



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Health  
Thursday, February 13, 2014 at 1:00 p.m.

by  
Jerris R. Hedges, MD  
Dean  
John A. Burns School of Medicine  
And  
Mary Boland, PhD  
School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### SB 2058 – RELATING TO THE HAWAII HEALTH CORPS LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

Aloha, Chair Green, Vice Chair Baker and members of the Committee. Mahalo for allowing us to testify today in support of SB 2058, to help further attract and retain health workers in rural communities of our State, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in the University's Board of Regents Approved Executive Biennium Budget.

The John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM), with the School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene, were honored to help organize Hawai'i's first educational loan repayment program for MDs, Physician Assistants and Advanced Practice Nurses. We are excited to tell you how the program is making a difference in many of our Island communities.

After the Hawai'i State Legislature authorized the UH Mānoa schools of medicine and nursing to establish the Hawai'i State Loan Repayment Program, JABSOM Professor Dr. Kelley Withy, MD, of the Hawai'i Area Health Education Center worked to obtain funding from the U.S. Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and generous donations from HMSA, The Queen's Medical Center and AlohaCare.

The program began with loan repayment agreements for five health professionals. This past year, a committee selected 11 more health care providers eligible to receive up to \$40,000 to repay their student loans in exchange for their commitment to work in a Health Profession Shortage Area in Hawai'i for two years. Our newest recipients include family nurse practitioners on Lāna'i, Moloka'i, Hawai'i Island and in Wai'anae on O'ahu; an obstetrician on Maui; pediatricians in Kalihi and Wai'anae on O'ahu and a psychiatrist at Hālawā prison.

These are people who are making a difference in communities where they are needed the most. Among the critical services these 11 are providing are helping sex and child abuse assault victims, performing the initial health screenings in family clinics and working with the homeless and migrant workers.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to tell you a little about our most recent loan recipients, the 11 who received awards totaling \$394,474.

Dr. Jasmine Waipa is working in Waiʻanae.

“I attend the deliveries of many babies that I eventually care for in my clinic,” said Dr. Jasmine Waipa, a loan repayment recipient and pediatrician at the Waiʻanae Coast Comprehensive Health Center. Waipa is a graduate of Kamehameha Schools, Harvard University and Stanford School of Medicine. “My interests are in health disparities, adolescent medicine, obesity and preventable chronic disease in children,” said Waipa.

Aileen Duran is working on Lānaʻi.

Aileen Duran, a graduate of Farrington High School and the UH Mānoa Family Nurse Practitioner Program, noticed a real need for bilingual providers when she was training on Lānaʻi. A speaker of Tagalog and Ilokano, Duran accepted a full-time position as a Family Nurse Practitioner at the Lānaʻi Community Health Center in July.

Erik Anderson is working at Kalihi-Palama.

Loan repayment award recipient Erik Anderson is a native of Kailua, Oʻahu. He graduated from ʻIolani School, the University of California-Santa Cruz and earned his master’s degree at the UH Mānoa School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene to become an Adult and Geriatric Nurse Practitioner. “During my education at UH, I had the pleasure of doing a clinical rotation at Kalihi-Palama Health Center,” said Anderson. “I enjoyed working with the patients from Kalihi, including the new Micronesian immigrants.” Anderson has joined the adult medicine team at Kalihi-Palama.

Denise Houghtaling is working on Molokaʻi

Denise Houghtaling, hired this year as a Family Nurse Practitioner at the Molokaʻi Community Health Center, is also a loan repayment award recipient. She grew up in Washington State, but has lived in Hawaiʻi for seven years. She is currently in a doctorate program through Johns Hopkins and doing a Capstone Project that focuses on providing services to victims of sex and child abuse on Molokaʻi.

Dr. Christopher Lawlis is working at Hālawā Correctional Facility.

Dr. Christopher Lawlis, who joined the state as a psychiatrist at Hālawā Correctional Facility this year, is a new father who wants to raise his children in Hawaiʻi. His loan repayment award helps make that possible. “I am very interested in homeless and chemical dependence issues”, said Dr. Lawlis, and I believe the incarcerated can be helped to get back on track.”

Jennifer Morita is working in Waiʻanae.

Jennifer Morita, from Pālolo on Oʻahu, graduated from Kaimukī High School and attended the UH Mānoa School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene. “I grew up in a single parent household,” said Morita. During her training at the Institute for Human Services, Kōkua Kalihi Valley and on the Waikī Care A Van, she honed skills and a passion to help the underserved, particularly Native Hawaiians, Micronesians and women currently in domestic violence settings. She is a Family Nurse Practitioner at the Waiʻanae Coast Comprehensive Health Center and a loan repayment recipient.

Dr. Alicia Turlington is working at Kalihi-Palama.

Dr. Alicia Turlington, Pediatrician at Kōkua Kalihi Valley Health Center, grew up on Kaua'i. She completed her medical training at the UH-JABSOM Pediatrics Residency Program. While still a pediatrician-in-training, she was assigned to a clinic at Kōkua Kalihi Valley. "I started there in 2008 as a trainee and have been there ever since," said Dr. Turlington, who now helps train current UH pediatric residents in addition to treating children at the health center.

Hokulani Porter is working in Wai'anae.

Loan repayment award recipient Hokulani Porter, who is part-Hawaiian, grew up seeing many of the health issues that Native Hawaiians experience in her own family. "That motivated me to enter nursing," said Porter. The holder of a Master's Degree, she is a Family Nurse Practitioner at the Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center. "I believe we play an active role serving as the first layer of detection of health deterioration," Porter said. "The patient visit can be a catalyst to engage patients, educating and empowering them to make lifestyle interventions to promote health and prevent disease," she said.

Dr. Duffy Casey is working on Maui.

Dr. Duffy Casey, an Obstetrician at Community Clinic of Maui, had lots of international experience when he moved to Hawai'i four years ago. Clinical rotations on the neighbor islands exposed him to the small-town life on Maui, which he loves. He is a 2013 loan repayment recipient.

Anjalie Graham is working on Hawai'i Island.

Loan repayment award recipient Anjalie Graham is a Family Nurse Practitioner at West Hawai'i Community Health Center. "We conduct homeless clinics weekly and I enjoy providing that kind of care," Graham said. "I hope to take part in a new migrant worker health program starting at West Hawai'i," she said.

Lisa Garrett-Guadnola is working in Wai'anae.

Lisa Garrett-Guadnola comes to the Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center by way of Detroit, where her parents worked in an automobile assembly line. During a Master's program in nursing, she worked with Catholic Charities of Hawai'i in Ma'ili. "It was my first introduction to the Wai'anae Coast, and I felt right at home," she said.

Right now, Dr. Withy is in the process of receiving new applications from recruits interested in the Hawai'i State Loan Repayment Program. We are proud of the recipients so far, and we believe that with State support, the loan repayment program can continue to grow, to attract or help retain additional health workers for our citizens. In the face of a growing health worker shortage, the Hawai'i State Loan Repayment Program is a great investment in our State's future.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.



## HAWAII MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

1360 S. Beretania Street, Suite 200, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814  
Phone (808) 536-7702 Fax (808) 528-2376 www.hmaonline.net

DATE: Thursday, February 13, 2014  
TIME: 1:00PM  
PLACE: Conference Room 224

TO:

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Senator Josh Green, Chair

Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

FROM: Hawaii Medical Association

Dr. Walton Shim, MD, President

Dr. Linda Rasmussen, MD, Legislative Co-Chair

Dr. Ron Keinitz, DO, Legislative Co-Chair

Dr. Christopher Flanders, DO, Executive Director

Lauren Zirbel, Community and Government Relations

Re: SB 2058

Position: Strongly Support

The Hawaii Medical Association is submitting testimony in strong support of this measure.

This measure makes an appropriation for the implementation and administration of the Hawaii health corps loan repayment program.

Overwhelming amounts of medical school debt are a huge reason that many medical students do not return to Hawaii to practice. Physicians can make 3-4 times as much money working on the mainland.

This measure works to improve the chance that young doctors will practice in Hawaii by establishing a student loan repayment program. We commend this effort!

HMA believes that increasing the potential pool of physicians and other health care providers is an important step forward in addressing Hawaii's worsening catastrophic shortage of health care providers.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important issue.

*Officers*

*President - Walton Shim, MD President-Elect – Robert Sloan*

*Secretary - Thomas Kosasa, MD Immediate Past President – Stephen Kemble, MD*

*Treasurer – Brandon Lee, MD Executive Director – Christopher Flanders, DO*

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Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2014 11:58:24 AM

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**SB2058**

Submitted on: 2/12/2014

Testimony for HTH on Feb 13, 2014 13:00PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Malia Ribeiro	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am writing to offer my strongest support SB2058. My name is Malia Ribeiro APRN I am a family nurse practitioner working at a womens and childrens homeless shelter in Kalihi providing primary care. Although I am not receiving the Hawaii State loan repayment, I can attest that finding and retaining primary care providers to work with underserved communities is difficult in Hawaii. The clinic I work at has had multiple providers before I came on two years ago. The lack of continuity of care for this vulnerable population has negative effects from both a health and economic perspective. It is well known that if patients are connected to and have adequate access to a primary care provider they are less likely to utilize emergency departments. Through building relationships with patients I can see the rates of ED visits decline in my own practice as patients know they can easily reach out to me to obtain care. Unfortunately, research has shown that Hawaii has a severe shortage of primary healthcare providers, especially in rural and underserved urban areas. Without enough providers, the people of Hawaii have trouble accessing necessary healthcare. Therefore we must recruit and retain more primary care providers. Loan repayment is one of the best ways of doing this. In 2011, the UH John. A. Buns School of Medicine Area Health Education Center created a state loan repayment program with private donations from HMSA, Queens and AlohaCare and matching funds from the federal government. This loan repayment program has provided repayment of up to \$40,000 a year of educational debt for 16 individuals who are still working in underserved areas. The matching federal funds are still available, but state funds must be allocated for the match in order to receive these funds. I applaud your efforts to secure these funds so that we can continue and EXPAND this valuable program. Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Mahalo, Malia Ribeiro MSN Family Nurse Practitioner Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Advanced Public Health Nurse

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**SB2058**

Submitted on: 2/12/2014

Testimony for HTH on Feb 13, 2014 13:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
catherine louise	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am writing to offer my strongest support SB2058. Research has shown that Hawaii has a severe shortage of healthcare providers, especially in rural areas and in primary care. Without enough providers, the people of Hawaii have trouble accessing necessary healthcare. Therefore we must recruit and retain more primary care providers. Loan repayment is one of the best ways of doing this. In 2011, the UH John. A. Buns School of Medicine Area Health Education Center created a state loan repayment program with private donations from HMSA, Queens and AlohaCare and matching funds from the federal government. This loan repayment program has provided repayment of up to \$40,000 a year of educational debt for 16 individuals who are still working in underserved areas. The matching federal funds are still available, but state funds must be allocated for the match in order to receive these funds. I applaud your efforts to secure these funds so that we can continue and EXPAND this valuable program. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

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**SB2058**

Submitted on: 2/12/2014

Testimony for HTH on Feb 13, 2014 13:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Anthony Guerrero	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: I am writing to offer my strongest support SB2058. Research has shown that Hawaii has a severe shortage of healthcare providers, especially in rural areas and in primary care. Without enough providers, the people of Hawaii have trouble accessing necessary healthcare. Therefore we must recruit and retain more primary care providers. Loan repayment is one of the best ways of doing this. In 2011, the UH John. A. Buns School of Medicine Area Health Education Center created a state loan repayment program with private donations from HMSA, Queens and AlohaCare and matching funds from the federal government. This loan repayment program has provided repayment of up to \$40,000 a year of educational debt for 16 individuals who are still working in underserved areas. The matching federal funds are still available, but state funds must be allocated for the match in order to receive these funds. I applaud your efforts to secure these funds so that we can continue and EXPAND this valuable program. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

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**SB2058**

Submitted on: 2/12/2014

Testimony for HTH on Feb 13, 2014 13:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Erik Anderson	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I strongly support SB2058. I am a current participant in the State Loan Repayment Program. The financial and academic support the program offers me has made my work as a nurse practitioner at Kalihi Palama Health Center more feasible and rewarding. I feel the program really helps to mitigate the high turnover in health care providers that plague our community health centers. I am very fortunate to be a part of the program, and I hope it continues to benefit others who choose to work in underserved areas in the future. Mahalo, Erik Anderson

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**SB2058**

Submitted on: 2/12/2014

Testimony for HTH on Feb 13, 2014 13:00PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
alex wills	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: I am writing to offer my strongest support SB2058. Research has shown that Hawaii has a severe shortage of healthcare providers, especially in rural areas and in primary care. Without enough providers, the people of Hawaii have trouble accessing necessary healthcare. Therefore we must recruit and retain more primary care providers. Loan repayment is one of the best ways of doing this. In 2011, the UH John. A. Buns School of Medicine Area Health Education Center created a state loan repayment program with private donations from HMSA, Queens and AlohaCare and matching funds from the federal government. This loan repayment program has provided repayment of up to \$40,000 a year of educational debt for 16 individuals who are still working in underserved areas. The matching federal funds are still available, but state funds must be allocated for the match in order to receive these funds. I applaud your efforts to secure these funds so that we can continue and EXPAND this valuable program. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

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