



**WAIANAE COAST
COMPREHENSIVE
HEALTH CENTER**
www.wcchc.com

LATE TESTIMONY

February 24, 2014

TO: Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Chair
Senator Clayton Hee, Vice Chair

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

FROM: Rich Bettini, Chief Executive Officer 
Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center / 697-3457 or wcchc@wcchc.com

RE: **SB2103: Relating to Health Planning**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB2103 to add objectives and policies regarding the social determinants of health to the Hawaii State Planning Act to reduce health disparities among Native Hawaiians, other Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos.

The Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center is a Federally Qualified Health Center serving over 31,000 patients in Leeward Oahu. Over 41 years dedicated to improving the health of our predominately Native Hawaiian community has taught the health center a few lessons. One of the most important lessons learned is that much of what affects our patients' health is determined by what happens outside of the doctor's office. What we now refer to as the "social determinants of health."

For Hawai'i's most vulnerable communities, the reality is that public policy decisions make it far too hard for individuals to make the right decisions to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Native Hawaiians are among the hardest hit by policy decisions that don't address the social determinants of health, resulting in our state's first people ranking last in many wellness indicators. The best way to address Native Hawaiian health in particular and our state's challenges overall is through a dual commitment to Native Hawaiian health as well as the broader social determinants of health that affect us all.

The State Planning Act is a policy-setting document intended to improve state planning, increase government effectiveness and improve coordination among different agencies, making it the appropriate vehicle for this commitment. While addressing social determinants of health is considered the most important factor to ensuring healthy communities, the health planning statutes of the State Planning Act haven't been updated since 1988 and do not yet explicitly address social determinants of health.

Incorporating a holistic understanding of health and well-being into health planning is consistent with the Native Hawaiian concept that the entirety of our well-being contributes to our own health, the health of our families, and the larger community. Preventative resources targeted to communities most significantly affected by barriers to good health can provide greater overall access to affordable housing, accessible fresh fruits and vegetables, safe neighborhoods and infrastructure, and preventative healthcare for all the people of Hawai'i. Thus, implementing policy that allows state agencies to address the social determinants of health simply makes our approach to healthcare more efficient, and benefits our entire population.

SB2103 is one step towards modernizing the way we address disparities. Providing support for state agencies that seek to include social determinants of health in their policy planning may lead to more effective use of resources and better health outcomes for all, while at the same time ensuring that communities most significantly affected by barriers to good health are not left behind.

LATE TESTIMONY

From: [Sr. Rosalinda Barrozo, M.M.](#)
To: [HWNTestimony](#)
Subject: "SUPPORT FOR SB2103, Feb. 24 at 2:45 pm"
Date: Monday, February 24, 2014 11:02:57 AM

THANKS for your efforts to help our people in the State of Hawaii.

Sr. Rosalinda Barrozo, MM
CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

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