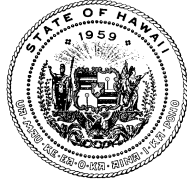


# HB2493 HD2

Measure Title: RELATING TO EPIDEMIOLOGISTS.  
Report Title: Department of Health; Epidemiologists  
Description: Removes the cap on the number of epidemiologists that the Department of Health may employ. (HB2493 HD2)  
Companion:  
Package: None  
Current Referral: CPH, WAM  
Introducer(s): BELATTI, CREAGAN, KOBAYASHI, C. LEE, MIZUNO, MORIKAWA, NAKAMURA



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
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**Testimony SUPPORTING HB2493 HD2  
RELATING TO EPIDEMIOLOGISTS.**

SENATOR ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH  
Hearing Date: March 20, 2018 Room Number: 229

1 **Fiscal Implications:** N/A.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) strongly supports HB2493 HD2  
3 and urges the Senate to pass unamended to expedite enactment. The department has immediate  
4 needs that will benefit from enactment of this measure.

5 Epidemiologists are unique to public health. DOH deploys epidemiologists to effectively track  
6 and characterize emergent disease outbreaks such as those caused by dengue, hepatitis A,  
7 norovirus, or mumps by using various tools (e.g., GIS mapping, online survey tools) to analyze  
8 data to determine specific risks, identify potential or specific etiologic agents, or guide public  
9 health interventions. Epidemiologists also analyze longer term trends, using environmental,  
10 health care, chronic disease, mental health, and substance abuse data including the injuries and  
11 deaths related to opioid misuse and abuse, to inform public policy and department operations.

12 **Offered Amendment:** N/A.

13



Date: March 18, 2018

To: The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair  
The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health

From: Jessica Yamauchi, Executive Director, Hawai'i Public Health Institute

Re: **Support for HB 2493 HD2 Relating to Epidemiologists**

Hrg: March 20, 2018 at 9:00 am at Conference Room 229

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Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of HB 2493 HD2, Relating to Epidemiologists.

The Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) supports and promotes policy efforts to create a healthy Hawai'i. HIPHI weaves silos into working relationships as an effective network, ensuring that we come together across sectors to advance collaboration and innovation in public health and work towards making Hawai'i the healthiest place to live.

Currently, the Department of Health Director is limited to establishing only up to ten permanent or temporary positions for epidemiologists. This bill would provide the director of health with operational flexibility lifting this restriction.

Epidemiologists provide a critical function for the Department of Health (DOH). Epidemiologists track and characterize emergent disease outbreaks and analyze long-term trends. Information Epidemiologists provide is critical to inform public policy and department operations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jessica Yamauchi'.

Jessica Yamauchi, MA  
Executive Director