



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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WRITTEN ONLY

**Testimony COMMENTING on SB2387 SD1
RELATING TO PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS**

SENATOR JILL N. TOKUDA
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date: February 26, 2016

Room Number: 211

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (DOH) defers to the Department of Education
2 on the fiscal implications, recognizing that this measure may necessitate resources above current
3 levels.

4 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health offers comments on SB2387 SD1. The
5 purpose of SB2387 SD1 is to connect adolescents back to their healthcare provider by expanding
6 the physical examination requirement. Currently, physical examinations are only conducted
7 upon entry into the school system. SB2387 SD1 expands the physical examination requirement
8 to also include entry into seventh grade. Grade seven coincides with current immunization
9 requirements and is a crucial time in a child's development. Private schools in Hawaii, at least
10 10 other states, and many other local school districts have multiple physical examination
11 requirements.

12 The Department offers comments in the interest of the health of our students because
13 increasing the physical exam requirement for school attendance provides a broader, systematic
14 approach to connecting children back to their primary care physicians. Student health is
15 positively associated with attendance, academic achievement, and graduation rates. The policy
16 also promotes utilization of the covered preventive health benefits established by the Affordable
17 Care Act (ACA). Due to the ACA, annual well child examinations are a required covered benefit
18 in all health plans.

19 Regular visits are preventive, so health needs can be assessed and addressed early.
20 According to the Trust for America's Health, "Keeping people healthier is one of the most

1 effective ways to reduce healthcare costs,” (July 2008). Currently, the state expends \$470 million
2 a year on obesity-related medical costs, and \$770 million on diabetes-related medical costs.
3 Today in Hawaii, more than one in two adults [Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance System
4 (BRFSS) 2014; 58.1%] and over one in four high school [Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)
5 2013; 28.2%] are overweight or obese. Diabetes and pre-diabetes rates have been steadily
6 increasing in Hawaii; nearly one quarter of all adults in Hawaii (24.1%) report having diabetes or
7 pre-diabetes.¹ By 2030 half of adults in Hawaii are projected to be obese without effective
8 interventions (2013, Trust for America’s Health). The additional physical exam requirements
9 offer physicians and healthcare providers together with parents and adolescents the opportunity
10 to address developmentally relevant physical and mental health issues.

11 The Department is aware of the DOE’s concerns that the adoption of this measure may
12 exclude children from attendance due to non-compliance. Should this measure move forward,
13 the DOH is willing to collaborate with the DOE and external partners, such as health care
14 providers, community health centers, and health plans, to conduct communication campaigns
15 with schools and communities to help bring awareness to the new requirements and increase
16 compliance.

17 Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

¹ Hawaii Health Data Warehouse. Diabetes Prevalence - Categorical. Honolulu, Hawaii: Hawaii State Department of Health;2016



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

Date: 02/26/2016

Time: 09:40 AM

Location: 211

Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2387, SD1 RELATING TO PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS.

Purpose of Bill: Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, requires a child to provide written documentation of a physical examination performed within twelve months prior to attending seventh grade at a public school. Provides for provisional attendance if an exam is scheduled. (SD1)

Department's Position:

The Department of Education does not support physical examinations as a condition of entrance and attendance for seventh graders at a public school.

The Department supports healthy lifestyles for Hawaii's youth. While the Department recognizes the intent of this bill, the mandate in this measure will serve as a deterrent to maintaining continuous enrollment and regular attendance, and may negatively impact student learning and achievement outcomes.

In lieu of a mandate, the Department is open to collaborating on a public campaign on this subject and exploring alternatives with the Department of Health (DOH) that may allow DOH staff to follow-up with families of students who require assistance or services to meet or are unable to meet the physical examination requirement mandates of this proposal.

Further, this bill has significant programmatic impacts as it will place additional recordkeeping and accountability responsibilities on schools and increase workload of staff. As schools already have very limited staffing, additional resources will be required in order to implement this measure effectively. The department's current budget does not have the means to cover such additional expense.

The Department has estimated funding in the amount of \$801,625 for fifty-five half-time equivalent (27.5 FTE) Office Assistant positions will be needed to address the record-keeping and accountability responsibilities this measure will place on schools. The follow-up requirements will result in a workload increase for schools with limited office staffing, as schools will need to:

- Inform parents/legal guardians about the new 7th grade requirement in advance of enrollment (e.g., written notice);
- Work with the school health aide (SHA) to ensure the SHA can review all new student health records (Form 14) for complete immunization information and confirm proof of physical exam in a timely manner;
- Notify parents/legal guardians in writing about any compliance problems;
- Follow-up on students with pending physical exams; and
- Maintain a database of students who have met and not met the requirements.

The additional half-time clerical support would provide the necessary supports to schools, and allow the school health aide to attend to the general health/first aid needs of students at a school throughout the school day.

Last year, the Department sought feedback from our Complex Area Superintendents and Principals on this measure. For your consideration, we would like to share some of those comments:

"Our school has challenges with chronic absenteeism. Having this new regulation will be "one more thing" and extreme burden to our students and families, as it is already difficult getting them to come to school regularly." - Oahu Middle School Principal

"I think the bill is good re: 7th graders having physical exams before attending school. It should be for all students in grade 7. However, I do see difficulty: No problem for families who live here long, have a job, transportation and have family doctors on hand as well as medical insurance. Just being able to have an appt would be a factor to consider. For many who are not as fortunate and struggle daily, there will be difficulties:

1. Scheduling appts. way in advance; so difficult to obtain appts. Walk-ins at sub clinics may be able to accommodate such.

2. Our immigrant families worrying about doctor bills and may be very hesitant to move on it. Will need ELL personnel to help them understand what needs to be done.

3. Transportation and where to go may be another factor for new families to the island

4. insurance. Immigrant families may have difficulty with this." - CAS (Oahu)

"What message are we sending to the community...we want your child here but they can't attend until they have a physical. Which could be an extra cost and time off for parents for doctor appointments. If we are looking at identifying health issues with our students, there are free programs already in the communities that offer screening for students, especially low economic areas. If there is a clear purpose of why we are asking for a physical, I could better understand whether to support or oppose this bill. It would be a lot of man power at the school level to ensure all students submit and follow up the actual physicals are on record." - Maui Middle School Principal

"In polling my school principals most felt that any additional level of health screening would be beneficial but all were concerned about the huge compliance load on schools. Who chases the parents, not in compliance? How can we force people to pay for a physical if they cannot afford to do so? Is thus not another obstacle to providing a free compulsory education?" - CAS (Big Island)

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



Hawaii Chapter

February 24, 2016

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Written Testimony from Michael Hamilton, President RE: SB 2387 SD 1 Relating to Physical Examinations

Thank you for this opportunity to testify *in strong support* of SB2387 which will establish a policy mandating documentation of a physical examination, by a licensed physician or advanced practice registered nurse, at entry to the 7th 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.

SB2387 will ensure that all youth attending public school in Hawaii have a well child preventive health care visit at 7th grade entry. ***This bill will also help to ensure that adolescents will receive important immunizations already required by the Department of Health at 7th grade. While we know this is just the start, we think this bill strongly supports the medical home, optimal adolescent health and student achievement. Finally, the bill enhances the working relationship between adolescents, their parents, and the health and educational systems in Hawaii.***

Sincerely,

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

R. Michael Hamilton, MD, FAAP
President



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 Senate Bill 2387 SD1

Relating to Physical Examinations

Submitted by Dustin Stevens, Public Affairs and Policy Director

February 26, 2016, 9:40 am, Room 211

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA), which represents the federally qualified health centers/community health centers in Hawaii, supports Senate Bill 2387, requiring children undergo a physical examination prior to beginning seventh grade.

In Hawaii, public education is student centered and grounded in a commitment to equity. Part of that equity depends on ensuring all children having the opportunity to pursue, and excel in, their education.

The number one cause most often provided by parents of children experiencing chronic absenteeism from public schools is healthcare. As a community, we must do more to ensure our students have access to and utilize such services. Asthma, vision, hearing, and depression are just a few of the myriad ailments that can be identified and responded through the course of basic preventive examinations.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to testify.



Date: February 25, 2016

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: Jessica Yamauchi, Executive Director, Hawai'i Public Health Institute

Re: **Strong Support for SB 2387, SD1, Relating to Physical Examinations**

Hrg: February 26, 2016 at 9:40 am at Capitol Room 211

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in **strong support of** Senate Bill 2387, SD1, which requires children to undergo a physical examination prior to attending seventh grade, and provides for provisional attendance if a child is in progress of undergoing a physical examination and sets a deadline for submittal of documentation of completion of such examination.

The Hawaii Public Health Institute (HIPHI) supports and promotes policy efforts to create a healthy Hawaii. HIPHI weaves silos into working relationships as an effective network, ensuring that we come together across sectors to advance collaboration and innovation in public health and work towards making Hawaii the healthiest place on earth.

Currently, physical examinations are only conducted upon entry into the school system (usually in kindergarten). In contrast, students attending private schools are assessed every one to two years. While physical examinations are conducted for sports activities, those types of examinations are limited and not as comprehensive as a health assessment. As academic success of Hawaii's youth is intimately linked to their health, this additional health screening has great promise for improving the health of our youth. Research shows that poor health such as mental health disorders, uncontrolled asthma, poor nutrition and sleep disorders are closely linked to poor academic outcomes. Further, obesity is becoming more of an issue each year, with as many as one in four children in Hawaii already being considered overweight or obese, contributing to medical expenditures that totaled more than \$470 million in 2009 alone.

The routine physical assessment of students is important for monitoring the health and wellbeing of our keiki. Conducting an additional physical assessment at the benchmark of entering seventh 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. Vision and hearing are also screened, which can interfere with learning. The physical exam helps link the child back to their medical home, which has shown an improvement in health for a variety of outcomes. 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. Under the Affordable Care Act, these physical exams would be done free of charge for all of Hawaii's keiki.



This initiative has been a priority for the statewide obesity prevention task force for the last three years and believe now is the optimal time to pass this legislation. There are preliminary plans for education regarding seventh grade vaccination requirements. Passing this measure now is ideal since education around the physical examination requirement could be combined with education for vaccine requirements. At least ten states have passed similar legislation, requiring physical exams beyond school entry. We, the obesity prevention task force and the Hawaii Public Health Institute **strongly support SB 2387, SD1**, and asks the committee to pass this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jessica Yamauchi'.

Jessica Yamauchi, MA
Executive Director



February 26, 2016

TO: Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz , Vice Chair

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

RE: **SB2387 SD1: Relating to Physical Examinations**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB2387 SD1 to mandate a physical examination for entry into seventh grade in the public school system.

The Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center (WCCHC), a Federally Qualified Health Center in Leeward Oahu, has over 600 employees working in clinics in Waipahu, Kapolei, Nanakuli and Waianae. Annually, we serve over 35,000 patients, of which 13,385 are school age children.

In line with the focus on improving adolescent health in SB2387 SD1, the health center is seeking grants to expand access and services to adolescents through a new adolescent clinic at the mall and two school based health centers in Waianae.

Looking at our electronic health record (EHR) information and the data gathered from focus groups for our adolescent clinic development, we know that preventive care visits steeply decline in the middle school years. In fact, the data shows a 20% drop off from annual elementary school physical exams (66%) to (45%) for middle school physical exams. These middle school years are when many preventable health issues develop that are intimately linked to academic achievement.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that regular well-child physical exams should occur throughout childhood. This well-child exam is above and beyond the sports physical required for athletic participation. And, we feel it is important to note, the sports physical doesn't end up covering the many at-risk adolescents who don't participate in school-sponsored sports.

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 adolescent depression, obesity, pre-diabetes and substance abuse often go undiagnosed until a crisis occurs. SB2387 SD1 will create an opportunity to check in and follow-up with adolescents regarding weight, depression, alcohol and drug use.

SB2387 SD1 combines the physical assessment requirement into the same timeframe already required for immunization updates in the 7th grade. So, this bill doesn't create an additional burden for parents because they already need to submit the form 14 with updated immunizations. Additionally, we support language that was added during earlier Senate consideration to allow a child to attend school provisionally upon written notice by a parent stating that the child has an appointment for a physical exam.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on SB2387 SD1 and we urge the passage of the bill.

To:

[COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS](#)

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

From: Cristeta Ancog MD

RE: Strong support for SB 2387 relating to Physical Exams

Thank you for an opportunity to testify ***in strong support*** of SB2387 which will establish a policy mandating documentation of a physical examination, by a licensed physician or advanced practice registered nurse, at entry to the 7th grade.

I am a board certified pediatrician, with 25 years of practice on the Waianae Coast. Currently, children are only required to receive a comprehensive physical exam prior to kindergarten entry, or when the child first enters school. Although the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends yearly well-child exams, many children visit their doctors only when they are very sick. Many *never* come in to see their doctors.

From the ages of 11-15, adolescents experience significant changes physically, emotionally and socially. 7th grade Physical exams are an opportunity to assess and address adolescent issues early, including nutrition, physical fitness, mental and sexual health. This is an ideal time to update adolescent immunizations. Comprehensive physical exams involve much more than is covered in a visit for an acute illness or even for sports clearance. In addition to prevention counseling on drinking/drug use, sexual activity, smoking and other high risk behaviors, we also identify and treat issues relating to obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular health. Physical exams reconnect children and parents to their healthcare providers and medical home, in order to provide continuity of care

Since the Affordable Care Act covers physical exams, parents will not incur additional cost for this visit. This bill also gives parents 12 months prior to 7th grade to get the physical done, and even a 3 month “grace period” after that. There don’t seem to be any barriers to getting this exam.

A 7th grade PE will improve adolescent health and well-being. Most importantly, we all know that healthy children have better school attendance which leads to improved school performance.

I strongly urge you to pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Cristeta Ancog M.D.

Fellow, American Academy of Pediatrics

98-1941 F Kaahumanu St

Aiea

TO: Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Natalie Iwasa
Honolulu, HI 96825
808-395-3233

HEARING: 9:40 a.m. Friday, February 26, 2016

SUBJECT: SB 2387, SD1 Requirement for Physical Exams for Grade 7 - **COMMENT**

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2387, SD1, which would require students have a physical exam within 12 months of entry into grade 7.

Please consider that HMSA covers a “**well child visit**,” which is essentially the same as a “physical examination.”