



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
STATE COUNCIL  
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
919 ALA MOANA BOULEVARD, ROOM 113  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96814  
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543  
March 30, 2016

The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Twenty-Eighth Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawaii  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: HB 1772 HD2 – Relating to Oral Health

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities (DD) **SUPPORTS HB 1772 HD2**. The bill appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services to restore basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid and QUEST integration enrollees.

The Council is especially pleased with the proposed strategy on Page 3, lines 4-6, to expand Medicaid dental services for adults to include preventive and treatment services. This provision would directly benefit adults with DD in providing oral health services that includes preventive, restorative, and prosthetic services.

The Council cannot emphasize enough the importance of dental care services that include preventive, restorative, prosthetic, and emergency services for people with DD. We are all aware of how oral health, or the lack thereof, affects all aspects (emotional, psychological, and social) of our lives. Numerous individuals can share with you their experience of having a tooth or teeth extracted or acquiring serious health problems because necessary dental services were not available because of the termination of the Medicaid adult dental benefit coverage in 1996. Compounding the challenges is the limited number of dentists on the Neighbor Islands who are available and willing to serve Medicaid and QUEST integration enrollees.

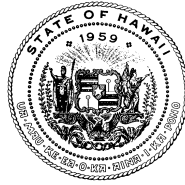
We applaud the Legislature's initiative in restoring basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid and QUEST-integrated enrollees through HB 1772 HD2.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support of HB 1772 HD2**.

Sincerely,

Waynette K.Y. Cabral, MSW  
Executive Administrator

Josephine C. Woll  
Chair



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

**Testimony COMMENTING on HB 1772, HD2  
RELATING TO ORAL HEALTH**

SENATOR JILL N. TOKUDA, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date: March 30, 2016

Room Number: 211

1 **Fiscal Implications:** HB1772, HD2 proposes adding a general fund appropriation for fiscal year  
2 2016-2017 to the Department of Human Services budget to restore basic adult dental benefits to  
3 Medicaid and QUEST integration enrollees.

4 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health is providing comment on HB1772, HD2  
5 Relating To Oral Health.

6 The U.S. Surgeon General 2000 report “Oral Health in America,” characterizes good oral  
7 health as a prerequisite for people’s general health and quality of life. Oral health affects people  
8 both physically and psychologically. It influences how they grow, enjoy life, look, speak, chew,  
9 taste food, and socialize. Poor oral health brings negative effects to both children and adults in  
10 all settings – home, school, work and social activities. Oral diseases, such as dental caries and  
11 periodontal (gum) disease are important public health issues because they are common and have  
12 high socioeconomic costs.

13 More recent research has shown poor oral health can be an indicator for chronic disease  
14 with possible links between periodontal disease and cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease,  
15 diabetes, and poor pregnancy outcomes. Fortunately, most oral diseases can be prevented.

16 The Department of Health 2015 “Hawaii Oral Health: Key Findings” report presents data  
17 indicating the need for basic preventive and treatment dental services for all Hawaii residents  
18 including adults. As described in the bill introduction, the 2012 data shows low-income adults

1 less likely to visit a dentist each year and are more likely to suffer from tooth loss than high  
2 income adults (Hawaii Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System).

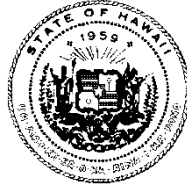
3 Also concerning, 2009-2011 data shows less than half of pregnant women (41%) see a  
4 dentist although national health recommendations state dental visits are safe and important to  
5 prevent dental problems for mothers and their developing babies. Low-income pregnant women  
6 and those on Medicaid/QUEST health insurance have the lowest estimates for dental visits  
7 (Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System).

8 Nationally, several states have shown a lack of regular dental care drives up health care  
9 costs by examining emergency department data. Without access to preventive and treatment  
10 services, many residents seek care at hospital emergency departments for dental problems  
11 although dental services are not available there. In 2012, there were more than 3,000 emergency  
12 department (ED) visits by children and adults in Hawaii for preventable dental problems,  
13 representing more than \$8.5 million dollars in hospital charges. The average charge per ED visit  
14 was \$2,854.09. Since 2006, the number of preventable ED visits for dental problems increased  
15 by 67%, significantly higher than the national average.

16 Hawaii's oral health disease rates are exacerbated due to the state's limited access to  
17 community water fluoridation (CWF), the most effective and affordable preventive measure.  
18 Hawaii continues to have the lowest rate of CWF in the U.S.; 11% compared to 75% nationally.

19 The "Hawaii Oral Health: Key Findings" report identified eight strategies to improve oral  
20 health and includes expanding Medicaid dental services for adults beyond the limited benefits for  
21 emergency and palliative care. A copy of the report can be found at:  
22 [http://health.hawaii.gov/about/files/2013/06/Key\\_Findings\\_wC.pdf](http://health.hawaii.gov/about/files/2013/06/Key_Findings_wC.pdf)

23 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 29, 2016

TO: The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

FROM: Rachael Wong, DrPH, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 1772 HD2 - RELATING TO ORAL HEALTH**  
Hearing: Wednesday, March 30, 2016; 9:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 211, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the opportunity to testify on this bill and provides comments.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds to the DHS to restore basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid and QUEST Integration enrollees.

The DHS appreciates and supports the restoration of a basic oral health benefit for adult Medicaid and QUEST Integration enrollees. We agree that currently oral health in the state is a public health crisis, and that the restoration of a basic adult dental benefit would help address that crisis. The current limited benefit of extractions and emergency-only coverage does not support the goals of whole person care. Lack of access to preventive oral health care has a negative impact on a person's health, especially for individuals with chronic diseases such as coronary disease and diabetes, and for pregnant women and their newborns as a mother's oral health directly impacts her baby.

The DHS estimates that the \$4,800,000 appropriation would re-establish basic adult dental benefits - up to \$500 per person per benefit year and also provide medically needed dentures up to \$500 each for upper and lower dentures. It is estimated that for the approximately 200,000 adults, the cost will be \$12,464,103 of combined state and federal funds, of which \$4,799,926 would be general funds. This amount was included in the

Governor's executive supplemental budget; however, the general fund amount was not included in HB1700 HD1. The Department prefers that the funds be appropriated through the Executive Budget request as it is very difficult to implement a program, such as an adult dental program that will include preventative and essential services, that is time limited.

The DHS respectfully requests that the Legislature support the funding priority for adult dental services included in the Governor's Executive Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**HPCCA**

HAWAII PRIMARY CARE ASSOCIATION

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

The Hon. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair

The Hon. Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair

**Testimony on House Bill 1772, HD2**

**Relating to Oral Health**

**Submitted by Robert Hirokawa, CEO**

**March 30, 2016, 9:00 a.m., Room 211**

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA), which represents the federally qualified community health centers in Hawaii, strongly supports House Bill 1772 HD2, which appropriates funds for the restoration of basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid patients.

In 2015, the Department of Health released a report entitled Hawaii Oral Health: Key Findings. In it, it was revealed that Hawaii has an enormous shortfall in the area of dental benefits, citing that:

- From 2009-2011, only 41% of pregnant women, 29% of pregnant low-income women, and 27% of women in Medicaid or QUEST visited a dentist during their pregnancy.
- In 2012, 52% of low-income adults saw a dentist as compared to 82% of higher income adults.
- In that same year, 51% of low-income adults lost teeth due to dental disease, while only 32% of high-income adults did.
- From 2006 to 2012, there was a 67% increase in emergency room visits for dental problems, accounting for a \$4.5M increase, bringing total expenditures for such visits alone to \$8.5M.

Further, the Department outlined a number of measures that could greatly improve the oral health of Hawaii's residents. Foremost among them was the continued support and expansion of preventive dental care to low-income populations, best achieved through the restoration of adult dental services in Medicaid.

This issue is of special importance to the HPCA, as all fourteen community health centers provide dental services. In the time frame from 2007 – 2014, the number of patients receiving dental care increased over 100%, rising from nearly 20,000 patients to over 42,000. As 57% of patients at community health centers are enrolled in either Medicaid or CHIP programs, this bill will provide much needed funding for services to the most needy in the state.

Additionally, the HPCA is a staunch believer in the social determinants of health, those economic and social conditions that influence an individual and a community's health status. This bill will provide additional benefits to both individuals and the community as a whole by making it easier for individuals to obtain employment, reduce absenteeism to school or work, and improve social standing.

For these reasons we strongly support House Bill 1772 HD2 and thank you for the opportunity to testify.



March 29, 2016

TESTIMONY: Written only

To: The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: **Hawaii Public Health Association**

Subject: **SUPPORT – HB 1772 HD2, RELATING TO ORAL HEALTH**

Hearing: March 30, 2016 at 9:00am in State Capitol Room 211

The Hawaii Public Health Association (HPHA) is an association of over 600 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. HPHA serves as a voice for public health professionals and as a repository for information about public health in the Pacific.

HPHA **supports the passage of HB 1772 HD2** which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services to restore basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid and QUEST integration enrollees.

Hawaii has one of the worst rates of oral health for children and adults alike in the U.S. The August 2015 DOH report, *“Hawaii Oral Health: Key Findings”*, reported that there are significant oral health disparities in Hawaii’s low-income residents, versus higher income residents, who are less likely to seek dental care, report more loss of teeth, over-use emergency room visits for oral health emergencies, and have lower overall dental health status. Good oral health is essential for optimal overall health, and poor dental health has been linked to higher rates of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and sepsis as well as premature infants of pregnant women.

There are also significant oral health disparities in Hawaii related to education, health insurance, and geographic location status. Children whose parents are on Medicaid are covered for preventive and treatment services, but their parents may not seek or access dental services, if the adult family members are not covered. Adults on Medicaid who are shown to be at greater risk and are more in need of oral health services are currently receiving emergency-only dental services, which are more invasive, painful and risky, more costly, and are a lower standard of care for oral health than our general population is receiving.

The DOH report specifically recommends as a key strategy based on these findings that, Medicaid services be expanded for ALL adults in Hawaii beyond the current coverage for emergencies only, to include preventative and treatment services. We ask that you provide the policy support and resources to ensure appropriate standards of dental care for our adult Medicaid population.

Respectfully submitted,

Hoce Kalkas, MPH  
HPHA Legislative and Government Relations Committee Chair



**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [SAAC96814@gmail.com](mailto:SAAC96814@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1772 on Mar 30, 2016 09:00AM\*  
**Date:** Monday, March 28, 2016 10:29:36 AM

---

**HB1772**

Submitted on: 3/28/2016

Testimony for WAM on Mar 30, 2016 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Bathey Fong	Hawaii Self-Advocacy Advisory Council	Support	No

Comments:

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email [webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)



**March 30, 2016 at 9:00 AM**  
**Conference Room 211**

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

To: Chair Jill N. Tokuda  
Vice Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz

From: George Greene  
President and CEO  
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Testimony in Support**  
**HB 1772 HD 2, Relating to Oral Health**

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), established in 1939, serves as the leading voice of healthcare on behalf of 180 member organizations who represent almost every aspect of the health care continuum in Hawaii. Members include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities and durable medical equipment suppliers. In addition to providing access to appropriate, affordable, high quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 20,000 people statewide.

We would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to **support** HB 1772 HD 2. This legislation would restore basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid patients. Having and maintaining good oral health enables individuals to live healthier, more productive lives. A recent report released by the Department of Health titled *Hawaii Oral Health: Key Findings* reveals that there are disparities in access to basic and routine dental treatment for underserved individuals. According to the report, low-income residents in the state were more likely to have dental problems and less likely to seek care to resolve those issues than their counterparts. Restoring the dental benefit in the Medicaid program will help to increase access to needed preventive and dental services that can help to bridge this gap in care.

Addressing dental issues early is also beneficial for the health care system, since many individuals turn to emergency room care to seek treatment. According to the department's report, there were more than 3,000 emergency room visits due to preventable dental problems in 2012. Expanding access to and encouraging the use of preventive dental treatments and oral health services could help to lower the number of visits, saving the system from costly treatments. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.



949 Kamokila Boulevard, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Suite 350, Kapolei, HI 96707  
808.675.7300 | [www.ohanahealthplan.com](http://www.ohanahealthplan.com)

March 30, 2016

To: The Honorable Jill Tokuda  
Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: 'Ohana Health Plan  
Wendy Morriarty, State President

Re: HB 1772, HD2, Relating to Oral Health; **In Support**  
March 30, 2016; Conference Room 211

---

'Ohana Health Plan ('Ohana) is a member of the WellCare Health Plans, Inc.'s ("WellCare") family of companies and provides healthcare for Hawai'i residents statewide. Since 2009, 'Ohana has utilized WellCare's national experience to develop a Hawai'i -specific care model that addresses local members' healthcare and health coordination needs. By focusing on the state's Medicaid and Medicare population, 'Ohana serves Hawaii's most vulnerable residents: low-income, elderly, disabled, and individuals with complex medical issues. Our mission is to help our members' lead better, healthier lives.

'Ohana Health Plan offers our **support** of HB 1772, HD2, which restores basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid and QUEST Integration enrollees.

Poor oral health is one of the most important issues facing our state, particularly with the Medicaid population. While oral health can often be overlooked, there is a clear relationship between preventative dental care and the deterrence of serious medical conditions. The investment to restore basic adult dental benefits for Medicaid enrollees would be relatively small in comparison to the downstream cost savings to the entire healthcare system.

'Ohana Health Plan would welcome the opportunity to help our members receive a vital service that will contribute positively to their overall health and well-being. We strongly urge the passage of HB 1772, HD2.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.



## THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

---

To: The Honorable Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dele Cruz, Vice Chair  
Members, Committee on Ways and Means

From: Paula Yoshioka, Senior Vice President, The Queen's Health Systems

Date: March 28, 2016

Hrg: Senate Committee on Ways and Means Hearing; Wednesday, March 30, 2016 at 9:00 AM in Room 211

Re: **Support for HB 1772, HD 2, Relating to Oral Health**

---

The Queen's Health Systems (Queen's) would like to express support for the intent of HB 1772, HD 2, relating to oral health.

The Queen's Medical Center, Dental Clinic is home to Hawaii's only accredited hospital-based General Practice Residency Program and provides comprehensive dental services to meet the needs of our community. Queen's is committed to providing quality care to Native Hawaiians and all the people of Hawaii regardless of ability to pay. For fiscal year 2015, 46% of the patients served at the Dental Clinic were Medicaid eligible. Queen's supports the legislative intent of restoring basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees.

We urge you to support HB 1772, HD 2. Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

*The mission of The Queen's Health Systems is to fulfill the intent of Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV to provide in perpetuity quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i.*



March 29, 2016

**TO:** COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Senator Jill Tokuda  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

**FROM:** Richard P. Bettini, President and CEO  
Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center / 697-3457 or [wcchc@wcchc.com](mailto:wcchc@wcchc.com)

**RE:** **Support for HB1772 HD2: Relating to Oral Health**

The Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center strongly supports HB 1772 HD2: Relating to Oral Health to appropriate funds to the Department of Human Services to restore basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid and QUEST integration enrollees.

This funding support is sorely overdue to address the 44% of the adult population on the Waianae Coast that has not had a dental visit for many years, which is the highest percentage in the state.

It is critical to restore adult dental benefits to address dental health needs and its relationship to other health conditions.

Please consider the importance of this funding to the health and well-being of our adult Medicaid and QUEST integration enrollees.

Mahalo.



TO: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair  
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

FR: Mary Oneha, APRN, PhD  
Chief Executive Officer, Waimānalo Health Center

Date: Wednesday, March 30, 2016  
9:00am, Conference Room 211

RE: Support for HB 1772 HD2 Relating to Oral Health

The Waimānalo Health Center **strongly supports HB 1772 HD2**, to appropriate funds to restore basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid and QUEST integration enrollees. From 7/1/2014 through 6/30/2015, there were 1,470 uninsured visits to Waimanalo Health Center Dental Clinic and the number of dental emergencies continues to increase each year.

The severity of cases vary within our population and the age groups typically show different disease manifestation (caries vs. periodontal) all with potentially devastating outcomes. Younger adults typically present with early signs of periodontal disease and more obvious, active signs of untreated tooth decay. Early preventable tooth loss is common in our young adult population. As the population goes into their forties and later, periodontal disease becomes more prevalent and devastating.

Should the adult population have the luck to survive the onslaught of decay and periodontal disease into their golden years; we see an uptick in caries again as medications and age take a toll on saliva flow. Now, exposed root surfaces and teeth that have been previously filled or crowned are subject to decay that destroys what's left of their dentition. Periodontal disease always remains a threat without proper dental care.

**There are many instances of adults negatively affected by lack of regular dental care, instances resulting in bone loss, teeth loss, periodontal disease, and poor nutrition.** The availability of resources (basic adult dental benefits) to assist these patients would have more positively impacted their outcomes. **The investment for basic adult services can have a dramatic effect on patient health and future costs. For too long, we have not set an acceptable baseline for adult dental health. The time is now to restore adult dental benefits at a level for positive health outcomes.** The Waimānalo Health Center urges your support of HB 1772 HD2 and recommends that the appropriation of \$4.8 million be returned to the bill. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [adamcfeely@gmail.com](mailto:adamcfeely@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1772 on Mar 30, 2016 09:00AM\*  
**Date:** Monday, March 28, 2016 10:30:34 AM

---

**HB1772**

Submitted on: 3/28/2016

Testimony for WAM on Mar 30, 2016 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
ada mcfeely	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email [webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)



**HO'OLA LAHUI HAWAI'I**  
*P.O. Box 3990; Līhu'e, Hawai'i*  
*Phone: 808.240.0100 Fax: 808.246.9551*

March 28, 2016

**COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

**Testimony in Support of HB 1772, HD2**  
**Relating to Oral Health**  
**Wednesday March 30, 2016, 9:00 A.M., Room 211**

Ho'ola Lahui Hawaii the only Federally Qualified Health Center and Native Hawaiian Health Care System on Kauai is strongly **SUPPORTING** this bill to restore adult dental benefits for those on Medicaid.

We are encouraged that there are dental funds in this bill to restore to the adult dental benefit. It is very important that oral health be at the forefront of health care as many dental problems lead to more serious health deficits and basic dental is not just for cosmetic effect.

It is vital to support the dental benefit restoration to Medicaid for those who are most in need. Prevention will save millions in restorative care services in the long term.

Respectfully Requested,

David Peters  
Chief Executive Officer



The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services  
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health  
Twenty-Eighth Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawaii  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**SUBJECT: HB 1772 HD2 – Relating to Oral Health**

Dear Senator Chun Oakland, Senator Baker, and Members of the Committees:

This bill is important not only for adults, but for children too! I am a patient and a Board member of Hamakua-Kohala Health, which provides primary care services in the rural areas of the Hamakua Coast and in North Kohala on the island of Hawaii. Because of the difficulty of finding and getting to a dentist for low-income children, our community health center has a dental van which can provide essential dental services to people in our area. However, due to the regulations for health centers, if we provide services to one population, we must provide that same service to all. We can get reimbursed for service to children since dental is covered by Medicaid for children. However, not for adults! We had to stop the dental bus, stop helping children who cannot learn in school if they have a toothache, because we could not afford to subsidize the adults we were required to care for. We want to serve all who need it.

Please support this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Meizhu Lui  
Papaaloa, HI 96780

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair  
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

HB 1772 HD2  
Relating to Oral Health

Date: Wednesday March 30, 2016  
Time: 9:00am  
Place: Conference Room 211  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

As a graduate student of the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and resident of the State of Hawaii, I strongly support the House Bill 1772 HD2, which appropriates funds for the restoration of basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid patients.

Per the 2015 Department of Health Hawaii Oral Health: Key Findings report, more Hawaii residents are seeking emergency dental care services from emergency rooms. In 2012, more than 3,000 Emergency Room visits occurred for preventative dental problems costing more than \$8.5 million. Medicaid patients made up over half of these visits. Furthermore, 51% of low-income individuals ended up losing teeth due to a dental disease.

Oral health is an imperative, but often overlooked aspect of an individual's overall physical health. In my experience as a Social Work Student, low-income individuals needing dental care do not have access to adequate dental coverage or services perpetuating health disparities amongst this population.

This is why I strongly support House Bill 1772 HD2. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Melissa Willke

Natalie Joy C. Badua  
[njbadua@hawaii.edu](mailto:njbadua@hawaii.edu)

February 30, 2016

To: Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chairperson  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chairperson

Members of the Comittee:

Suzanne Chun Oakland

J. Kalani English

Brickwood Galuteria

Breene Harimoto

Lorraine R. Inouye

Sam Slom

Glenn Wakai

Brian T. Taniguchi

Gil Riviere

RE: HB1772 HD2, Relating to Oral Health – Support

Good Morning Senator J. Tokuda and Senator D. Dela Cruz and members of the committee.

My name is Natalie Joy Badua and I am a student from University of Hawaii in the Social Work Program. I am testifying on behalf of myself and in full support for this Bill HB1772 HD2. This bill shows the importance of giving quality care for adults in dental health.

I feel this bill is important because providing funds for regular dental health will decrease the emergency dental procedures, which is what Medicaid covers only. Having regular screenings for oral health is important to maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Similar to how some medical health plans remind patients he or she is due for an annual screening, then have their reasons why that particular screening is helpful. This will help increase better health for people especially because other health problems interfere with oral problems as well. Medicaid does not include co-pay for medical office visit, but to help with costs for dental Medicaid there should be small co-pay since having regular check-ups is less than regular medical check-ups. Generally oral health is a connection to overall health and can offer clues to medical health issues.

As a current Medicaid member I really encourage to have these funds approved to help with improving medical health among members. Especially for the adults that have multiple health issues, the more dental health is needed. Thank you Senator Tokuda, Senator Dela Cruz, and committee members for letting me testify for HB1772.