

**PRESENTATION OF THE  
HAWAII MEDICAL BOARD**

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE  
Regular Session of 2018

Wednesday, February 21, 2018  
2:00 p.m.

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2578, H.D. 1, RELATING TO PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS.**

TO THE HONORABLE ROY M. TAKUMI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Ahlani Quiogue, and I am the Executive Officer of the Hawaii Medical Board (“Board”). Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure, which is a companion to S.B. 3074. The Board supports this measure and provides the following comments and proposed amendments for the Committee’s consideration.

H.B. 2578, H.D. 1 requires physician assistants to meet continuing education requirements as a condition of license renewal and prohibits the Board from additionally requiring repeated passage of a certification examination upon each renewal. The H.D. 1 amends the measure by changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to further continue discussion.

For the Committee’s information, the Board’s current administrative rules require that, for a physician assistant to be eligible for renewal, the physician assistant shall maintain national certification by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (“NCCPA”). See, Hawaii Administrative Rules §16-85-48. The Board recognizes that this requirement is no longer the norm amongst regulatory boards that certify/license physician assistants. As the Committee may be aware:

- 20 states require physician assistants to obtain continuing medical education (“CME”) only for renewal;

- 15 states require physician assistants to obtain NCCPA certification only for renewal;
- 7 states require physician assistants to obtain CME or NCCPA certification for renewal; and
- 4 states require physician assistants to obtain CME and NCCPA certification for renewal if the physician assistant prescribes controlled substances.

The Board respectfully submits the following proposed amendments for the Committee's consideration:

Page 6, Lines 4-11:

(j) A physician assistant shall meet the category 1 or 1A continuing medical education requirements by obtaining forty credit hours in a category 1 or 1A continuing medical education program accredited by the American Medical Association or American Osteopathic Association or in another approved category 1 or 1A continuing medical education. To determine compliance, the board may conduct a random audit. A physician assistant selected for audit shall be notified by the board. Within sixty days of notification, the physician assistant shall provide the board documentation to verify compliance with the category 1 or category 1A continuing medical education requirements.

The proposed amendments are similar to the CME renewal requirements for physicians and osteopathic physicians. See, Hawaii Revised Statutes §453-6.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of H.B. 2578, H.D. 1, with suggested amendments.

**HB-2578-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2018 11:35:01 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/21/2018 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Wayne Kawahara	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support HB 2578

A test should not be indicative of how well a physician assistant (PA) provides care. Not passing the currently required Physician Assistant National Recertifying Exam (PANRE) test every ten (10) years in order to be continue to be a PA in Hawaii should not trump the many years of experience a PA has. If we continue to make this test a requirement we will lose many very good experienced PAs to another state that does not require taking this test to continue to be a PA. Currently many states do not require this test. Why do we keep this requirement when it hurts the people of Hawaii by losing these valuable experienced PAs? We are already short-staffed in medical care in Hawaii. Let's not lose good experienced PAs to another state and please let's vote HB 2578 in.

Again I support HB 2578

My name is Fielding Mercer and over the past 10 years I have been a Board Officer (president, president elect in a recurring manner) and Legislative Liaison for the Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants. As such, I have extensive knowledge of HRS Chapter 453 and HAR Chapter 85 regarding (physician assistant) PA practice in the state of Hawaii and have been instrumental in working with HMB in effecting rules changes pertinent to PA practice in Hawaii.

HB 2578 in its current amended form will do more harm than good. The reason I say this is that the Bill will require the Hawaii Medical Board to meet and make recommendations for CME requirements for PAs and then submit it for a rules change to the Governor, Attorney General and multiple committees for approval. A rules change to HAR Chapter 85 takes a minimum of 10 months after the HMB meets and submits the proposed rules for approval. It often takes far longer, and this may impact the ability of PAs to renew licensure if there are no CME requirements listed in HAR 85.

It there are no provisions for CME listed in HAR 85, then PAs will not be able to renew licensure until such rules changes are made. Therefore, it makes implicit sense to include the CME requirements in this Bill so that these will be immediately implemented upon passage of the Bill and signature of the Governor if required. Currently, the NCCPA requires 50 hours of AMA PRA category 1 and 50 hours of AMA PRA category 2 CME every 2 years for maintenance of certification. This should be the required CME requirement and should be included in the language of this bill and as per my below listed recommended amendment of this Bill. I feel assured that the HMB (Hawaii Medical Board and HMA (Hawaii Medical Association) would be in support of including this language in the current Bill. If it is not included in the Bill, then the Bill should be held, because passage in its current form will create far more problems for PAs than it solves.

While I am testifying in opposition of the Bill in its current form, I do support passage of the Bill with the amendments that I have included herein, which include the CME requirements that I have listed above. Those CME requirements reflect the current requirements of the NCCPA and therefore do not diminish the current CME requirements. Note that the 50 hours of AMA PRA Category 1 hours exceed the M.D. requirement which is 40 hours of Category 1 CME.

There are many PAs practicing in specialty areas that should not be required to take the NCCPA recertification exam, which is concentrated in Primary Care and not pertinent to PAs practicing in orthopedics, surgery, dermatology and other sub specialties. Maintenance of Board Certification is not required in any other medical profession to maintain licensure. Current HAR pertaining to PAs does require PAs to maintain Board Certification in order to be licensed. This needs to be modified is the reason for the Bill eliminating the requirement for maintenance of Board Certification.

The Bill should be amended as below. Language to be eliminated is marked in double strike through and recommended changes are noted in capital letters and bold print.

This can be a good Bill, but ONLY with the recommended amendments.

Fielding Mercer, PA-C

Past President and past legislative liaison – HAPA (proposed amendments to section J as below)

## ~~A BILL FOR AN ACT~~

~~— [(j)] (k) A license that has been forfeited for one renewal term shall be automatically terminated and cannot be restored. A new application for licensure shall be required."~~

**HB-2578-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2018 8:32:05 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/21/2018 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Frank Ancona	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear members of the Committee,

My name is Frank Ancona. I am a clinical drug researcher in California and am writing in support of HB 2578.

My Uncle has been a practicing Physician's Assistant in HI for over 20 years and during a conversation he had with me last week he expressed to me his distress over the current testing requirements for PAs in HI.

Being in the healthcare industry myself for 25 years, it seems the requirement to pass an annual test to maintain a license is quite extreme. PAs ought to take their certifying exam upon graduation and then maintain their certificate through CME (Continuing medical education courses) like other medical professionals such as nurses and physicians.

The ability to pass an exam is not indicative of one's ability to practice medicine (especially someone who has been practicing for the greater portion of their life like in the case of my Uncle).

My Uncle has informed me that there is a shortage of healthcare practitioners in Hawaii. Invalidating the licenses of PAs who do not pass the exam threatens to worsen the state's health disparity by putting those PAs out of practice.

I ask that you pass HB 2578. Confiscation of PA medical licenses for failing an exam is quite unfair and discriminatory for this particular segment of the medical profession, and is a direct threat to the treatment and well-being of the people of Hawaii.

Thank you for your time.

Frank D. Ancona

**HB-2578-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2018 7:47:03 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/21/2018 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Santo Di Martino	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Good morning Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to your committee this morning. My name is Santo Di Martino. I have been a PA for 41 years and have been in family practice in Hawaii for 31 years.

I strongly support HB 2578 which will allow for the renewal of PA licensure upon the completion of a specified number of continuing education hours and explicitly states that PAs shall not be required to maintain certification for license renewal.

PAs are medical providers who diagnose illness, develop and manage treatment plans, prescribe medications, and often serve as a patient's principle healthcare professional. With thousands of hours of medical training, PAs are versatile and collaborative. PAs practice in every state and in every medical setting and specialty, improving healthcare access and quality.

Currently, PAs in all states are required to pass an initial certifying exam to obtain a PA license. However, a little over a dozen states- 18 to be exact- Hawaii included, also require PAs to maintain certification to renew a license- a distinction that oddly applies only to PAs. PAs are the only profession required to pass a recertification exam on a periodic basis in order to satisfy state maintenance of license requirements- it is not required for advance practice nurses or for physicians.

In order to maintain certification, PAs are allowed four attempts at passing the recertification exam during 10 year period. In the event that a PA in Hawaii fails to pass the exam, they are unable to renew their license – regardless of the quality of care they have historically provided to patients or their current capacity to provide excellent care to patients.

This type of requirement is outdated as unnecessary, as evidenced by the lack of such a requirement for physicians and advance practice nurses. The burdensome and unnecessary nature of this requirement further supported by the fact that 31 states and the District of Columbia do not require PAs to maintain certification for license renewal.



This means PAs in the 18 states requiring current certification are the only medical professionals who risk losing their livelihoods based on the passage or failure of an exam regardless of years of experience or quality of care provided to their patients. It also means that these states risk losing talented, experienced healthcare providers simply because they do not wish to take the time away from practice or they do not see the benefit of sitting for a generalist medical exam again when they may have fewer than ten years of practice ahead of them.

Many PAs choose to keep up with their certification either to remain competitive in the job market or in some cases, because their employer requires current certification. I'm not speaking against maintenance of certification as an option, appropriately determined by individual PAs or at the practice level not mandated by law.

However, a PA should not be ineligible for licensure as a PA in Hawaii, although they are competent to provide care and have completed continuing education courses, just like their colleagues in other states. A PA with the exact same qualifications would be allowed to practice in 31 states which do not have a requirement for current certification for license renewal.

This can certainly serve as a disincentive for PAs to practice in Hawaii when they can relocate to a state with modernized PA practice laws. PAs are licensed to practice with the inherent understanding that PAs will maintain current knowledge. In fact, PAs in all states must meet rigorous continuing medical education (CME) requirements to remain licensed.

As Hawaii faces a physician shortage, and the hopes of bringing a PA program to the state to increase the number of healthcare providers available to meet the needs of patients, I hope that you will agree that Hawaii should join as the 32nd state to allow PAs to renew licensure without a requirement for current NCCPA certification.

There is no evidence that requiring MOC for licensure renewal has any impact on the quality of care provided. In fact, federal programs, such as Medicare and Medicaid, do not require that PAs maintain certification after passage of the initial certifying exam in order to participate in the programs.

The PA profession has ample documentation of the quality and safety of the care it provides which you can find on the American Academy of PAs website at [www.aapa.org](http://www.aapa.org) or I am happy to provide you with direct link to the information.

As a longtime Hawaii PA, I appreciate your support of this great bill. Thank you for your time.

My name is Fielding Mercer and over the past 10 years I have been a Board Officer (president, president elect in a recurring manner) and Legislative Liaison for the Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants. As such, I have extensive knowledge of HRS Chapter 453 and HAR Chapter 85 regarding (physician assistant) PA practice in the state of Hawaii and have been instrumental in working with HMB in effecting rules changes pertinent to PA practice in Hawaii.

HB 2578 in its current amended form will do more harm than good. The reason I say this is that the Bill will require the Hawaii Medical Board to meet and make recommendations for CME requirements for PAs and then submit it for a rules change to the Governor, Attorney General and multiple committees for approval. A rules change to HAR Chapter 85 takes a minimum of 10 months after the HMB meets and submits the proposed rules for approval. It often takes far longer, and this may impact the ability of PAs to renew licensure if there are no CME requirements listed in HAR 85.

It there are no provisions for CME listed in HAR 85, then PAs will not be able to renew licensure until such rules changes are made. Therefore, it makes implicit sense to include the CME requirements in this Bill so that these will be immediately implemented upon passage of the Bill and signature of the Governor if required. Currently, the NCCPA requires 50 hours of AMA PRA category 1 and 50 hours of AMA PRA category 2 CME every 2 years for maintenance of certification. This should be the required CME requirement and should be included in the language of this bill and as per my below listed recommended amendment of this Bill. I feel assured that the HMB (Hawaii Medical Board and HMA (Hawaii Medical Association) would be in support of including this language in the current Bill. If it is not included in the Bill, then the Bill should be held, because passage in its current form will create far more problems for PAs than it solves.

While I am testifying in opposition of the Bill in its current form, I do support passage of the Bill with the amendments that I have included herein, which include the CME requirements that I have listed above. Those CME requirements reflect the current requirements of the NCCPA and therefore do not diminish the current CME requirements. Note that the 50 hours of AMA PRA Category 1 hours exceed the M.D. requirement which is 40 hours of Category 1 CME.

There are many PAs practicing in specialty areas that should not be required to take the NCCPA recertification exam, which is concentrated in Primary Care and not pertinent to PAs practicing in orthopedics, surgery, dermatology and other sub specialties. Maintenance of Board Certification is not required in any other medical profession to maintain licensure. Current HAR pertaining to PAs does require PAs to maintain Board Certification in order to be licensed. This needs to be modified is the reason for the Bill eliminating the requirement for maintenance of Board Certification.

The Bill should be amended as below. Language to be eliminated is marked in double strike through and recommended changes are noted in capital letters and bold print.

This can be a good Bill, but ONLY with the recommended amendments.

Fielding Mercer, PA-C

Past President and past legislative liaison – HAPA (proposed amendments to section J as below)

## ~~A BILL FOR AN ACT~~

~~— [(j)] (k) A license that has been forfeited for one renewal term shall be automatically terminated and cannot be restored. A new application for licensure shall be required."~~

Good Morning Chair and members of the Committee,

My name is Rida Cabanilla, a business owner in the health care industry namely in the field of medical diagnostics and urgent cares. I am here in support of HB 2578. This bill is pertaining to the amendment of Chapter 16-85-48 which is the certification renewal of Physician Assistants by a national organization for continued practice.

The current law mandates Physicians Assistants to carry licensure from the State of Hawaii and a certification from a National organization. The absence of one will prevent them from practicing their profession.

18 states have opted out of this state dual mandate for they found out to be a discriminating and career inhibiting. As a result diminishing the number of qualified health care providers in a strained pool of health care providers, a solution in abating the rising cost of health care.

I said it is discriminatory. All other professionals in the health care industry such as nurses, doctors, medical technologies and other like professions take their test only once in their lifetime. Physician Assistants must take a comprehensive written test once every five years.

I said the current law can be a career stopper. Physician Assistants enter specialties just like physicians. You find them in orthopedics, emergency rooms, dermatology and so on. This specialty work will make it very difficult to pass a comprehensive test every five year. This comprehensive written test should only be mandated initially after college. The longer you are in these specialty fields the more difficult it is to pass this written test every five years.

Several years ago, the legislature passed the Nurse Practitioners Act to expand the health care providers pool in our State. The current law is doing the opposite of that initiative. The other states who opt out of this dual requirement realized that this is a limiting requirement. A state licensure should suffice.

Rising health care cost is the front page of the paper every year and is a matter of concern to all. Physician Assistants are paid half that of a physician's hourly pay. They are coined the cheap doctors. When Queens Medical Centers needed to

expand their emergency rooms, they hired six Physician Assistants instead of doctors.

In closing, I want to re-iterate that passing this amendment will be good not only to PA s as they are called but to the state as whole. The new law will encourage more Physician Assistants, give justice and parity to this dying profession, and a measure to maintain the current health care cost.

Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for hearing this bill. I rest with your good judgement.

**HB-2578-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2018 2:12:26 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/21/2018 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
BODHI M ANDERSON	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Members of the House Consumer Protection & Commerce Committee:

As a PA (physician assistant) practicing in Hilo, I **urge your SUPPORT for H.B. 2578**. This bill will allow PAs to renew licensure upon the completion of a specified number of continuing medical education (CME) hours, and will prohibit the Hawaii Medical Board from requiring PAs to maintain current certification from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) as a condition of license renewal. This bill is consistent with the renewal process used in 31 states and the District of Columbia and the license renewal requirements for Hawaii physicians.

PAs are healthcare practitioners who receive a graduate-level degree after an approximately 27-month program of study. The typical PA student receives more than 2,000 hours of supervised, hands-on clinical care experience before graduation, and all new PAs must take and pass an initial national certifying exam. The more than 300 PAs in Hawaii diagnose illnesses, develop and manage treatment plans and prescribe medications in every medical setting and specialty.

Only seventeen states (including Hawaii) require PAs to maintain NCCPA certification, which requires passage of a recertification exam every six or ten years, as a condition of license renewal. While preparation for this exam requires PAs to take significant amounts of time away from practice, there is no evidence that requiring maintenance of certification has a positive impact on patient care. While other healthcare practitioners may be subject to their own maintenance of certification requirements, in these 17 states, PAs are the only healthcare profession for which license renewal is tied to the passage of a recertification exam rather than completion of CME.

PAs are known to provide safe, quality healthcare to their patients. The majority of states, as well as federal programs like Medicare and Medicaid, do not require PAs to maintain certification. Instead, the decision to require current certification is left to individual PAs and their employers. I urge Hawaii to do the same by passing H.B. 2578.

Sincerely,

Bodhi Anderson, PA-C, Hilo



**LATE**

**HB-2578-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2018 7:58:25 PM  
Testimony for CPC on 2/21/2018 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kathleen Elliott	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have been a PA-C, a physician assistant, in Hawai'i since 1988. I am writing in SUPPORT of this bill which would separate the Hawai'i State licensing from the PANRE PA recertification exam. I know that being a good test taker and being a competent physician assistant are not necessarily the same thing. Physician assistants are the only health care providers that are required to pass a recertification exam on a regular basis in order to maintain licensure. MDs and nurse practitioners (advance practice nurses) do not. I believe in maintaining our skills up to date, and our continuing education credits (CME) are important, but the recertification exam mostly proves who is a good test taker. Please remove this requirement from PA licensing requirements. Aloha, Kathleen Elliott, PA-C, Honolulu



**LATE**

**HB-2578-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2018 8:09:44 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/21/2018 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
alisha wallace	HAPA	Support	No

Comments:

As a PA (physician assistant) practicing in (location),Hawaii I **urge your SUPPORT for H.B. 2578**. This bill will allow PAs to renew licensure upon the completion of a specified number of continuing medical education (CME) hours, and will prohibit the Hawaii Medical Board from requiring PAs to maintain current certification from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) as a condition of license renewal. This bill is consistent with the renewal process used in 31 states and the District of Columbia and the license renewal requirements for Hawaii physicians.

PAs are healthcare practitioners who receive a graduate-level degree after an approximately 27-month program of study. The typical PA student receives more than 2,000 hours of supervised, hands-on clinical care experience before graduation, and all new PAs must take and pass an initial national certifying exam. The more than 300 PAs in Hawaii diagnose illnesses, develop and manage treatment plans and prescribe medications in every medical setting and specialty.

Only seventeen states (including Hawaii) require PAs to maintain NCCPA certification, which requires passage of a recertification exam every six or ten years, as a condition of license renewal. While preparation for this exam requires PAs to take significant amounts of time away from practice, there is no evidence that requiring maintenance of certification has a positive impact on patient care. While other healthcare practitioners may be subject to their own maintenance of certification requirements, in these 17 states, PAs are the only healthcare profession for which license renewal is tied to the passage of a recertification exam rather than completion of CME.

PAs are known to provide safe, quality healthcare to their patients. The majority of states, as well as federal programs like Medicare and Medicaid, do not require PAs to maintain certification. Instead, the decision to require current certification is left to individual PAs and their employers. I urge Hawaii to do the same by passing H.B. 2578.

Sincerely

**LATE**

**HB-2578-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2018 10:12:34 PM  
Testimony for CPC on 2/21/2018 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michael OLeary	HAPA	Support	No

Comments:

I have been a physician assistant for over ten years. I have worked extensively alongside nurse practitioners during this time and my spouse is also a nurse practitioner. Our roles and responsibilities in the medical field are identical. Our state licensure requirements should be the same as well. I support H.B. 2578 to correct this antiquated inequality.

sincerely,

Michael OLeary



**LATE**

February 21, 2018

Honorable Roy Takumi, Chairman  
Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce  
Hawaii House of Representatives  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 320  
415 South Beretania St.  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: **SUPPORT HB 2578** Regarding Physician Assistant Licensure Renewal Requirements

Dear Chairman Takumi:

The American Academy of PAs (AAPA) is the national professional organization for physician assistants (PAs) representing more than 123,000 PAs practicing across all medical and surgical specialties. In addition, AAPA has an affiliate structure with over 100 PA constituent organizations, which include state chapters, federal service chapters, specialty organizations, caucuses, and special interest groups.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony to the Consumer Protection & Commerce committee in SUPPORT of HB 2578. This legislation allows PAs in Hawaii to renew their license to practice upon the completion of a specified number of continuing education hours. The bill also prohibits the Hawaii Medical Board from requiring PAs to be certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) as a condition of license renewal. **AAPA supports this legislation, and we urge the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce to support it, as well.**

PAs are healthcare professionals who practice and prescribe medication in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the majority of U.S. territories, and the uniformed services. PAs practice in all medical settings and specialties, and the typical PA diagnoses and treats illnesses, orders and interprets diagnostic tests, and develops and manages treatment plans for their patients, among other medical duties. PA graduate educational programs last an average of 27 months or three academic years and award a Master's degree, with PA students completing at least 2,000 hours of clinical rotations in outpatient settings and hospitals prior to graduation. All PAs must take and pass the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE), administered by NCCPA, prior to beginning practice in any state.

PAs who wish to maintain NCCPA certification must pass a recertifying exam every six or ten years. While many PAs choose to maintain their NCCPA certification, only 17 states (including Hawaii) *require* PAs to do so in order to remain licensed. This means PAs in these states are the only healthcare professionals for which their license renewal is tied to the passage of a recertification exam<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> See Table 1

In the majority of states, along with the District of Columbia, PAs must instead complete a specified amount of CME, and decisions related to certification are made at the practice level. This process for renewal is consistent with several peer-reviewed studies which have shown no relationship between taking a recertification exam and better quality of patient care.<sup>2,3,4,5,6</sup> In fact, federal programs, such as Medicare and Medicaid, do not require that PAs maintain certification after passage of the initial certifying exam in order to participate in the programs. The PA profession is supported by substantial documentation of the quality and safety of the care PAs provide.<sup>7</sup>

AAPA strongly feels that requirements for maintenance of certification should not be mandated within state law. The unusual nature of such a requirement is evidenced by the lack of any such requirement for other healthcare providers and the lack of such a requirement in over half of the states.

The license renewal requirements proposed by H.B. 2578 would bring Hawaii's licensure renewal process in line with the majority of states as well as federal programs like Medicare and Medicaid. We urge the Committee to support this good bill.

Sincerely,



Keisha Pitts, JD  
Director, Constituent Organization Outreach & Advocacy

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. (2016) Advanced Practice Registered Nurses, Anesthesiologist Assistants, and Physician Assistants. <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/Medicare-Information-for-APRNs-AAs-PAs-Booklet-ICN-901623.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Scoles, P.V.; Hawkins, R.E.; LaDuca, A. Assessment of Clinical Skills in Medical Practice. *J. Contin Educ Health Prof.* 2003 Summer; 23(3): 182-90.

<sup>4</sup> Epstein R.M. Assessment in medical education. *N Engl J Med.* 2007 Jan 25;356(4): 387-96.

<sup>5</sup> Hayes, J.; Jackson, J.L.; McNutt, G.M.; et al. Association Between Physician Time-Unlimited vs Time-Limited Internal Medicine Board Certification and Ambulatory Patient Care Quality. *JAMA* 2014; 312(22): 2358-2363

<sup>6</sup> Gray, B.M.; Vandergrift, J.L.; Mary M. Johnston, M.M.; et al. Association Between Imposition of a Maintenance of Certification Requirement and Ambulatory Care-Sensitive Hospitalizations and Health Care Costs. *JAMA* 2014; 312(22): 2348-2357.

<sup>7</sup> Articles and Reports on the PA Profession, Selected Topics. [https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Bibliography\\_on\\_the\\_PA\\_Profession-8\\_1\\_17.pdf](https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Bibliography_on_the_PA_Profession-8_1_17.pdf)



**Table 1**

**Overview of Licensing and Certification Requirements for Selected Healthcare Professions**

Only PAs are required by their certifying organization to pass a recertification exam on a periodic basis in order to satisfy state *maintenance of license* requirements.

Profession	License and Maintenance of License Requirements				Certification and Maintenance of Certification Requirements			
	Licensure Exam Required	Residency Required for Initial Licensure	Certification Required for Initial Licensure	Maintenance of License Requirement	Certifying/ Recertifying Organizations	Type of Certification Available	Initial Certification Exam	Recertification Requirements Set by Recertification Organization
PA	Yes	No	Yes	17 states <sup>1</sup> : NCCPA Recertification (Test & CME) 2 states <sup>2</sup> : NCCPA Recertification required for Rx Authority 27 states/DC: CME	NCCPA	General	License Exam	Test & CME
NP	Yes	No	Yes (except CA & NY)	CPD <sup>3</sup> & Practice Hours or CPD & Test (if practice hours not completed)	ANCC AANPCP	Specialty	License Exam	CPD & Practice Hours or CPD & Test (if practice hours not completed)
Pharmacist	Yes	No	No	CE	BPS	Specialty	Specialty Exam	Exam or CPD
Physicians	Yes	1 yr: 32 states 2 yrs: 16 states 3 yrs: 3 states	No	CME	Multiple; Varies by Specialty	Specialty	Varies by Specialty	Varies by specialty; test and/or CME

<sup>1</sup> Only PAs licensed by the NV Osteopathic Board must be recertified by NCCPA in order to maintain their license.

<sup>2</sup> PAs licensed in MN must be recertified by NCCPA in order to retain any prescribing authority; those licensed in OR must be recertified by NCCPA in order to retain their Schedule II prescribing authority.

<sup>3</sup> CPD is Continuing Professional Development, which may consist of continuing education, precepting, speaking, research and writing.

**LATE**

**HB-2578-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 9:24:41 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/21/2018 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Abby Gardner	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

**Dear Members of the House Consumer Protection & Commerce Committee:**

As a PA (physician assistant) practicing in Honolulu, Hawaii, I **urge your SUPPORT for H.B. 2578**. This bill will allow PAs to renew licensure upon the completion of a specified number of continuing medical education (CME) hours, and will prohibit the Hawaii Medical Board from requiring PAs to maintain current certification from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) as a condition of license renewal. This bill is consistent with the renewal process used in 31 states and the District of Columbia and the license renewal requirements for Hawaii physicians.

PAs are healthcare practitioners who receive a graduate-level degree after an approximately 27-month program of study. The typical PA student receives more than 2,000 hours of supervised, hands-on clinical care experience before graduation, and all new PAs must take and pass an initial national certifying exam. The more than 300 PAs in Hawaii diagnose illnesses, develop and manage treatment plans and prescribe medications in every medical setting and specialty.

Only seventeen states (including Hawaii) require PAs to maintain NCCPA certification, which requires passage of a recertification exam every six or ten years, as a condition of license renewal. While preparation for this exam requires PAs to take significant amounts of time away from practice, there is no evidence that requiring maintenance of certification has a positive impact on patient care. While other healthcare practitioners may be subject to their own maintenance of certification requirements, in these 17 states, PAs are the only healthcare profession for which license renewal is tied to the passage of a recertification exam rather than completion of CME.

PAs are known to provide safe, quality healthcare to their patients. The majority of states, as well as federal programs like Medicare and Medicaid, do not require PAs to maintain certification. Instead, the decision to require current certification is left to individual PAs and their employers. I urge Hawaii to do the same by passing H.B. 2578.

Sincerely,

Abby Gardner, PA-C

Honolulu, Hawaii

**LATE**

**HB-2578-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 9:43:06 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/21/2018 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Justin Greges	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Dear Members of the House Consumer Protection & Commerce Committee:**

As a PA (physician assistant) practicing in Honolulu I **urge your SUPPORT for H.B. 2578**. This bill will allow PAs to renew licensure upon the completion of a specified number of continuing medical education (CME) hours, and will prohibit the Hawaii Medical Board from requiring PAs to maintain current certification from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) as a condition of license renewal. This bill is consistent with the renewal process used in 31 states and the District of Columbia and the license renewal requirements for Hawaii physicians.

Only seventeen states (including Hawaii) require PAs to maintain NCCPA certification, which requires passage of a recertification exam every six or ten years, as a condition of license renewal. While preparation for this exam requires PAs to take significant amounts of time away from practice, there is no evidence that requiring maintenance of certification has a positive impact on patient care. While other healthcare practitioners may be subject to their own maintenance of certification requirements, in these 17 states, PAs are the only healthcare profession for which license renewal is tied to the passage of a recertification exam rather than completion of CME.

In addition this measure will allow the facilitation of online license renewal( a paper document from the NCCPA will no longer need to be submitted) making more timely and easier processing by the state PVL office.

PAs are known to provide safe, quality healthcare to their patients. The majority of states, as well as federal programs like Medicare and Medicaid, do not require PAs to maintain third party certification. Instead, the decision to require current certification is left to individual PAs and their employers. I urge Hawaii to do the same by passing H.B. 2578.

Sincerely,

Justin Greges PA-C/Honolulu



Dear Honorable Roy Takumi Chair,  
Consumer Protection Committee,  
House of Representatives,  
Hawaii State Capital, Room 329  
415 South Beretania St.  
Honolulu, Hi 96813

My name is Vincent Tenorio. I am a physician assistant and am writing in support of HB 2578.

Mandating the passage of Panre by the Hawaii Medical Board is detrimental and devastating to the physician assistant practice in Hawaii. This law prohibits and penalizes the PAs who do not pass the Panre exam.

The ability to pass the Panre exam is not indicative of one's ability to practice medicine.

Physician Assistants are the only class of clinical providers required to pass recertification exam to maintain licensure. Currently, AAPA along with other Constituents Organizations in each state, are actively working to remove the laws with this burdensome tether. PA practice in 32 other states are not negatively impacted by the lack of a re-test requirement.

Physicians and nurse practitioners are not mandated to re-test and have effectively proven that the tether testing is irrelevant to providing, safe and competent care and that medical knowledge can be gained effectively through continued medical education.

Invalidation of the license of PAs who do not pass the exam threatens to worsen the state's disparity by putting PAs out of practice. Passage of this bill will also encourage PAs to remain in practice in Hawaii.

I ask that you pass HB 2578. Confiscation of the PA medical license for failing the exam is erroneous, unjust, and a direct threat to the livelihood of PAs and well-being of people in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time,

Vincent Tenorio,  
Physician Assistant

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE

Dea. Honorable Roy Takumi Chair  
Consumer Protection Committee  
House of Representatives  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 329  
415 South Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

My name is Vincent Tenorio, I am a physician assistant and am writing in support of HB 2578.

Mandating the passage of Part by the Hawaii Medical Board is detrimental and devastating to the physician assistant practice in Hawaii. This law prohibits and penalizes the PAs who do not pass the Paros exam.

The ability to pass the Paros exam is not indicative of one's ability to practice medicine.

Physician Assistants are the only class of clinical providers required to pass recertification exam to maintain licensure. Currently, AARA along with other Constituents Organizations in each state, are actively working to remove the laws with this burdensome barrier. PA practice in 48 other states are not negatively impacted by the lack of a re-test requirement.

Physicians and nurse practitioners are not mandated to re-test and have effectively proven that the tether testing is irrelevant to providing safe and competent care and that medical knowledge can be gained effectively through continued medical education.

Invalidation of the license of PAs who do not pass the exam threatens to worsen the state's disparity by putting PAs out of practice. Passage of this bill will also encourage PAs to remain in practice in Hawaii.

As that you pass HB 2578, Confession of the PA medical license for failing the exam is erroneous, unjust, and direct threat to the livelihood of PAs and well-being of people in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time.

Vincent Tenorio  
Physician Assistant

## LATE TESTIMONY

Good morning Chair and members of the Committee,

My name is Santo Di Martino. I am a Physician Assistant of 41 years and am writing in support of HB2578.

It is unjust that PAs can lose their license for failing an exam, a form of penalization not present in other healthcare occupations. Only 18 states require continual recertification exams. PAs ought to take their certifying exam once (upon graduation), and then maintain their certification through CME (Continuing Medical Education) courses.

Using test results as a measure of PA competence is erroneous. Electronic and paper-based evaluations are not indicative of the quality of service and ability of the servicer. The ability to pass an exam is not indicative of one's ability to practice medicine. This is especially true for someone who has been practicing for the greater portion of their life.

Finally, there is a shortage of healthcare practitioners in Hawai'i. Invalidating the licenses of PAs who do not pass the exam threatens to worsen the state's health disparity by putting those PAs out of practice.

I ask you to pass HB2578. Confiscation of PA medical licenses for failing an exam is unjust, erroneous, and is a direct threat to the treatment and well-being of the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you for your time.

**LATE**

**HB-2578-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 12:59:43 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/21/2018 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
marc	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Marc Morifuji, PA-C.

I practice at the Kaiser Moanalua hospital in orthopedics. I am in supprt of HB2578 in regards to Physician Assistants (PA'S). I feel that it would be very helpful, saving time and money if the requirement for recertification exams were no longer required. I work on orthopedics doing fracture care as well as other musculoskeletal disorders and the recertification exam tests on general medicine which does not apply to me and many other PA'S in Hawaii. It would still be required for us to do yearly CME (continuing medical education) and would ensure that PA's were staying up to date on medical topics. Hawaii is one of only 17 states that still require the recertification exam.

Thank you for your time,

Marc Morifuji, PA-C