <<http://www.hhsc.org>>



Tuesday– March 18, 2014 – 2:45pm
Conference Room 224

The Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

To: Senator Will Espero, Chair
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

The Senate Committee on Health

To: Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

The Senate Committee on Human Services

To: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair

From: George Greene
President & CEO
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Testimony in Support**
HB 2074 — Relating to Veterans

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH) is a 116-member organization that includes all of the acute care hospitals in Hawaii, the majority of long term care facilities, all the Medicare-certified home health agencies, all hospice programs, as well as other healthcare organizations including durable medical equipment, air and ground ambulance, blood bank and respiratory therapy. In addition to providing quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing nearly 20,000 people statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2074, which would authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds for the construction of a second long-term care facility for veterans contingent upon the receipt of federal funds.

There are approximately one hundred twenty thousand veterans in Hawaii, forty-four thousand of whom are over the age of sixty-five. There is a serious shortfall of long-term care beds for veterans in the state, and the construction of a second long-term care facility would greatly expand access to quality long-term care for Hawaii's veterans.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2074.



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

Headquarters: Department of State of Hawaii
438 Hobron Lane, Suite 407
Honolulu, Hawaii 96815

March 12, 14

**Testimony in Support of HOUSE BILL 2074
Relating to Veterans Before the
Senate Committee On Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs,
Senate Committee on Health, and Senate Committee on Human Services
Hearing On Tuesday, March 18, 2014, 2:45 P.M. In Conference Room 224**

Chairs Espero, Green and Chun Oakland, Vice Chairs Baker and Green and Committee Members,

The Department of Hawaii, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) represents 3,800 members in 20 Posts located throughout the State of Hawaii. VFW is a federally chartered national association of soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen who have served the United States of America in wars, campaigns, and expeditions on foreign soil or in hostile waters.

H.B. 2074 Authorizes the issuance of General Obligation (GO) bonds for the construction of a long term care facility for veterans contingent upon the receipt of federal funds.

VFW Hawaii fully supports the urgent need to construct a 173-bed long-term care facility on Oahu; and urges that this committee pass this bill without delay, thereby authorizing the director of finance to issue sufficient GO bonds for fiscal years 2014-2015 to cover the state's portion of construction costs for that facility.

VFW Hawaii fully concurs with recommendations of the House Committee on Veterans, Military, & Intergovernmental Affairs, & Culture and the Arts and of the House Committee on Finance that this measure be PASSED, UNAMENDED!

VFW Hawaii members are grateful for your efforts to promote this tangible benefit for veterans whose failing physical or mental health would require them to stay in such a long-term care facility.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 2074.

Lawrence M.G. Enomoto

Lawrence M.G. Enomoto
VFW Hawaii State Legislative Liaison

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2014 5:26 AM
To: PSMTestimony
Cc: dne39@isp.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2074 on Mar 18, 2014 14:45PM

HB2074

Submitted on: 3/13/2014

Testimony for PSM/HTH/HMS on Mar 18, 2014 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dennis Egge	naus hawaii chapter	Support	No

Comments: We are grateful for your efforts to fund this project. Dennis Egge; president

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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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 17, 2014 8:41 AM
To: PSMTestimony
Cc: cocpwdhawaii@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2074 on Mar 18, 2014 14:45PM

HB2074

Submitted on: 3/17/2014

Testimony for PSM/HTH/HMS on Mar 18, 2014 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Derek Tamura	COC Persons with Disabilities	Support	No

Comments: The Chamber of Commerce for Persons with Disabilities supports the State of Hawaii fulfilling its obligations to those that have responsibly defended this country.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2014 3:19 PM
To: PSMTestimony
Cc: sonnyfernan@msn.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2074 on Mar 18, 2014 14:45PM

HB2074

Submitted on: 3/13/2014

Testimony for PSM/HTH/HMS on Mar 18, 2014 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stanley Y. Fernandez Sr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments: In Support of HB2074, a state established Veterans Long Term Care facility is way overdue. Let not the Government of Hawaii forget those less than one percent that served their nation and came home disabled physically and mentally.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2014 2:13 PM
To: PSMTestimony
Cc: teresa.parsons@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2074 on Mar 18, 2014 14:45PM

HB2074

Submitted on: 3/12/2014

Testimony for PSM/HTH/HMS on Mar 18, 2014 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Teresa Parsons	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Honorable Representative Chairs Espero, Green and Chun-Oaklund and Committee members, As a veteran of 30 years' Active Duty in Service to this Nation and Hawai'i as well as a health care provider, I stand in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2074 to issue GO bonds to construct a Veteran's State home to care for those who served honorably. There are thousands of veterans within the State who are in need of long term care. Their illnesses and injuries are often unique due to military service which begs the establishment of a central location to provide specialized care. Equally important is the ability to create an environment of support as comrades in declining years. While the VA Center for long-term care on the Tripler Army Medical Center does provide some Veteran LTC as well as the one facility in Hilo, the need for more long term care beds is undeniable. This measure will begin the journey to creation of a sense of community and recognition of honorable service. I urge you to promptly pass this measure and move it to full vote of the Legislature this session. Mahalo for allowing this testimony in strong support of HB 2074.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2014 8:22 PM
To: PSMTestimony
Cc: psgegen@hotmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB2074 on Mar 18, 2014 14:45PM*

HB2074

Submitted on: 3/12/2014

Testimony for PSM/HTH/HMS on Mar 18, 2014 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
pat gegen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2014 7:42 AM
To: PSMTestimony
Cc: greenlee@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB2074 on Mar 18, 2014 14:45PM*

HB2074

Submitted on: 3/13/2014

Testimony for PSM/HTH/HMS on Mar 18, 2014 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ann Greenlee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Testimony to Senate Joint Hearing

To: Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs, Chair Will Espero
Senate Committee on Health, Chair Josh Green
Senate Committee on Human Services, Chair Susanne Chun Oakland

Date: Tuesday, March 18, 2014, 2:45 PM, Room 224 State Capitol.

Re: RELATING TO VETERANS

Chair Espero, Vice Chair Baker; Chair Green, Vice Chair Baker, Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Green, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in SUPPORT of HB 2074 Relating To Veterans.

My name is Keith Ribbentrop, I am United States Air Force retired, a disabled combat veteran of the Vietnam War and retired Hawaii State employee. My last position was as the Hawaii State Veterans Home Liaison Officer. I live in Volcano on Hawaii Island.

Medical science has advanced to the point allowing us to live longer, however, this does not necessarily mean healthy nor independent. Hawaii's disabled and senior veterans have earned the right to live and age with dignity and respect in an environment that provides quality of life that some can only find in a long-term care facility. These men and women have made valuable contributions as well as significant personal sacrifices to our country defending the freedoms we enjoy every day and protecting our Nation's ideals.

Ten percent of Hawaii's population are veterans. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), 73% of Hawaii's veteran population, approximately 85,000 veterans, live in the City and County of Honolulu. Of these veterans more than 28,000 are aged 65 or older. In 2011, there were 15,317 Service Connected Disabled Veterans living in Honolulu County. Among these veterans, 3,868 are rated by the VA with a disability at 70% or greater.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has allocated 268 State Veterans Homes beds to the State of Hawaii. Currently 95 of these allocated beds are in place at the Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home – Hilo leaving 173 beds available for future State Veterans Homes statewide. The Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home – Hilo is a skilled and interim care nursing facility that also offers an Adult Day Health Care Program. The VA, through the State Veterans Homes Program has the capability to cost effectively fill a wide variety of veterans long term care needs. Notably, the Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home – Hilo is owned lock, stock and license by the State of Hawaii. It is managed by contract - at no operational or maintenance cost to the State. Medicare.gov shows that the Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home-Hilo has maintained a 93.42% occupancy rate. The only other facility offering long term care services specifically to veterans is the Department of Veterans Affairs Center for Aging, a 60 bed facility located on the Tripler Army Medical Center Campus. It is a resident facility operated by the VA for veterans aged 65 and older with an average occupancy rate of 95%. Only 60 beds are dedicated to Veterans residing in Honolulu. These numbers demonstrate a significant need.

The VA, through its State Veterans Home program, provides a cost effective venue for states to deliver quality long term care for their veterans. Adoption of this measure would ensure the health and well-being of Hawaii's veterans by offering a safe home for veterans. Additionally, construction of a State Veterans Home would significantly contribute to the economy by creating new jobs. It would greatly enrich both public and private university students' education by providing practicum opportunities within fields such as nursing, social services and medicine. This is a sound investment for Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this Testimony.