



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

**Testimony SUPPORTING HB2493 HD2
RELATING TO EPIDEMIOLOGISTS.**

SENATOR DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date: March 29, 2018

Room Number: 211

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

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) strongly supports HB2493 HD2
3 and respectfully urges the Senate to pass unamended to expedite enactment. The department has
4 immediate needs that will benefit from enactment of this measure. In 2017, the Legislature
5 appropriated funds and authorized an epidemiologist to investigate potential lead exposure on
6 Kauai. The department is unable to recruit for this because of the arbitrary cap.

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

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

HB-2493-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2018 10:39:40 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/29/2018 10:50:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for Oahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments: