

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

WRITTEN ONLY

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB460
Relating to Health**

REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: 02/18/15, 8:30am

Room Number: 329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Testimony:** We support HB460.

3 This measure seeks to improve the outcomes from alcohol and drug poisoning episodes
4 by encouraging those who may be affected by an overdose, or those around the victim, to seek
5 medical attention by calling 911. It has been shown that the fear of arrest or prosecution may
6 cause unnecessary deaths and bad outcomes that might have been avoided if appropriate help
7 was sought sooner. This harm reduction strategy is one of ten most promising practices in
8 reducing prescription drug abuse based on a comprehensive national review of policies and
9 approaches.¹ Similar legislation has been passed in seventeen other states and Washington, D.C.
10 In order for this measure to be effective, the public needs to be made aware of medical amnesty
11 as a lifesaving measure for individuals at risk for overdose.

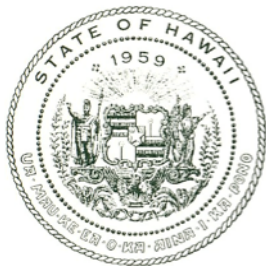
12 Drug Poisoning is a serious public health problem in Hawaii and across the nation.
13 Based on Hawaii death certificate records, fatal drug poisoning among Hawaii residents have
14 increased significantly over the last 20 years to make it the leading mechanism of fatal injuries,
15 surpassing deaths from motor vehicle crashes and falls. There was an almost two-fold increase
16 in deaths from drug poisonings from 78 deaths per year in the 1999-2003 period to 151 deaths
17 per year over the 2009-2013 period. Almost all of the fatal poisonings in the 2009-2013 period
18 were drug-related (88%, or 754 of 856). Prescription drugs were implicated in nearly half (45%)
19 of the unintentional poisonings, including 36% of deaths that involved opioid pain relievers.

¹ <http://healthyamericans.org/assets/files/TFAH2013RxDrugAbuseRptFINAL.pdf>

1 Death certificate codes further indicated that 52% of these deaths involved illicit substances,
2 most commonly methamphetamine (43%) and cocaine (8%).

3 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HAWAII
STATE
COMMISSION
ON THE
STATUS
OF
WOMEN



Chair
LESLIE WILKINS

COMMISSIONERS:

ELENA CABATU
CARMILLE LIM
AMY MONK
LISA ELLEN SMITH
MARILYN LEE
JUDY KERN

Executive Director
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235 S. Beretania #407
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: 808-586-5758
FAX: 808-586-5756

February 11, 2015

To: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Representative Richard P. Creagan, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Health

From: Cathy Betts
Executive Director, Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women

Re: Testimony in Support, HB 460, Relating to Health

The Commission is support of HB 460, which would provide limited immunity for individuals who seek medical assistance for victims of alcohol or substance overdose.

Twenty one states and Washington, D.C. have similar legislation which allows limited immunity for individuals (most frequently close friends or family members) who call 911 to prevent an alcohol or drug overdose from becoming fatal. The most common reason people do not call 911 is fear of police involvement. This reasoning is more prevalent among young people, although this demographic has the highest rates of unintended alcohol related deaths. Many colleges and universities institute this common sense policy because it ensures the well being and safety of students. It also encourages individuals to come forward for help.

This policy does not prevent prosecution for certain offenses, but it does allow limited immunity for individuals who witness someone close to them potentially overdosing. Providing limited medical amnesty to individuals would allow bystanders and witnesses to come to the assistance of another, without fear that calling 911 would result in their subsequent arrest for a minor infraction with the law. This policy doesn't seek to "reward" those who engage in potentially illegal behaviors. Rather, it seeks to encourage bystanders who may otherwise hesitate to act. The Commission supports HB 460. Thank you for your consideration.



HAWAII SUBSTANCE ABUSE COALITION

HB460 RELATING TO HEALTH

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair; Representative Richard Creagan, Vice Chair

- Wednesday, February 18, 2015 at 8:30 a.m.
- Conference Room 329

HSAC Supports HB460:

Good Morning Chair Belatti; Chair; Vice Chair Creagan; Vice; And Distinguished Committee Members. My name is Alan Johnson, Chair of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition, an organization of more than thirty treatment and prevention agencies across the State.

The Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition supports limited immunity for individuals who seek medical assistance for victims of overdoses of drugs or alcohol.

Almost half of the states in the U.S. provide limited immunity from arrest or prosecution for minor drug law violations for people who summon help at the scene of an overdose.

Good Samaritan laws do not protect people from arrest for other offenses, such as selling or trafficking drugs, or driving while drugged.

These policies protect only the caller and overdose victim from arrest and/or prosecution for simple drug possession, possession of paraphernalia, and/or being under the influence.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify and are available for questions.

creagan3 - Karina

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 9:52 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: laurenzirbel@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM

HB460

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for HLT on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lauren Zirbel	Hawaii Medical Association	Support	Yes

Comments: Hawaii Medical Association supports this measure.

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Community Health Outreach Work

677 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 226
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone (808) 853-3292 • Fax (808) 853-3274

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 460 – Relating to Health

TO: Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair and Rep. Richard P. Creagan, Vice Chair; Committee on Health

FROM: Heather Lusk, Executive Director, CHOW Project

Hearing: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 8:30 AM Room 329

Dear Chair Au Belatti, Vice Chair Creagan and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in Strong Support of HB 460 relating to 911 medical amnesty.

Unintentional drug overdoses are on the rise in Hawaii

According to the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH), overdose was the leading cause of unintentional injury-related deaths in the State in 2013 and has been on the rise over the past five years. This mirrors fatal overdoses on the U.S. continent where 100 people die everyday from overdose and it is the leading cause of accidental death. These overdoses can be prevented with a comprehensive approach including education, prescription drug monitoring and training people how to prevent and respond appropriately to overdoses.

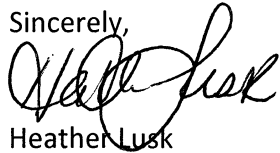
HB 480 will save lives by making it more likely for witnesses to call 911

The number one reason cited among CHOW participants and in other research for not calling 911 in response to an overdose is fear of arrest for drug possession. HB 460 will give amnesty for drug possession, but will not protect people from arrest or prosecution for other offenses, such as drug trafficking. At least seventeen other states have similar so called “good samaritan” legislation and over 240 college campuses have policies which provide protection from prosecution for witnesses who call 911. This bill prioritizes saving lives over drug possession.

The Community Health Outreach Work (CHOW) Project is dedicated to serving individuals, families and communities adversely affected by drug use, especially people who inject drugs, through a participant-centered harm reduction approach. CHOW works to reduce drug-related harms such as but not limited to HIV, hepatitis B/C and overdose. CHOW supports the optimal health and well-being of people affected by drug use throughout the State of Hawaii. CHOW has operated the statewide syringe exchange program for the past twenty years. In 2010, CHOW surveyed participants about their experience with overdose and more than half of CHOW’s participants had witnessed an overdose in the past two years. Unfortunately, we have lost more than one participant to overdose when 911 was not called out of fear.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony and please support saving lives by supporting HB 460

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heather Lusk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Heather" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Lusk".

Heather Lusk
Executive Director
CHOW Project

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, HI 96837-0158

Phone/email: (808) 927-1214 / kat.caphi@gmail.com



COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair

Rep. Richard Creagan, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 18, 2015

8:30 a.m.

Room 329

SUPPORT for HB 460 –Medical Amnesty/Good Samaritan; Overdose Prevention

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Creagan and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies for almost two decades. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the 5,600 Hawai`i individuals living behind bars, always mindful that more than 1,600, and soon to be rising number of Hawai`i individuals who are serving their sentences abroad, thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Native Hawaiians, far from their ancestral lands.

HB 460 establishes limited immunity for individuals who seek medical assistance for victims of overdoses of drugs or alcohol.

Community Alliance on Prisons is in strong support of this measure that is all about saving lives. Overdose deaths are preventable. The majority of drug-related overdoses occur in the presence of others and there is usually time to intervene by calling 911, performing CPR, or with an opiate blocker such as Naloxone.

The **most common reason cited for not calling 911** for help during an overdose is **fear of police involvement**. Witnesses fear being arrested for possession or contributing to the overdose, so instead of calling 911, people may try dangerous methods to revive the victim.

The following is an excerpt from an article¹ published in Civil Beat by an internal medicine physician at Straub Clinic and Hospital (June 2014):

Does the social stigma of drug use make us less likely to care about saving the lives of addicts?

¹ Health Beat: **Hawaii Could Save the Lives of Many More Overdose Victims**-The state should join others that are overcoming uncomfortable questions to help speed up action to spare people who are dying from drugs, By KATHLEEN KOZAK, JUNE 23, 2014.

<http://www.civilbeat.com/2014/06/health-beat-hawaii-could-save-the-lives-of-many-more-overdose-victims>

Statistics from the Hawaii Department of Health Injury Prevention Program indicate that from 2009 to 2013, there were 773 recorded deaths from drug poisoning in Hawaii. This tops the 618 people who died in motor vehicle accidents over the same five-year period.

Based on trends apparent in this data, the annual numbers of overdoses are likely to continue to rise in the next few years. Despite an increased awareness of the dangers, there is still a huge black market for prescription pain pills, which account for a significant number of the overdoses seen in the last few years.

When people overdose, whether intentionally or accidentally, the first people on the scene are often friends or family members. If they find a loved one within minutes of an overdose, they are – or could be – in a unique position to save them.

According to the Department of Health presentation² at the 2014 Hawai`i Harm Reduction Conference, drug poisonings are increasing in Hawai`i:

- ~155 deaths per year, and ~4,500 hospital treatments

- Pharmaceutical opiates involved in 41% of fatal drug poisonings, and 12% to 20% of nonfatal drug poisonings.

Fatal drug poisonings in Hawaii, by various groups, 2004-2013:

- prescription drugs (55%)
- opioid pain relievers (41%)
- illicit drugs (36%)
- methamphetamine (27%)
- unspecified drugs (16%)

The number of **drug overdose deaths** - a majority of which are from prescription drugs - in Hawaii **increased by 68 percent since 1999** when the rate was 6.5 per 100,000. Nationally, rates have doubled in 29 states since 1999, quadrupled in four of these states and tripled in 10 more.

This bill would NOT protect people from prosecution for other offenses such as drug trafficking. It would, however, provide amnesty from prosecution to people who call 911 by prioritizing the saving lives over arrests for drug possession.

Laws have been enacted in 17 states and adopted as policies by 240 colleges and universities. The statistics from the Injury Prevention Branch of the Hawai`i Department of Health surely provide justification for this life saving measure.

What if someone you love was in a situation like this? Wouldn't you want someone to help him or her? Please pass this common sense, life saving measure. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

² **Drug overdoses and prevention efforts in Hawaii**, Dan Galanis, Ph.D., Epidemiologist, Injury Prevention and Control Section, EMS & Injury Prevention System Branch, Hawaii Department of Health.



Hawaii's Voice for Sensible, Compassionate, and Just Drug Policy

TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

FROM: PAMELA LICHTY, M.P.H., PRESIDENT

DATE: FEBRUARY 18, 2015, 8:30 a.m., ROOM 329

RE: H.B. 460, RELATING TO HEALTH - **SUPPORT**

Good morning Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Creagan, and members of the Committee. My name is Pam Lichty and I'm President of the Drug Policy Action Group (DPAG), the government affairs arm of the Drug Policy Forum of Hawaii.

But let me begin by thanking you for hearing this important bill today. Medical amnesty laws, also known as Good Samaritan laws, are in place now in 20 states and at many colleges and universities, with more under consideration every year. The measure itself explains how overdose deaths in Hawaii - from illegal drugs, prescription drugs, and alcohol - have increased greatly in recent years. As we hopefully move towards a compassionate, evidence-based, public health approach to drug control, this type of measure is literally a way to save lives.

As noted in Section 1 of the measure, if criminal punishment is intended to deter drug use, it is clearly too late for that approach when a person has suffered an overdose. In any case many of the overdose deaths reported in Hawaii and elsewhere were from prescription drugs or alcohol rather than illicit drugs.

Therefore it behooves us to suspend any moral judgments we may harbor about those who use misuse drugs or alcohol and instead look at the best ways to save lives and help people to call for medical assistance without fear of legal repercussions.

All too often the victims' companions abandon the victim out of fear of arrest or literally dump him outside of an emergency room. This is an inhumane yet understandable response under current law, but it is clearly no way to deal with a life-threatening medical emergency.

This issue is personal to me since I lost a nephew to an overdose death fifteen years ago. I was visiting his mother last year when Phillip Seymour Hoffman's death vividly brought back that terrible time to my family and me.

His death and those of so many others underscores the urgency of getting this type of medical amnesty bill in place immediately to prevent more of such tragedies.

I urge this committee to move H.B. 460 on to the Judiciary Committee today so that this important and necessary discussion can continue. Again thank you for hearing this measure and for giving us the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify today.



Hawaii Women's Coalition

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair

Rep. Richard P. Creagan, Vice Chair

DATE: Wednesday, February 18, 2015

TIME: 8:30 a.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 329

STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB 460 relating to medical amnesty, good samaritan law and overdose prevention

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Creagan and Committee Members,

I am Ann Freed, Co-Chair of the Hawaii Women's Coalition and we are in strong support of this measure.

Overdose deaths are often preventable, IF medical intervention happens in time. Sadly, the majority of drug-related overdoses occur in the presence of others and could have been prevented if someone had called 911 immediately. But, too often that does not happen.

The most common reason cited for not calling 911 during an overdose is fear of police involvement. Witnesses fear being arrested for possession or contributing to the overdose, so instead of calling 911, they may try dangerous methods to revive the victim or simply panic and run.

Hawaii has the 34th highest drug overdose mortality rate in the United States, with 10.9 per 100,000 people suffering drug overdose fatalities, according to a new report, "Prescription Drug Abuse: Strategies to Stop the Epidemic."

The number of drug overdose deaths in Hawaii, a majority from prescription drugs, have increased by **68 percent** since 1999. From 2005-2012, **drug poisoning/overdose was leading cause of fatal injuries** in Hawaii surpassing falls, motor vehicle, drowning and other injury-related deaths. Many of these tragic overdoses are teenagers and young adults.

Nationally, overdose rates have doubled in 29 states since 1999, quadrupled in four of these states and tripled in 10 more.

It is important to know what this bill is not. **It is not a get-out-of-jail-free card. It would NOT protect people from prosecution for other offenses such as drug trafficking** . It would, however, provide amnesty from prosecution to those who call 911 by prioritizing the saving lives over arrests for drug possession.

There is precedent. Laws have been enacted in 17 states and adopted as policies by 240 colleges and universities. Enacting a law such as this bill proposes to do, is the right thing to do, the sane thing to do and the compassionate thing to do.

Please pass this bill out of committee.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Ann S. Freed Co-Chair, Hawai'i Women's Coalition
Contact: annsfreed@gmail.com Phone: 808-623-5676

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 11:46 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: jenny@hiappleseed.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM

HB460

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for HLT on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jenny Lee	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Advancing public health and safety is one of the most basic purposes of our government and legal system. This bill will achieve this goal by enabling witnesses to overdoses to call 911 without fear. Overdose deaths are preventable, and this bill will save lives.

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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creagan3 - Karina

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Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 12:18 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: hitheresmile@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM*

HB460

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for HLT on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christina Haynes	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 12:09 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: laurenjagla808@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM

HB460

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for HLT on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lauren Jagla	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support this bill

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To: HLTtestimony
Cc: michaela.rinkel@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM

HB460

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for HLT on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michaela Rinkel	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am writing in support of HB 460, the Good Samaritan 911 Amnesty Bill. I am concerned that unintentional drug overdoses are on the rise, here in Hawai`i and nationally. In fact, from 2009-2013, drug poisoning/overdose was leading cause of fatal injuries in Hawaii, surpassing falls, motor vehicle, drowning and other injury-related deaths. In 2013 alone, there were 150 deaths from drug poisoning/overdoes in Hawai`i. These deaths are preventable, something not understood by the general public. They are preventable because the overdose typically occurs in front of others and there is time to intervene by getting help and/or delivering an opiate blocker such as Naloxone. However, witnesses often do not call 911 because of fear of police involvement. Witnesses fear being arrested for possession or contributing to overdose. The Good Samaritan bill will encourage people to call 911. Some are concerned, but this bill would NOT protect people from prosecution for other offenses such as drug trafficking. This legislation would provide amnesty to people who call 911 from prosecution for drug possession and prioritizes saving lives over arrests for drug possession. For these reasons, and the health of our community I urge your support of this bill.

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Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 12:00 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: stacylenze@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM

HB460

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for HLT on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stacy	Individual	Support	No

Comments: On 2/3/15 I witnessed an overdose while doing outreach in Chinatown. I had finished doing a housing assessment with a man and he had gone down the street to his van, that her and his girlfriend were living in. He came rushing back to me, telling me that his girlfriend "wasn't right" and asked for my help. I followed him down the street and immediately recognized an overdose. She was hunched and unresponsive. Her lips where blue and she wasn't breathing. I helped him take her out of the van and lay her flat on the sidewalk. I told him we had to call 911 and he began to panic. The paperwork for his van (registration/insurance) was not current and he was worried that his vehicle, their home, would be impounded. We wasted precious moments arguing before I called 911 anyways. The operator guided me through nearly five minutes of chest compressions before the fire department and EMS arrived. The woman lived. But I've spent many moments since thinking about what would have happened if someone hadn't insisted on called 911. Would she have lost her life because her partner was too afraid to call for help? No one should be afraid to call for the help needed to save a life. I strongly support this Bill and urge you to do the same. Thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony.

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To: HLTtestimony
Cc: wendygibson9@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM

HB460

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for HLT on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Wendy Gibson	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Passing this bill could potentially result in fewer drug-related overdose deaths. That is why I support this bill. Thank you, Wendy Gibson R.N.

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To: HLTtestimony
Cc: hanabgood@hotmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM*

HB460

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for HLT on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hana Barrineau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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To: HLTtestimony
Cc: kpuahi@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM

HB460

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for HLT on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kavika Puahi	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Unintentional drug overdoses are on the rise in Hawaii and this bill will help to bring those numbers down by taking away some of the fear and stigma around calling 911. Let's continue to prioritize saving lives!

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To: HLTtestimony
Cc: longt1919@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM*

HB460

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for HLT on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Long	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 1:59 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: jthompson@chowproject.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM

HB460

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for HLT on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
wallace thompson	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I work for the Chow Project and have been doing outreach with them for over 20 years. The majority of drug related overdoses occur in the presence of others. People that inject are scared of going to jail. Calling 911 is one of the safest ways of helping a overdosed person to survive. I feel everyone should have a chance of getting help. I have seen many addicts change and live good lives. I feel they deserve every chance to find peace. Let Hawaii be the 18th state to pass the good Samaritan bill.

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Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 3:42 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: lmaxera@chowproject.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM

HB460

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for HLT on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leilani Maxera	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I strongly support HB 460 relating to 911 medical amnesty. According to the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH), overdose was the leading cause of unintentional injury- related deaths in the State in 2013 and has been on the rise over the past five years. This mirrors fatal overdoses on the U.S. continent where 100 people die everyday from overdose and it is the leading cause of accidental death. These overdoses could be prevented with a comprehensive approach including education, prescription drug monitoring and training people how to prevent and respond appropriately to overdoses. HB 480 will save lives by making it more likely for witnesses to call 911. Many active drug users are afraid to call 911 in response to an overdose due to fear of being arrested for drug possession. HB 460 will give amnesty for drug possession, but will not protect people from arrest or prosecution for other offenses, such as drug trafficking. At least seventeen other states have similar so called "good samaritan" legislation and over 240 college campuses have policies which provide protection from prosecution for witnesses who call 911. This bill prioritizes saving lives over drug possession. Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony. Please support saving lives by supporting HB 460.

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creagan1 - Dannah

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
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To: HLTtestimony
Cc: mmarie856@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM*

HB460

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for HLT on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marie Medina	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.

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creagan1 - Dannah

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 10:12 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: labrash@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB460 on Feb 18, 2015 08:30AM

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steven Labrash	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: This is a common sense bill to save lives. Please pass it.

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February 17, 2015

RELATING TO HEALTH.

Report Title: Women's Legislative Caucus Package; Good Samaritan Policies; Medical Amnesty; Controlled Substances

Re: HB460, Establishes limited immunity for individuals who seek medical assistance for victims of overdoses of drugs or alcohol.

Aloha Chair Belatti, Senators, Representatives, and, other distinguished committee members, I want to thank you for this opportunity to support HB 460.

My name is Gabrielle Schwing and I am a Masters of Social Work Student, University of Hawaii, Manoa, with a concentration in Behavioral Mental Health. I support this bill, both professionally, as well as personally.

The most common reason cited for not calling 911 for help during an overdose is fear of police involvement. Witnesses fear being arrested for possession or contributing to the overdose, so instead of calling 911, people may try dangerous methods to revive the victim.

According to the Department of Health presentation¹ at the 2014 Hawaii Harm Reduction Conference, drug poisonings are increasing in Hawaii:

- 155 deaths per year, and 4,500 hospital treatments
- Pharmaceutical opiates involved in 41% of fatal drug poisonings, and 12% to 20% of nonfatal drug poisonings.

Fatal drug poisonings in Hawaii, by various groups, 2004-2013:

- Prescription drugs (55%)
- Opioid pain relievers (41%)
- Illicit drugs (36%)
- Methamphetamine (27%)
- Unspecified drugs (16%)

The number of drug overdose death in Hawaii has increased by 68 percent since 1999 when the rate was 6.5 per 100,000. This bill has the power to save lives. Every second counts.

On May 27th 2015 I will celebrate five years sober. For many years I struggled with a crippling heroin addiction that ruined not just my life, but, the lives of every person that cared about me. I know many people that still suffer and struggle with the disease of addiction, yet, for the grace of god there go I. With this second chance I want to use my voice to support this bill. Every person I know that has died of an overdose is one too many. These are preventable deaths, and every second counts. This bill will encourage people to make the best choice and call 911 and get help.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Gabrielle C. Schwing

¹ **Drug overdoses and prevention efforts in Hawaii**, Dan Galanis, Ph.D., Epidemiologist, Injury Prevention and Control Section, EMS & Injury Prevention System Branch, Hawaii Department of Health.