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To: [HTHTestimony](#)
Cc: judith.clarke@doh.hawaii.gov
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2579 on Jan 27, 2014 13:30PM
Date: Sunday, January 26, 2014 12:28:10 PM
Attachments: [SB2579_HTH_01-27-14_HTH.pdf](#)

SB2579

Submitted on: 1/26/2014

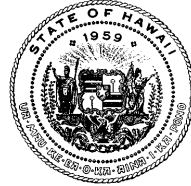
Testimony for HTH on Jan 27, 2014 13:30PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Judith M. Clarke	Department of Health - AMHD	Support	Yes

Comments: Acting Director of Health, Gary L. Gill or Deputy Director of Behavioral Health Administration, Lynn N. Fallin will be in attendance at the Hearing to provide testimony.

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

In reply, please refer to:
File:

Senate Committee on Health

SB2579, Relating to Mental Health

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

Monday, January 27, 2014, 1:30 p.m., Room 229

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health (DOH) strongly supports this measure provided
2 that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in DOH's Executive Budget and
3 Administration bill package, for example, SB2851/HB2301, SB2868/HB2318, and SB2869/HB2319.

4 **Fiscal Implications:** Undetermined at this time.

5 **Purpose and Justification:** This bill proposes to authorize the Director of Finance to issue general
6 obligation bonds for the DOH to develop a secure inpatient psychiatric facility to serve people
7 experiencing a mental illness who require strict security and intensive inpatient mental health treatment.
8 This population would include inmates and detainees who have a history of violence and significant
9 needs for psychiatric care and inpatient hospitalization. In addition, the bill proposes that DOH submit
10 plans to build the secure inpatient psychiatric facility.

11 The DOH strongly supports this measure and will coordinate and collaborate with other state
12 agencies, such as the Judiciary, Department of Public Safety, the State Procurement Office, the
13 Department of Accounting and General Services, and the Department of the Attorney General to
14 develop and submit plans for such a facility to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the 2015
15 Legislative Session.

Promoting Lifelong Health & Wellness

1 We acknowledge previous and current legislative initiatives and other proposals with similar
2 intent, such as SB3095. We will coordinate between these and with others on potential implications and
3 look forward to working with interested parties on the development of a secure inpatient psychiatric
4 facility that will address the forensic mental health and the correctional mental health needs of our state.
5 Our efforts will involve working in collaboration with stakeholders to clarify terminology, target
6 populations, and develop both short and longer-term solutions.

7 To accomplish this, the DOH proposes to convene a Task Force with the participation of
8 stakeholders from relevant state agencies and the legal, law enforcement, and mental health community
9 with a focus on interagency collaboration. The Task Force will study the policy changes needed to
10 successfully coordinate services provided to the populations that will be served by this facility and will
11 develop a coordinated action to plan to implement them in this unique setting.

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

DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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**THE HONORABLE JOSH GREEN, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Twenty-Seventh State Legislature
Regular Session of 2014
State of Hawai'i**

January 27, 2014

RE: S.B. 2579; RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH.

Chair Green, Vice-Chair Baker and members of the Senate Committee on Health, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu submits the following testimony in support of Senate Bill 2579.

The Department recognizes that serious mental illness is a highly specialized field that requires appropriate care, treatment and—at times—secured facilities. Due to the violent tendencies of certain psychiatric patients, which may include those who were found unfit for purposes of trial or acquitted for mental health reasons, and those incarcerated with existing or developing mental health issues—Hawai'i greatly needs a secured inpatient psychiatric facility, to promote greater safety for those individuals, as well as for other prison inmates, staff, and ultimately for the public.

For all the reasons above, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu strongly supports S.B. 2579. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



HAWAII DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER

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E-mail: info@hawaiidisabilityrights.org Website: www.hawaiidisabilityrights.org

THE SENATE THE TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2014

Committee on Health Testimony in Support of S.B. 2579 Relating to Mental Health

**Monday, January 27, 2014, 1:30 P.M.
Conference Room 229**

Chair Green and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Disability Rights Center testifies in support of this bill which would fund a facility to serve forensic mental health patients who need stricter security or a higher level of services. Clearly it goes without saying that it is a necessary step the state must take. Most of the professionals who are knowledgeable on the issue have suggested for some time that the current Hawaii State Hospital, which was designed to be a treating hospital has essentially “lost its way”. Although it was intended to be a treating hospital for individuals with mental illness, it has become a de facto forensic facility simply because Criminal Court Judges continue to order defendants placed there. As a result two things occur. One is that it is a forensic facility not really equipped to be a forensic facility. The other is that it has no capacity to serve its original purpose and so individuals who actually need to go there for treatment are unable to.

A separate facility would appropriately house the forensic population with well trained staff operating at a sensible ratio. It would also free up space at the current facility to serve non forensic individuals who need to be treated for their mental illness. It might actually reduce some of the problems we are seeing on the streets which are occupied by many untreated individuals who have not committed crimes. It might help to break the sad cycle which currently states that the only way to receive treatment in Hawaii for mental illness is to get arrested.

We have observed with great interest the hearings conducted this session in response to the reports of patient assaults on staff members at the hospital. Obviously that is a matter of great concern. Yet, several things need to be stated. One is that in truth, we



believe that a study of the data would demonstrate that patient assaults against other patients are more prevalent than assaults against the staff. The other is that advocates in the mental health community have been coming to the legislature for the past several years to ask that cuts in community based mental health services be restored. The notion is that if these services were properly funded, (which would be infinitely cheaper) it might reduce the number of individuals who needed to be hospitalized. We continue to believe that that is true and we hope that as the session progresses, the legislature will take a "holistic" look at the system of mental health delivery in Hawaii. It is unfortunate that it took a clamoring from unionized state employees to point out what those who have been working with the mental health population have known and been saying for years. Yet it is also fortunate that the issue has finally received front burner attention from the legislature and we hope that the safety concerns of the workers and the treatment needs of the patients can be properly addressed in a way that helps all of them.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [HTHTestimony](#)
Cc: maefuimaono@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2579 on Jan 27, 2014 13:30PM
Date: Sunday, January 26, 2014 5:21:56 AM

SB2579

Submitted on: 1/26/2014

Testimony for HTH on Jan 27, 2014 13:30PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mae Fuimaono	Individual	Comments Only	Yes

Comments: Aloha, Thank you for hearing this important piece of legislation. I have worked in mental health in Hawaii for the past 5 years. I have witnessed my friends and co workers get assaulted, threatened and harassed. Working in a environment where you are scared and have no recourse if injured is hard. We have needed higher security at state for years, how many more professionals need to get injured before the state steps in and gives funding where it is desperately needed. Getting the mentally ill out of the prison system and into the mental health system is a good thing we just need more infrastructure to do it safely. Thank you

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