

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

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB916 HD1 SD1
RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS.**

SENATOR JILL TOKUDA, CHAIR

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date: April 4, 2017

Room Number: 211

1 **Fiscal Implications:** Undetermined general fund appropriation to the Department of Health.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health supports a loan repayment program for
3 health care professionals to increase provider supply and access to care in rural and underserved
4 areas, and recognizes the leadership of the John A. Burns School of Medicine of the University
5 of Hawaii at Manoa in assuring the success of this resource.

6 The department defers to the University of Hawaii on the sufficiency of an appropriation request,
7 and so long as it does not replace priorities requested in the Executive Budget.

8 **Offered Amendments:** None.

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DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

SHAN S. TSUTSUI
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



LINDA CHU TAKAYAMA
DIRECTOR

LEONARD HOSHIJO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 321
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
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Email: dlir.director@hawaii.gov

April 4, 2017

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

Date: Tuesday, April 4, 2017
Time: 9:35 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 211, State Capitol

From: Linda Chu Takayama, Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

Re: H.B. No. 916 HD1 SD1 Relating to Loan Repayment for Healthcare Professionals

I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

HB 916 HD1 SD1 proposes to appropriate funds to the department of health to fund the loan repayment program administered through the John A. Burns School of Medicine to provide loan repayment for physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners who agree to work in a federally-designated health professional shortage area or an area of Hawaii found to be underserved.

The Department supports this bill provided its passage does not replace or adversely affect priorities identified in the Governor's Executive Budget request.

II. CURRENT LAW

Act 166 (SLH, 2015) established the Hawaii Healthcare Workforce Advisory Board (§371-19.2) to advise the DLIR on strategies for developing the healthcare industry workforce. The Advisory Board was an outgrowth of Healthcare Skill Panels* convened in 2010 among 150 healthcare professionals and educators to identify skill shortages and recommend strategies to reduce or avoid the shortages.

Advisory Board members include DLIR as Chair and representatives from the Department of Health, University of Hawaii, Community College, Center on Nursing,

and health professionals.

III. COMMENTS ON THE HOUSE BILL

Reducing the tremendous burden of student debt will encourage more health professionals to continue working in underserved areas and thereby help reduce the pressing need for healthcare workers in those areas.

For this reason, the Department supports this bill as an effective strategy to address shortages in the healthcare workforce in underserved areas, provided sufficient funds are appropriated and its passage does not replace or adversely affect priorities identified in the Governor's Executive Budget request.

* <http://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/files/2013/01/Healthcare2020Report.pdf>

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 4:09 PM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: ecabatu@hhsc.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB916 on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM

HB916

Submitted on: 3/31/2017

Testimony for WAM on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elena Cabatu	East Hawaii Region of Hawaii Health Systems Corporation	Support	No

Comments: Please accept testimony in support of HB916 on behalf of the East Hawaii Region of Hawaii Health Systems Corporation consisting of Hilo Medical Center, Hale Ho`ola Hamakua in Honoka`a, Ka`u Hospital and our 9 specialty clinics.

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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UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, April 4, 2017 at 9:35 a.m.

By

Jerris Hedges, MD, Dean

and

Kelley Withy, MD, Professor, Department of Complementary and Integrative Medicine
Hawai'i/Pacific Basin Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Director

John A. Burns School of Medicine

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 916 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and members of the committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of HB 916 HD1 SD1, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Biennium Budget. This measure permits continuation of the Hawai'i State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawai'i. This program is possible through a grant from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. Funds have been provided in the past from HMSA, Queens, AlohaCare, University Health Alliance, 'Ohana Health Plan, Maui Memorial, Lāna'i Community Health Center and Kalihi Palama Health Center. However the funds provided are not enough to maintain the program. Without State support, Hawai'i will not be able to reapply for the grant, and the program will end.

Hawai'i has a shortage of over 500 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers as the graph below demonstrates. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawai'i do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is loan repayment. The Hawai'i State Loan Repayment program has helped 25 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 2/3 are still practicing in underserved areas of Hawai'i.

In 2016, 64% of the University of Hawai'i's John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) residents and fellows had a current student loan burden. The average student loan indebtedness of our JABSOM MD residents/fellows is \$235,000, with some

residents having loans in the \$300,000-600,000 range. These loans, with average minimum monthly payment of \$500, begin repayment while in residency training, in addition to the high cost of living, rent and other living expenses. The high cost of college and medical education results in large student loan debt -- which detracts from physicians choosing primary care specialties and choosing to practice in underserved or rural communities.

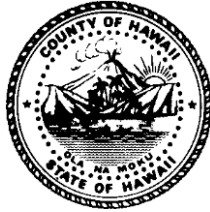
If a physician does his or her medical school AND residency (or Graduate Medical Education or GME) training here in Hawai'i, about 80% of them stay in Hawai'i to practice. Having loan repayment options tied to commitments to serve in neighbor-island, rural and underserved populations will help to reduce the physician shortages in those areas. The loan repayment program has played an important role in bringing needed physicians and healthcare providers to underserved areas.

HB 916 HD1 SD1 requests \$250,000 for loan repayment for the above listed health professions. The funds provided will be matched dollar for dollar from other funding sources and be provided to reduce the debt of our healthcare providers working in areas of need. This will allow for 15-20 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawai'i and receive at least \$25,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need.

The senate version of HB 916 HD1 SD1 renamed the program to the Hawai'i Rural Health Care Provider Loan Repayment Program and deleted the references to psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, and marriage and family therapists benefitting from the program because those professions are not included in section 309H-3, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, which establishes the Hawai'i Rural Health Care Provider Loan Repayment Program. Currently, through the Hawai'i State Loan Repayment program, JABSOM provides loan repayment to psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawai'i in addition to physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants. Moreover, the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations recognized that behavioral health is one of the professions for which there exists a tremendous need but in which there is a significant shortage. Therefore, we recommend the original language of HB 916 HD1 SD1, which would enable JABSOM to provide loan repayment to a range of healthcare providers, including psychologists and social workers, all of which are needed in underserved areas throughout the state.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Harry Kim
Mayor



Wil Okabe
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

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(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

March 31, 2017

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Tokuda and Members:

**RE: HB 916 HD1 SD1
Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 916, HD1, SD1.

Simply put, we need more physicians, and loan repayment has proven to be an effective tool in getting them and keeping them.

Please approve HB 916 with some reasonable funding and an appropriate effective date.

Respectfully submitted,

Harry Kim
Mayor



HAWAII' I ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committees on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health and
Higher Education
March 16, 2017; 1:35 pm

HB 916 Relating to the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program

Aloha Chairs Baker and Kahele, Vice Chairs Nishihara and Kidani, and committee members:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of HB 916, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. Funds have been provided in the past from HMSA, Queens, AlohaCare, University Health Alliance, Ohana Health Plan, Maui Memorial, Lanai Community Health Center and Kalihi Palama Health Center. However the funds provided are not enough to maintain the program. Without State support, Hawaii will not be able to reapply for the grant, and the program will end.

Hawaii has a shortage of over 500 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawaii do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is loan repayment. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 25 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 2/3 are still practicing in underserved areas of Hawaii.

HB 916 requests \$250,000 for loan repayment for the above listed health professions. The funds provided will be matched dollar for dollar from other funding sources and be provided to reduce the debt of our healthcare providers working in areas of need. This will allow for 15-20 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$25,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

President, Hawaii Academy of Family Physicians

95-390 KUAHELANI AVENUE • MILILANI, HI • 96789
PHONE: 808-627-3244 • FAX: 808-627-3262



April 4, 2017 at 9:35 AM
Conference Room 211

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

From: Paige Heckathorn
Senior Manager, Legislative Affairs
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Testimony in Support**
HB 916 HD 1 SD 1, Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals

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.

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii would like to thank the committees for the opportunity to **support** HB 916 HD 1 SD 1, which would provide funding to help students who are educated in Hawaii in the medical field receive help repaying their loans after graduation. This measure is important because it will encourage these students to stay and practice in the state. It is critical that we invest in programs to develop and retain providers here in Hawaii so that we can start to address the shortages that are particularly problematic on our neighbor islands.

This funding will create opportunities for students in the state and provide needed incentives to strengthen the workforce. For example, it has been shown that of physicians who receive their medical degree and their training here in Hawaii, 80 percent will stay and practice in that community or one nearby. We are appreciative of attempts to direct funding towards effective and important programs such as this and humbly request your support for this measure.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

LĀNA'Ī COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

P. O. Box 630142
Lāna'ī City, HI 96763-0142



Phone: 808-565-6919
Fax: 808-565-9111
dshaw@lanaicommunityhealthcenter.org

The Community is our Patient -- men, women, children, uninsured, insured!

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, April 4, 2017
9:35am

HB 916 Relating to the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and committee members:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of HB 916, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. Funds have been provided in the past from HMSA, Queens, AlohaCare, University Health Alliance, Ohana Health Plan, Maui Memorial, Lanai Community Health Center and Kalihi Palama Health Center. However the funds provided are not enough to maintain the program. Without State support, Hawaii will not be able to reapply for the grant, and the program will end.

Hawaii has a shortage of over 500 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawaii do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is loan repayment. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 25 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 2/3 are still practicing in underserved areas of Hawaii.

HB 916 HD1 requests \$250,000 for loan repayment for the above listed health profes-

E Ola nō Lāna'ī

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sions. The funds provided will be matched dollar for dollar from other funding sources and be provided to reduce the debt of our healthcare providers working in areas of need. This will allow for 15-20 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive between \$25,000 and \$40,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need. You cannot continue to voice your concerns about health care provider shortages—if you do not fund this bill. Please, your vote in support of funding this program is the loudest ‘voice’ you can provide!

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'DVK' followed by a flourish.



Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, April 4, 2017
9:35am

HB 916 Relating to the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and committee members:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of HB 916, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. Funds have been provided in the past from HMSA, Queens, AlohaCare, University Health Alliance, Ohana Health Plan, Maui Memorial, Lanai Community Health Center and Kalihi Palama Health Center. However the funds provided are not enough to maintain the program. Without State support, Hawaii will not be able to reapply for the grant, and the program will end.

Hawaii has a shortage of over 500 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawaii do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is loan repayment. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 25 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 2/3 are still practicing in underserved areas of Hawaii.

HB 916 requests \$250,000 for loan repayment for the above listed health professions, including behavioral health professionals who represent one of Hawaii’s greatest need at this time. The funds provided will be matched dollar for dollar from other funding sources and be provided to reduce the debt of our healthcare providers working in areas of need. This will allow for 15-20 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive between \$25,000 and \$40,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify!

David S. De Luz, Jr.
Vice President

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April 4, 2017; 9:35 am
Conference Room 211

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

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

Re: HB 916, HD1, SD1 – Testimony in Support

My name is Michael Robinson, Vice President, Government Relations and Community Affairs at Hawai'i Pacific Health (HPH). Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system, and the state's largest health care provider and non-governmental employer. Hawai'i Pacific Health is committed to providing the highest quality medical care and service to the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific Region through its four hospitals, more than 50 outpatient clinics and service sites, and over 1,600 affiliated physicians. Hawai'i Pacific Health's hospitals are Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children, Pali Momi Medical Center, Straub Clinic & Hospital and Wilcox Memorial Hospital.

I am writing in support of HB 916, HD1, SD1 which requests an appropriation for the healthcare professionals loan repayment program administered through the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM). The continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii plays a vital role in addressing the shortage of healthcare professionals in the state. Hawaii has a shortage of over 500 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawaii do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is loan repayment.

The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations recognized that behavioral health is one of the professions for which there exists a tremendous need as well as a significant shortage. Therefore, we prefer the original language of HB 916 which would enable JABSOM to provide loan repayment to a range of healthcare providers, including

psychologists and social workers, all of which are needed in underserved areas throughout the state.

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



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

April 3, 2017

The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: HB 916, HD1, SD1 – Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and Committee Members:

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of HB 916, HD1, SD1, which is intended to make an appropriation to the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine for the Hawaii Rural Healthcare Repayment Loan Program.

HMSA is acutely aware of the issue of access to health care, especially in rural and underserved areas of the state. The Repayment Loan Program's mission is to provide loan repayments to graduates who agree to practice in rural areas lacking appropriate providers. We are supportive of such efforts to develop appropriate health care services in these communities.

We support this worthy program and hope that the Committee sees fit to pass this measure.

Thank you for allowing us to provide testimony in support of HB 916, HD1.

Sincerely,

Mark K. Oto
Director, Government Relations



HAWAII MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

1360 S. Beretania Street, Suite 200, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Phone (808) 536-7702 Fax (808) 528-2376
www.hawaiimedicalassociation.org

FROM:
HAWAII MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
Dr. Christopher Flanders, Executive Director
Lauren Zirbel, Community and Government Relations

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

DATE: Tuesday, April 4 2016
TIME: 9:35 AM
PLACE: Conference Room 211

HB 916
Position: Support

The Physician Workforce Assessment estimated that in 2015, Hawaii faced a physician shortage of about 655 FTE's that will increase to 800 FTE's across all specialties by 2020. An acute physician shortage will have a profound impact on health care access, quality and costs, especially for native Hawaiians who are already underserved. With an average medical student debt for indebted graduates of \$160,000, debt plays a major role in career decisions and impacts the supply of our state's physicians.

Medical education remains the most expensive postsecondary education in the United States, with over one-third of all graduates carrying debt balances of more than \$200,000. This significant financial burden can have a considerable effect on students' choice of practice area.

Although many students enter medical school planning to pursue family medicine, geriatrics or other careers in primary care, pressure arising from debt concerns often cause graduates to eschew these goals in order to pursue higher paying specialties. This high debt burden may dissuade students from attending medical school altogether, especially students from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. According to surveys of the American Association of Medical Colleges, under-represented minorities cited cost of attendance as the top deterrent to applying to medical school. With recent health reforms seeking to eliminate health care disparities amongst the U.S. population, increasing the number of minority physicians is important to ensure a work force more reflective of the general population.

The American Medical Association recommends:

- Making medical student loan interest rates variable and capped at no more than 5 percent

HMA OFFICERS

President – Bernard Robinson, MD President-Elect – William Wong, Jr., MD Secretary – Thomas Kosasa, MD
Immediate Past President – Scott McCaffrey, MD Treasurer – Michael Champion, MD
Executive Director – Christopher Flanders, DO



HAWAII MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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www.hawaiimedicalassociation.org

- Income tax exemptions for medical student scholarships
- Making medical student loan interest fully tax deductible for borrowers
- **Creating more opportunities for debt relief through tuition assistance and loan forgiveness programs**

Reducing medical student indebtedness promotes diversity within medicine and may contribute to a reduction in the shortage of primary care physicians. Fair, low interest rates, tax relief, tuition assistance, and loan forgiveness and repayment programs lower barriers to medical education for disadvantaged students. In addition, borrowers with less debt are more likely to begin careers in medical education and research, practice medicine in medically underserved areas, or enter careers in public health service.

The HMA supports access to medical care for underserved populations by providing student loan repayment options for primary care physicians serving in communities with limited access to health services.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of HB 916, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. Funds have been provided in the past from HMSA, Queens, AlohaCare, University Health Alliance, Ohana Health Plan, Maui Memorial, Lanai Community Health Center and Kalihi Palama Health Center. However the funds provided are not enough to maintain the program. **Without State support, Hawaii will not be able to reapply for the grant, and the program will end.**

HB 916 requests \$250,000 for loan repayment for health professions, including behavioral health professionals who represent one of Hawaii's greatest need at this time. The funds provided will be matched dollar for dollar from other funding sources and be provided to reduce the debt of our healthcare providers working in areas of need. This will allow for 15-20 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive between \$25,000 and \$40,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

HMA OFFICERS

President – Bernard Robinson, MD President-Elect – William Wong, Jr., MD Secretary – Thomas Kosasa, MD

Immediate Past President – Scott McCaffrey, MD Treasurer – Michael Champion, MD

Executive Director – Christopher Flanders, DO

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, April 3, 2017 6:29 AM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: lrantz@hhsc.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB916 on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM

HB916

Submitted on: 4/3/2017

Testimony for WAM on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Rantz	Hilo Medical Center Foundation	Support	No

Comments: Loan repayment is the single largest issue facing young doctors today; without it they are unable to stay in Hawaii to practice. Reimbursement rates are lower and the cost of living much higher. The average debt for doctors coming out of residency is \$250,000 and other states offer large incentive bonuses to attract bright young doctors to practice in their state. Please help support keeping doctors in Hawaii. Thank you

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

From: Gerard Akaka, MD, Vice President, The Queen's Health Systems

Date: March 31, 2017

Hrg: Senate Committee on Ways and Means Decision Making; Tuesday, April 4, 2017 at
9:35AM in Room 211

**Re: Support for HB 916, HD1, SD1, Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care
Professionals**

My name is Gerard Akaka, MD, and I am a physician and the Vice President of Native Hawaiian Affairs & Clinical Support at The Queen's Health Systems (QHS). I would like to express my **strong support** for HB 916, HD1, SD1 Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals. This bill makes an appropriation for the health care professionals loan repayment program administered through the John S. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM). The loan repayment program provides financial assistance to certain health care workers who agree to work in a federally-designated health professional shortage area or an area of Hawaii found to be underserved.

As a parent who helped put my children through college, I'm keenly aware of the debt burden that is incurred during training. The student loans are similar to house payments in other states. New health professionals must also use a substantial part of their income to pay for housing in Hawaii. I'm concerned that our new graduates will struggle to live in Hawaii and remain hopeful that some or many might be helped by loan repayment assistance or else they may leave for job opportunities the mainland.

The need for behavioral health care workers is particularly acute in rural and underserved areas. Therefore, I would like to request that the committee reinsert the professions removed in the SD1 version, particularly psychologists and social workers.

I ask you to support the health care professionals loan repayment program and pass this measure.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.



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

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

Date: March 31, 2017

Hrg: Senate Committee on Ways and Means Decision Making; Tuesday, April 4, 2017 at
9:35AM in Room 211

**Re: Support for HB 916, HD1, SD1, Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care
Professionals**

My name is Paula Yoshioka and I am a Senior Vice President at The Queen's Health Systems (QHS). We would like to express our **support** for HB 916, HD1, SD1 Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals. This bill makes an appropriation for the health care professionals loan repayment program administered through the John S. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM). The loan repayment program provides financial assistance to certain health care workers who agree to work in a federally-designated health professional shortage area or an area of Hawaii found to be underserved.

At QHS, we support our local students and graduates who would like to live and work in Hawaii through internship and residency programs. In FY 2015 we spent \$14.4 million in education and training to support current and future health care professionals in the community. It is evident that the high cost of living in Hawaii, coupled with the prospect of having to pay back student loans, creates a real barrier for students who may be interested in pursuing a career in rural or medically underserved areas of the state. Hawaii currently experiences a shortage of over 500 physicians and almost all other types of primary and behavioral health care workers particularly in rural and underserved areas. Providing financial assistance to students interested in health care careers is one way that we can start to address this issue. Therefore, we request that the committee reinsert the professions removed in the SD1 version, particularly psychologists and social workers, due to the high need for behavioral health care workers in rural and underserved parts of the state.

This legislation shows a commitment to and investment in our local students and communities. Loan repayment programs will support efforts to fill in gaps in the state's health care workforce and will also benefit our underserved communities.

We ask you to support the health care professionals loan repayment program. Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

The Twenty-Ninth Legislature
Regular Session of 2017

THE STATE SENATE
Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair
State Capitol, Conference Room 211
Tuesday, April 4, 2017; 9:35 a.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON H.B. 916 HD 1 SD 1
RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS**

The ILWU Local 142 supports H.B. 916 HD 1 SD 1, which makes an appropriation for the health care professionals loan repayment program administered through the John A. Burns School of Medicine.

The current shortage of doctors is a national problem today, and this shortage has affected essentially all of the states, including Hawaii. In fact we have had recent assessments made of the doctors' and other health care professionals' shortage in Hawaii, which reflects an acute situation approaching a crisis. This is particularly true for the neighbor islands and other rural areas that are currently underserved.

For example, this has affected injured workers, under the workers' compensation system preventing them from accessing any medical treatment. When there is a delay in providing medical treatment usually this leads to greater permanent impairment, which does not help any of the parties.

Given the limited number of doctors providing care on Kauai, there is currently no psychiatrist or psychologist who is willing to treat workers who sustain industrial injuries. This prevents injured workers, suffering from injuries involving behavioral health, to access medical care on the island. We need to be able to effectively address the shortage of doctors throughout the State. This will help all residents in Hawaii have access to good medical care.

The loan repayment program administered by the John A. Burns School of Medicine is the only program of its kind in our State. It is also one of the important tools that are needed, to adequately address the doctor shortage situation over the long term.

The ILWU urges passage of H.B. 916 HD 1 SD 1. Thank you for the opportunity to share our views and concerns on this matter.

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, April 4, 2017
9:35am

HB 916 Relating to the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and committee members:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of HB 916, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. Funds have been provided in the past from HMSA, Queens, AlohaCare, University Health Alliance, Ohana Health Plan, Maui Memorial, Lanai Community Health Center and Kalihi Palama Health Center. However the funds provided are not enough to maintain the program. Without State support, Hawaii will not be able to reapply for the grant, and the program will end.

Hawaii has a shortage of over 500 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawaii do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is loan repayment. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 25 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 2/3 are still practicing in underserved areas of Hawaii.

HB 916 requests \$250,000 for loan repayment for the above listed health professions, including behavioral health professionals who represent one of Hawaii's greatest need at this time. The funds provided will be matched dollar for dollar from other funding sources and be provided to reduce the debt of our healthcare providers working in areas of need. This will allow for 15-20 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive between \$25,000 and \$40,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Erica L. Davis
Hawai'i AHEC Associate Director
Email: daviseL3@hawaii.edu

Dear Legislators:

Prior to retiring last year, I was responsible for recruiting doctors to staff most of the emergency departments on the Big Island. In my last 2 years, we lost 5 candidates---several Hawaiian island born---because their school debts where so high (average \$300,000) they could not afford to come here to practice. Indeed the combination of Hawaii's high cost of living and the relatively low payments to physicians makes the choice to start ones career in Hawaii very difficult for those who had to borrow to fund there education. This bill will go a long way to helping us with this issue. Please give it your serious consideration.

Mahalo,

Jerry L Gray, M.D.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, April 2, 2017 8:30 AM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: kaburg@att.net
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB916 on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM*

HB916

Submitted on: 4/2/2017

Testimony for WAM on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
kelley burg	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, April 1, 2017 7:18 AM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: aliapoint@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB916 on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM*

HB916

Submitted on: 4/1/2017

Testimony for WAM on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Edward Johnston	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, April 4, 2017
9:35am

HB 916 Relating to the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and committee members:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of HB 916, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. Funds have been provided in the past from HMSA, Queens, AlohaCare, University Health Alliance, Ohana Health Plan, Maui Memorial, Lanai Community Health Center and Kalihi Palama Health Center. However the funds provided are not enough to maintain the program. Without State support, Hawaii will not be able to reapply for the grant, and the program will end.

Hawaii has a shortage of over 500 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawaii do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is loan repayment. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 25 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 2/3 are still practicing in underserved areas of Hawaii.

HB 916 requests \$250,000 for loan repayment for the above listed health professions, including behavioral health professionals who represent one of Hawaii's greatest need at this time. The funds provided will be matched dollar for dollar from other funding sources and be provided to reduce the debt of our healthcare providers working in areas of need. This will allow for 15-20 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive between \$25,000 and \$40,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, April 4, 2017
9:35am

HB 916 Relating to the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and committee members:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of HB 916, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. Funds have been provided in the past from HMSA, Queens, AlohaCare, University Health Alliance, Ohana Health Plan, Maui Memorial, Lanai Community Health Center and Kalihi Palama Health Center. However the funds provided are not enough to maintain the program. Without State support, Hawaii will not be able to reapply for the grant, and the program will end.

Hawaii has a shortage of over 500 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawaii do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is loan repayment. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 25 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 2/3 are still practicing in underserved areas of Hawaii.

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Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 4:50 PM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: doug@shipmanlawhilo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB916 on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM*

HB916

Submitted on: 3/31/2017

Testimony for WAM on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Douglass Adams	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, April 4, 2017
9:35am

HB 916 Relating to the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and committee members:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of HB 916, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. Funds have been provided in the past from HMSA, Queens, AlohaCare, University Health Alliance, Ohana Health Plan, Maui Memorial, Lanai Community Health Center and Kalihi Palama Health Center. However the funds provided are not enough to maintain the program. Without State support, Hawaii will not be able to reapply for the grant, and the program will end.

Hawaii has a shortage of over 500 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawaii do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is loan repayment. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 25 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 2/3 are still practicing in underserved areas of Hawaii.

I will be graduating this May with my Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner certification and live on Maui. There is a huge shortage of psychiatrists on Maui for children and adults. I will be able to see all ages. I went back to school to get this degree, as I have been an RN for 17 years with my specialty in psychiatry. I owe \$80,000 dollars in student debt that I was hoping some of my loan would be paid for by the state of Hawaii or from the Federal grant (which is hard to get). And with Trump in office I am hoping I will still have a job waiting for me. (I have been asked by a couple of agencies when I can start working). Suicide is the number one killer of adolescents in Hawaii!

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sharilyn Butteling BSN RN

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 3:40 PM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: russell@ginozarealty.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB916 on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM*

HB916

Submitted on: 3/31/2017

Testimony for WAM on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Russell Arikawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
April 4, 2017; 9:35m

**IN SUPPORT OF: HB916 - RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS**

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz and members of the committees:

Every community health center medical director knows that finding qualified and committed physicians is a herculian task. I served as medical director of Kalihi-Palama Health Center, Bay Clinic, Inc. and Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center for over 25 years. I am keenly aware of the healthcare provider workforce needs in Kalihi, Chinatown, Institute for Human Services, Hilo, Paho, Naaleu, Waianae, Nanakuli, Kapolei and Waipahu. I have dealt with the doctor shortage firsthand in these poor and underserved communities..

In my experience, the Big Island of Hawaii has the worse shortage. I once calculated that when I saw patients in Naaleu (Kau, South Point), I was the only pediatrician for 1000 square miles. We need to train more healthcare providers, from these communities, for these communities. For many qualified students living in these high need areas, the cost of professional education is a barrier.

The loan repayment program is one good solution and sends a strong message to the members of these communities and their youth that the state supports their efforts to "Grow Our Own". Having been the Regional Director of Medical Education for the A.T. Stills University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Waianae and the Director of the Kalihi-Palama Nurse Practitioner Residency Program, I know that students that are from Hawaii and train in the community will stay and practice in the community. Physicians and Nurse Practitioners from these two programs now serve in Molokai, Nanakuli, Kalihi-Palama, Kaiser Moanalua and Castle Medical Center.

From a pediatrician who has practiced medicine in Hawaii for over 35 years, please support HB916. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any comments or questions.

Mahalo for your time and regards to your families,

Ricardo C. Custodio, M.D., M.P.H.
Associate Professor of Health Sciences, UH West Oahu
Pediatrician, Kalihi-Palama Health Center
rcustodio1@hawaii.rr.com / 808-799-8634

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, April 3, 2017 6:27 AM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: lrantz@hhsc.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB916 on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM

HB916

Submitted on: 4/3/2017

Testimony for WAM on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Rantz	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Loan repayment is the single largest issue facing young doctors today; without it they are unable to stay in Hawaii to practice. Reimbursement rates are lower and the cost of living much higher. The average debt for doctors coming out of residency is \$250,000 and other states offer large incentive bonuses to attract bright young doctors to practice in their state. Please help support keeping young doctors in Hawaii. Thank you.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, April 3, 2017 12:07 AM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: rattle4881@mypacks.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB916 on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM

HB916

Submitted on: 4/3/2017

Testimony for WAM on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elizabeth Tam	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Thank you for allowing me to express strong support of HB 916, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. HB 916 requests \$250,000 for loan repayment for the above listed health professions, including behavioral health professionals who represent one of Hawaii's greatest need at this time. The funds provided will be matched dollar for dollar from other funding sources and be provided to reduce the debt of our healthcare providers working in areas of need. Please vote for HB 916.

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Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, April 4, 2017; 9:35am

HB 916 Relating to the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of HB916**, which provides loan repayment for primary care and behavioral health practitioners in Health Professions Shortage Areas within Hawaii.

Legislators should view this measure as an indirect subsidy of our Community Health Centers, which provide primary care services for many of the neediest residents in our state. In some neighbor island locales, the Community Health Center might be the only source of primary care services for the mainstream population as well as the indigent.

Many of Hawaii's Community Health Centers struggle to recruit and retain high quality practitioners, as the salaries that they offer are often significantly below what primary care and behavioral health providers can obtain in other clinical settings. And with the changes in reimbursement strategy recently adopted by the Federal Government and our local insurance companies, this salary gap will only widen. HB916 offers a partial fix for this challenge.

Without State support Hawaii will not be able to continue a program that has helped 25 healthcare providers since 2012. And more strikingly, of the healthcare providers who have completed the program, two-thirds are still working in underserved areas of Hawaii. This is clearly a worthwhile measure that deserves your vote.

Thank you for allowing me to testify

David Sakamoto
(808) 589-8081
dtsret@gmail.com

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, April 2, 2017 7:24 PM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: Sarfeenstra@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB916 on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM

HB916

Submitted on: 4/2/2017

Testimony for WAM on Apr 4, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sarah Feenstra	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha! I am writing to promote HB 916, which supports the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program. I am a recipient of loan repayment through this program. I am a psychiatrist working with the correctional system and a community clinic in Maui. I moved to Maui in 2015 for my first job out of residency. In my career search, it was important to find a job that offered loan repayment, as I came out of residency with a daunting \$280,000 in debt. I thoroughly enjoy my work with the underserved mentally ill population, seeing people that are often overlooked but have significant needs. I have learned firsthand that there are not enough providers on this island, and we desperately need to improve this situation. Loan repayment works- it attracts providers, like myself, to work in areas of need. I feel very fortunate to be a part of this program. It has not only provided me financial support, but allowed me to do the work that I love. When I first moved here I debated whether I should stay, some of the factors that weighed heavily on me were the high cost of living and the lower salaries offered in Hawaii compared to the Midwest. However, loan repayment motivated to stay and prompted me to commit to two years of service. I am very happy with this decision and will likely commit to additional years in the future. Please continue to support this program so Hawaii attracts more providers in mental health and other primary care specialties. Loan repayment options help to combat the financial burden that can deter providers from moving here or staying here. However without State support, Hawaii will not be able to continue this program that has helped me and 24 other healthcare providers since 2012. HB 916 requests \$250,000 for loan repayment. The funds provided will be matched dollar for dollar from other funding sources and be provided to reduce the debt of our healthcare providers working in areas of need. This will allow for 15-20 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$25,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need. Thank you for allowing me to testify. Sincerely, Sarah Feenstra, DO

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Testimony Presented Before the

House Committee on Finance

Monday, April 03, 2017

Relating to the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and members of the committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 916, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. Funds have been provided in the past from HMSA, Queens, AlohaCare, University Health Alliance, Ohana Health Plan, Maui Memorial, Lanai Community Health Center and Kalihi Palama Health Center. However the funds provided are not enough to maintain the program. Without State support, Hawaii will not be able to reapply for the grant, and the program will end.

Hawaii has a shortage of over 500 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawaii do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is loan repayment. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 25 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 2/3 are still practicing in underserved areas of Hawaii.

HB 916 requests \$250,000 for loan repayment for the above listed health professions. This will allow for 15-20 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$25,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need.

As my daughter is a Nurse Practitioner currently working on Oahu, she has over \$100,000.00 worth of loans for just her Master's Program Degree alone at UH Manoa. She is very dedicated to her profession, her staff and her patients. She is also a single mom who would love to return to the Big Island and own her own home to bring up my granddaughter. This Repayment program will be a definite help to these

individuals who have dedicated their lives to help so many. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Testimony in Support of HB916

Hawaii has a shortage of over 500 doctors, as well as all other primary care and behavioral health providers. Without these providers, the people of Hawaii will not have ready access to the healthcare they need. The need is most acute on the neighbor islands and in remote regions.

The fastest and most cost effective way of recruiting providers to areas of need is by paying back their loans in return for continuous service to that area. SB141 would supply funding to recruit, train and retain physicians. . As a medical provider taking care of patients in a rural environment, this bill is near and dear to my heart.

My name is (Heather) Hokulani Porter and I am a FNP working out in Wai'anāe Coast Comprehensive Health Center. I am part-Hawaiian and born and raised on the West Coast.

My FNP back ground trained me well enough to support our physicians and help take the burden off their load. My position as a FNP in our Nanakuli satellite health center paired me up with a FP doctor. I was able to take care of the majority of his health promotion visits (PAPS, EPSDTs) as well as same day acute visits (sick visits, maintenance of HTN and DMII meds and follow up labs). Which gave him time on his schedule to see patients in dire need of his care (ie f/u hospital discharge patients post-stroke, patients with valve disorders needing Coumadin therapy and monitoring of labs, seizure patients, kidney and heart failure patients, the list goes on.) However, with the shortage of doctors we have, NPs have been expected to see and care for sicker and sicker patients with multiple co-morbidities and provide care that we were not trained to provide. We do our best to take care of our patients, however, we are often left feeling as if the patient did not get the comprehensive care a physician's training would provide.

Not only will this bill support the physician shortage, but also the amazing training I have had the opportunity to receive through ECHO. This fantastic community of providers meet on a weekly basis to discuss a variety of condition and offer their expert help and advice. This has been extremely helpful for me especially and has allowed me a few resources to help those complicated patients that I mentioned I must provide care for because of our physician shortage. The training also offers FREE CME hours, which if very hard to come by. Obtaining CME is vital for all care providers to maintain their medical licensure.

Recently, my work schedule as changed and I can no longer partake in ECHO. I certainly miss the teaching community that helped me be a better provider. I am also very thankful for the AHEC website that put me in contact with many resources – most important how to apply and qualify for the SLRP for which I am a recipient.

Please support HB916 and help rural patients to get the quality care they deserve. Help us to be able to safely provide evidenced based care through the use of ECHO learning community. Finally, help us recruit needed health care providers to our rural areas and entice them to stay by providing them with a variety of resources that this bill would help to fund.

Mahalo for your time and attention to this matter. Please pass **HB916!!**

Hokulani Porter RN, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC, CNSBH

Hokulani.porter@gmail.com