



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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**Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of SB203
RELATING TO STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH**

REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: March 14, 2017, 8:30 a.m. Room Number: 329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Testimony:** The purpose of the measure is to amend the principal state
3 agencies representatives on the State Council on Mental Health, also known as the
4 Council, to establish itself within the Department of Health (DOH) for administrative
5 purposes, and to redefine quorum. As specified in Section 334-10, Hawaii Revised
6 Statutes, the principal state agencies representatives on the Council are: mental health,
7 education, vocational rehabilitation, criminal justice, housing and social services.

8 Since social services is under the Department of Human Services and represents
9 the Child Welfare Services, which provides the Council with perspectives on systems
10 change for children with mental illness, it is also important to add the Medicaid agency
11 which provides services to many of our adult consumers living with mental illness. The
12 passing of this measure will allow the Council to gain the Medicaid agency's knowledge
13 and expertise on issues and trends that influence the direction in which the mental
14 health field is headed in the State of Hawaii.

1 The re-definition of quorum will enable the Council to conduct business based on
2 the number of currently appointed members and not based on the number of vacancies.
3 For example, the Council did not meet twice in FY2017, and therefore, could not
4 discuss pending legislation.

5 We thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this
6 measure on behalf of this body of volunteers, who give their time and effort in
7 supporting consumers living with mental illness in our State.

8 **Offered Amendments:** None