

January 30, 2017/2:45pm
Conference Room 016

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection & Health

To: Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Senator Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

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

Re: SB 285 – 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 SB 285, which reauthorizes the nursing facility sustainability fee program, with amendment to include both fiscal years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.

Nursing facilities are a vital component of the health care delivery system, yet they face major financial challenges in providing quality long-term care to Hawai'i residents because payments for Medicaid enrollees are not adequate to cover the actual costs of care. Provider fees have been identified in forty-nine states and the District of Columbia as effective mechanisms for drawing down federal funds to sustain Medicaid programs in light of rising state budget deficits, increasing health care costs, and expanding Medicaid enrollment. This fee program has the capacity to obtain additional federal funds which will reduce the financial losses incurred by nursing and long-term care facilities.

Reauthorization of the nursing sustainability fee program through SB 275 will enhance access to health care for Medicaid recipients in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.