



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at 1:15 p.m.

By:

Jerris R. Hedges, MD, MS, MMM, Dean and Professor of Medicine  
and

Lee Buenconsejo-Lum, MD, Professor, Department of Family Medicine and Community  
Health; Designated Institutional Official and Graduate Medical Education Director

John A. Burns School of Medicine  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

GM 722 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Medical  
Education Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, ALLEN HIXON, for a term to  
expire 06-30-2021.

Chair Kahele, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) and its John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM)  
administer two (2) statutes related to graduate medical education (GME) and  
addressing the severe physician shortage needs in Hawai'i.

- [HRS § 304A-1702] – Graduate Medical Education (GME) Program, was established to formally encompass the administration of UH JABSOM's institutional graduate medical education (GME) program.
- [HRS §§304A-1703, 1704, 1705] – Medical Education Council, was created within UH JABSOM and called "**The Hawai'i Medical Education Council**" (HMEC). HMEC was given the administrative **duties and powers** to:
  - (1) Analyze the State healthcare workforce for the present and future, focusing in particular on the State's need for physicians;
  - (2) Assess the State's healthcare training programs, focusing on UH JABSOM's institutional GME enterprise to determine its ability to meet the workforce needs identified by HMEC;
  - (3) Recommend to the Legislature and UH Board of Regents (BOR) ways in which identified GME and other healthcare training programs can improve and change in order to effectively meet the HMEC assessment;
  - (4) Work with other entities and state agencies, and in consultation with the Legislature and BOR, develop and implement a Plan to ensure the adequate funding of healthcare training programs in the State, with an emphasis on UH JABSOM GME programs;
  - (5) Seek funding to implement the funding Plan from all public (county, state and federal government) and private sources;
  - (6) Monitor and continue to improve the funding Plan; and,
  - (7) Submit an annual report to the Legislature no later than twenty days before the convening of each regular Legislative session.

Per statute, the HMEC is comprised of eight Governor-appointed and Legislature-confirmed individuals and five ex-officio members, including the Dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine who serves as the Chair. The HMEC is administered by the Designated Institutional Official and Director of the Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs.

Solving Hawai'i's physician (and health professions) workforce shortage requires multi-sector engagement and ownership, a multi-pronged and longitudinal approach, as well as ideas and resources from the private sector (*i.e., insurers, hospitals, businesses and private health care organizations committed to improving and maintaining healthy citizens and communities*) the public sector (*i.e., primary-, secondary-, and higher education, legislature, Departments of Health and Human Services and Federal agencies*) and the larger communities of Hawai'i.

**Dr. Allen Hixon** is a primary care physician, Professor and Chair of the Department of Family Medicine for our medical school, and has a wide range of experience working with the various hospital systems in Hawai'i. As a doctor, he understands the need for training future physicians of Hawai'i, especially as we are faced with anticipated physician shortages largely affecting primary care. Dr. Hixon has served on this council for the last four years and is committed to health workforce development and the expansion of physician training including to our neighbor islands.

His input would greatly benefit the Council, whose charge is to ensure that planning and medical education training meets the needs of the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

April 18, 2017/1:15 p.m.  
Conference Room 414

**Senate Committee On Higher Education**

To: Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair  
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

From: Michael Robinson  
Vice President – Government Relations & Community Affairs

**Re: GM 722 – Testimony in Support**

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My name is Michael Robinson, and I am the Vice President of Government Relations and Community Affairs at Hawai'i Pacific Health (HPH). Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system with over 70 locations statewide including medical centers, clinics, physicians and other caregivers serving Hawai'i and the Pacific Region with high quality, compassionate care. Its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox – specialize in innovative programs in women's health, pediatric care, cardiovascular services, cancer care, bone and joint services and more. Hawai'i Pacific Health is recognized nationally for its excellence in patient care and the use of electronic health records to improve quality and patient safety.

**I am writing in strong support of GM 722 regarding the nomination of Allen Hixon to the Medical Education Council.**

The Graduate Medical Education Program was established pursuant to HRS §304A-1702 to formally encompass the administration of the University of Hawai'i's John A. Burns School of Medicine's (JABSOM's) institutional graduate medical education program. Under HRS §§304A-1703, 1704, and 1705 the Medical Education Council (HMEC) was created within JABSOM for the purposes of analyzing and assessing the healthcare workforce with an emphasis on JABSOM's graduate medical education program, as well as working with other entities and state agencies to ensure adequate funding of healthcare training in Hawai'i, among other duties. Per statute, the HMEC is comprised of eight Governor-appointed and Legislature-confirmed individuals and five ex-officio members, including the Dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine who serves as the Chair. The HMEC is administered by the Designated Institutional Official and Director of the Graduate Medical Education programs.

**Dr. Allen Hixon** is a primary care physician and Professor and Chair of the Department of Family Medicine for JABSOM. He has a wide range of experience working with the various hospital systems in Hawai'i, and has been a strong advocate for expanding the family medicine residency program, especially to the Neighbor Islands where primary care physicians are in great need. As a doctor, he understands the importance of training future physicians for Hawai'i, especially as we are faced with anticipated physician shortages largely affecting

primary care. Dr. Hixon has served on the council for the last four years and is committed to health workforce development and the expansion of physician training including to our neighbor islands. Dr. Hixon's input would greatly benefit the Council, whose charge is to ensure that planning and medical education training meets the needs of the people of Hawai'i so that we may continue our work toward addressing and reducing the physician as well as healthcare workforce shortage in Hawai'i.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



**Date:** Tuesday, April 18, 2017  
**Time:** 1:15pm  
**Location:** Conference Room 414

Senate Committee on Higher Education

To: Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

From: Gidget Ruschetta  
Chief Operating Officer

**Re: GM 722 – Testimony in Support**

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My name is Gidget Ruschetta, and I am the Chief Operating Officer at Pali Momi Medical Center. With 118 beds and more than 400 physicians on its medical staff, Pali Momi Medical Center offers a full range of services for the communities of Central and West O'ahu. The hospital is an affiliate of Hawai'i Pacific Health, one of the state's largest health care providers and a not-for-profit health care system with over 70 locations statewide including medical centers, clinics, physicians and other caregivers serving Hawai'i and the Pacific Region with high quality, compassionate care.

**I am writing in strong support of GM 722 regarding the nomination of Dr. Allen Hixon to the Medical Education Council.**

Dr. Hixon's input will greatly benefit the Council whose charge is to ensure that the planning and medical education training occurring across our State meets the needs of our community and to continue the work of addressing and reducing the physician and healthcare workforce shortage in Hawai'i.

I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Hixon through our work together as a partner and fiscal sponsor of the UH Family Medical Residency Program which Dr. Hixson serves as Chair. The UH Family Medicine Residency program is one of 18 nationally accredited programs in different specialties and sub-specialties sponsored by the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) in a partnership with numerous Hawai'i hospitals and clinics, where the physicians train under faculty supervision, while working toward licensure and board certification. Through our partnership with the Family Residency Program, Dr. Hixon continues to demonstrate his commitment to work towards ensuring that the State's physicians receive the practical training needed while serving our patients in Leeward and Central O'ahu.

I strongly support his nomination to serve on the Hawai'i Medical Education Council. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.