

# SB2235

Physical Examinations; \$  
EDU/HTH, WAM



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

**Date:** 01/31/2014

**Committee:** Senate Education/Senate Health

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Bill:** SB 2235 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 SB 2235. While the Department appreciates the intent of this bill, the mandate to present the 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.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Written Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committees on Education and Health  
Friday, January 31, 2014 at 1:15 p.m.

by

Dr. Jerris Hedges, Dean  
John A. Burns School of Medicine  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### SB 2235 – RELATING TO EDUCATION

Aloha Chairs Tokuda and Green, Vice Chairs Kidani and Baker and members of the Committees:

Almost three-fourth (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. Youth are also at risk for suicide from underlying depression. In 2011, among youth in Hawai'i:

- 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% reported that they ever had sexual intercourse

Except for routine immunizations and mandated sports physicals, many youth do not receive health screening for depression or chronic health conditions such as obesity. As academic success of Hawaii's youth is intimately linked to their health, annual health screening of school age youth has great promise for strengthening the fabric of society. Research shows that poor health such as mental health disorders, uncontrolled asthma, poor nutrition and sleep disorders are closely linked to poor academic outcomes. On the other hand, research also shows that academic success is a primary predictor of adult health outcomes. For example, in Hawai'i, 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. Thus mandating annual health screening by a primary care provider prior to beginning school offers great promise for advancing the health of both our keiki and our kūpuna.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



**SB2235**  
**Relating to Education**  
Senate Committee on Education and  
Senate Committee on Health

January 31, 2014

1:15 p.m.

Room 414

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The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) offers the following **COMMENTS** on SB2235, which would require children to complete a physical examination before attending kindergarten, sixth grade or ninth grade.

OHA's strategic priorities include Maui Ola (Health), which represents our commitment to improving the health and well-being of Native Hawaiians. OHA research shows obesity as one of the greatest threats to the health of Native Hawaiians, with Native Hawaiian rates of obesity at 49.3 percent, more than double the statewide rate. Data also show that Native Hawaiian students in public high schools have an obesity rate of 31.3 percent, with increasingly high levels of overweight students. With this in mind, OHA has committed to the strategic goal of reducing the Native Hawaiian obesity rate to 35 percent by 2018.

In pursuit of its commitment to reduce the Native Hawaiian obesity rate, OHA collaborates with the Childhood Obesity Prevention Task Force, a body formed in 2012 with the goal of combating childhood obesity. This measure represents a part of one of the policy recommendations prepared by the Task Force and submitted to the legislature in 2013. The Task Force's report to the legislature is available online at:

<http://co.doh.hawaii.gov/sites/LegRpt/2013/Reports/1/ACT%20269.pdf>

Requiring students to submit evidence of completion of a physical examination prior to school enrollment at three different school grade levels prompts families to visit their primary care physician, and encourages families to prioritize wellness visits for children. Such visits may facilitate early interventions for children with potential health concerns, including children who may be at risk of becoming overweight or obese. As originally framed by the Task Force, the policy recommendation for children to complete physical examinations also included a data collection component, that would enable schools to assess the impact of school-based programs and interventions on student health.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



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**Friday, January 31, 2014 – 1:15 pm**  
**Conference Room 414**

**The Senate Committee on Education**

To: Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

**The Senate Committee on Health**

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

From: Virginia Pressler, MD, MBA

**Re: SB 2235, Relating to Education**  
**Testimony in Support**

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My name is Virginia Pressler, MD, MBA, Executive Vice President and Chief Strategic Officer for Hawai'i Pacific Health (HPH). HPH is a nonprofit health care system and the state's largest health care provider anchored by its four nonprofit hospitals: Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children, Pali Momi Medical Center, Straub Clinic & Hospital and Wilcox Memorial Hospital on Kauai. HPH is committed to providing the highest quality medical care and service to the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific Region through its four affiliated hospitals, 49 outpatient clinics and service sites, more than 5,400 employees and 1,300 physicians on staff,

I write in support of SB 2235 which requires children to undergo a physical examination prior to attending kindergarten, sixth grade, and ninth grade beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, and makes an appropriation to the department of education.

Currently, kindergarten is the only time when students are required to have a health assessment in order to participate in a public school. In contrast, students attending private schools are assessed every one to two years. While cursory physical examinations are conducted for sports activities, those types of examinations are limited and not as comprehensive as a health assessment.

The routine physical assessment of students is important for monitoring the health and wellbeing of our keiki. Conducting physical assessments at the benchmark time periods for children of kindergarten, sixth grade, and ninth grade greatly aides in addressing and preventing health-related issues such as childhood obesity, smoking, and dealing with stress, as well as maintaining a current schedule of vaccinations.

We urge your committees to pass SB 2235.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.





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January 29, 2014

The Honorable Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair – Education Committee  
The Hawaii State Capitol Conference Room 414  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair Michelle N. Kidani, and Committee Members,

The American Diabetes Association is the leading voluntary health association for all people with diabetes. The Association's mission is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes. The Association carries out this mission by directly funding research; disseminating critical information to the patient, clinician and research communities; and by advocating for research, prevention, and care in ways that will benefit people with diabetes.

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) supports SB 2235 and bills requiring children to undergo a physical examination prior to attending kindergarten, sixth grade, and ninth grade beginning with the 2015-2016 school year.

Why should the legislature care about obesity and the growing diabetes epidemic? We commend the legislature taking the lead in the fight against diabetes and obesity in Hawaii. **Diabetes now affects more than 113,000 Hawaii residents.**

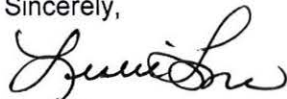
Obesity is a major health and economic concern for Hawaii and the nation, causing higher medical costs and lower quality of life. In Hawaii one in four children entering kindergarten are overweight or obese and one in two adults are overweight or obese. Obesity-related medical expenditures in Hawaii were calculated to be over \$470 million in 2009, and are continuing to rise. The adolescent physical examination visit provides an opportunity for the healthcare provider to assess growth, screen for obesity and possible complications such as prediabetes or high blood pressure, identify the appropriate resources for the child and the child's family and develop a plan to support family-based lifestyle changes.

The health of our students in Hawaii is important and healthy students are better prepared to succeed academically. If we do not do something about the growing epidemic the economic cost to Hawaii will be crippling. Because of this, the American Diabetes Association strives to improve public policy as it relates to diabetes.

**The American Diabetes Association believes this legislation will provide much needed public health awareness for families and schools. The American Diabetes Association would like to thank you for your support of SB 2235 as this bill could go a long way to help prevent school age children from developing type 2 diabetes in Hawaii.**

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at email: [llam@diabetes.org](mailto:llam@diabetes.org) or: 808-947-5979.

Sincerely,



Leslie Lam  
Executive Director- Hawaii



Laura Keller  
Director State Government Relations





## Hawaii Chapter

**AAP - Hawaii Chapter**  
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## Testimony for SB 2235

From: Hawaii Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
January 27, 2014

Thank you for an opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 2235, 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.

The Hawaii Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics is a voluntary organization of over 200 pediatricians in Hawaii. Our mission is to attain optimal physical, mental and social health and well being for infants, children, adolescents and young adults in Hawaii.

Adolescence is a period of tremendous physical, emotional and social change. During this period 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 failure and achievement.

Primary care practitioners, pediatricians, family physicians and nurse practitioners who have a long-standing relationship with families, are ideally suited for preventing 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. The American Academy of Pediatrics has advocated that child should have regular "Well Child" physical exams throughout childhood. In adolescence, 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.

Too many adolescents are now *only* seen by their primary care provider for the occasional sick visit. The reasons are many. 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. In turn, many busy, over-taxed 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, substance abuse too often go undiagnosed until a crisis occurs.

HB 1776 will ensure that all youth attending public school in Hawaii have a well child preventive health care visit at 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade entry. 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.

*In order align this policy with current recommendations for yearly well child examinations, we strongly suggest one modification to the proposed bill (Line 8)– that physical examination be performed within twelve months of the date of attendance, rather than 6 months.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Michael Hamilton".

R. Michael Hamilton, MS, MD, FAAP



**HPCCA**

HAWAII PRIMARY CARE ASSOCIATION

**House Committee on Education**

The Hon. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair

The Hon. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

**House Committee on Health**

The Hon. Josh Green, Chair

The Hon. Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2235**  
**Relating to Education**  
**Submitted by Robert Hirokawa, Chief Executive Officer**  
**January 31, 2014, 1:15 pm, Room 414**

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA), which represents the federally qualified community health centers in Hawaii, supports Senate Bill 2235, requiring children to undergo physical examinations upon entering kindergarten, sixth, and ninth grades.

The HPCA believes in leading a shift from a sickness based form of medicine currently practiced in Hawaii to one of wellness. A key part of this is by instituting wellness physical exams at regularly scheduled intervals to ensure patient health and catch any malady before it becomes catastrophic. Nowhere is this need more apparent than with adolescents, who often only see primary care providers when ill, despite the enormous amount of physical and mental change they encounter.

Further, obesity is becoming more of an issue each year. In recent years, as many as one in four children in Hawaii are already considered overweight or obese, contributing to medical expenditures that totaled more than \$470 million in 2009 alone. Instituting more regular physical examinations will allow providers to keep better information on patients, as well as provide regular feedback for patients about their health status.

For these reasons, and the continued physical and financial health of Hawaii, the HPCA supports Senate Bill 2235. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.





January 31, 2014

**TO:** Senate Committee on Education                      Senate Committee on Health  
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair                                      Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair  
Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair                                      Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

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

**RE:**                      **Support for SB2235: Relating to Education**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB2235, 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.

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 SB 2235.

SB2235 will ensure that all youth attending public school in Hawaii have a well child preventive health care visit at 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade entry. While we know this bill is just the start, we think it strongly supports our patient centered medical home model, optimal adolescent health and student achievement. Even more importantly, the bill strengthens the relationship between our health and educational systems, as well as adolescents and parents in Hawaii.

SB 2235  
RELATING TO EDUCATION

Senate Committees on Education and Health

Public Hearing – January 31, 2014  
1:15pm., State Capitol, Conference Room 414

By  
Jay Maddock, Ph.D.

I am writing to **support** SB2235. 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 Hawaii'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.

**SB2235**

Submitted on: 1/28/2014

Testimony for EDU/HTH on Jan 31, 2014 13:15PM in Conference Room 414

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Teresa Parsons	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Honorable Senators, I applaud this legislation to ensure the health of children in Hawai'i. Routine physical examinations at intervals detect problems early and ensure children are prepared for the school day and learning. I write this in SUPPORT of SB 2235. Mahalo for allowing me to provide this testimony.

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Stacy Evensen	Individual	Support	Yes

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Adele Mattoon	Health	Comments Only	Yes