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February 13, 2018

TO: The Honorable Representative John Mizuno, Chair
House Committee on Health and Human Services

The Honorable Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair
House Committee on Public Safety

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **HB2144 - RELATED TO MEDICAID**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 13, 2018; 9:05 a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this measure and offers comments regarding Section 1 of the measure.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to require the Department of Human Services to suspend rather than terminate an individual's Medicaid eligibility upon entry into a correctional facility. The bill also requires the Department of Public Safety (PSD) to inform inmates of the availability of assistance to secure or verify applicable Medicaid eligibility prior to an inmate's release.

Continuity of access to healthcare is important for all, including those who are incarcerated in public institutions. That being said, federal regulations prohibit Medicaid payment for services provided to inmates of public institutions, including correctional institutions, except for services provided as "*a patient in a medical institution that is not located on the grounds of the public institution.*" Due to this regulation, Medicaid does not allow an

inmate to remain enrolled for Medicaid benefits during their time of incarceration as this bill proposes.

However, PSD and DHS Med-QUEST (MQD) have executed a data-share agreement that allows for file transfers of incarceration and release dates for individuals. We are working on developing the data exchange and other processes to facilitate re-entry, so that the Medicaid eligibility determination process may begin just prior to release of the inmate. The goal is to have eligibility determined for Medicaid just prior to release and the application will remain pending until the inmate is released.

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



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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No. _____

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2144
RELATING TO MEDICAID

by

Nolan P. Espinda, Director
Department of Public Safety

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair
Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY
Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair
Representative Cedric Asuega Gates, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 13, 2018; 9:05 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 329

Chairs Mizuno and Takayama, Vice Chairs Kobayashi and Gates, and Members of the Committees:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) **supports the intent** of House Bill (HB) 2144, which, in part, would require PSD to inform inmates of the availability of assistance to secure or verify applicable Medicaid eligibility prior to an inmate's release.

The Department notes that although facilities' staff had routinely assisted inmates with gaining or regaining coverage they received prior to incarceration through MedQuest/Medicaid, HB 2144 would formalize these processes. PSD notes, further, that with the support of the 2017 Legislature in passing Act 56, \$25,000 was provided to the Department to establish processes for inmates to obtain civil identification cards, essential for successful reentry to the community.

This effort is overseen by PSD's newly-invigorated Reentry Coordination Office (RCO) which, in the past year, has become fully staffed and is making steady progress in working with the facilities to prepare inmates to transition back to the community.

The RCO works intensively in providing guidance and assistance to each facility's staff in addressing obstacles to developing work opportunities, access to social services, assistance in securing housing, and access to health coverage, giving priority to inmates who will be the earliest to reenter society.

In short, PSD's Reentry Coordination Office is not just informing inmates of available assistance, its staff has built and is continually working to improve processes to secure the above elements, including MedQuest/Medicaid access, into the overall Reentry Program, providing inmates in custody with access to the services necessary for a successful reentry to the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.



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COMMITTEES ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY
TUESDAY, FEB. 13, 9:05 AM, Room 329
HB2144 RELATING TO MEDICAID

TESTIMONY

Beppie Shapiro, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chairs MIZUNO and TAKAYAMA, Vice-Chairs KOBAYASHI and GATES, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports HB2144 that directs DHS to suspend rather than terminate Medicaid eligibility for any inmate of a public institution for as long as the inmate meets other eligibility requirements; and directs DHS to assist inmates whose incarceration will end within one year to secure or verify Medicaid eligibility.

When someone is released after incarceration, especially after incarceration for more than a few months, it is very difficult for them to reconstruct a viable life outside of the institution. Very few will have employment to which they can return; family relationships often have changed; and finding out about public health support for which they may be eligible, and going through the eligibility determination process, can take months. Documents need to be updated, appointments made and kept, and paperwork has to go through review. In the meantime the newly released person also needs normal preventive health care, and s/he may have ongoing health problems which need to be re-evaluated and addressed.

HB2144 will ensure that released individuals eligible for Medicaid will be (re) enrolled so they can access health services. Getting those services in a timely manner will allow these individuals to pay attention to other aspects of their reintegration into society, such as finding employment and housing.

The League is happy to have the opportunity to support such a logical and beneficial measure. Please pass HB2144.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

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To: Hawaii State House Committee on Health & Human Services
Hawaii State House Committee on Public Safety
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 13, 2018 9:05AM
Hawaii State Capitol, Rm. 329

Position Statement Supporting House Bill 2144

Thank you, Chair Takayama, Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kobayahi and Committee members, for the opportunity to testify in **support of House Bill 2144**, relating to Medicaid.

YWCA O'ahu operates the state's only community-based, work furlough program for women. We understand the struggle of reentering society. We support House Bill 2144 because it will allow those leaving incarceration to access necessary health services.

As noted in the 2017 report *Touchpoints of Homelessness: Institutional Discharge as a Window of Opportunity for Hawaii's Homeless*, people preparing for release are not receiving assistance in securing benefits. For those needing to continue mental health treatment, obtaining medical benefits as quickly as possible is imperative. If Medicaid benefits were suspended rather than terminated, it would simplify one piece of the reentry process.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2144.

Kathleen Algire
Director, Public Policy and Advocacy
YWCA O'ahu

YWCA IS ON A MISSION

HB-2144

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 2:32:47 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/13/2018 9:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
E. Ileina Funakoshi		Support	No

Comments:

Aloha

Committee on HHS: Reps. John M. Mizuno, Chair, Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair and Committee Members:

Committee on PBS: Reps. Gregg Takayama, Chair, Cedric Asuega Gates, Vice Chair

I strongly support this bill to help the incarcerated exiting from prison have some financial assistance to help them acquire housing, employment, and medical coverage.

It would also help if they had the necessary identification cards to be able to even file for any of the above.

Thank you for opportunity to provide my comments, and thank you for your consideration of passing HB2144.

mahalo,

e. ileina funakioshi

HB-2144

Submitted on: 2/9/2018 7:33:35 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/13/2018 9:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Louis Erteschik	Hawaii Disability Rights Center	Support	No

Comments:

We see clients in the office who have recently been discharged from prison and one of the immediate problems they face is that while they are clearly eligible for Medicaid they are not in fact on Medicaid as of the day they are discharged. This creates a range of problems for them in terms of housing and other benefits to which they may be entitled that would facilitate their community re-entry. It would be very beneficial if they could immediately be eligible to receive them.