



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

**Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of SB203
RELATING TO STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH**

REPRESENTATIVE SCOTT Y. NISHIMOTO, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Hearing Date: Wednesday, April 4, 2018, 2:00 p.m.

Room Number: 329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Testimony:** The purpose of the measure is to amend the principal state
3 agencies representatives on the State Council on Mental Health, also known as the
4 Council, to establish itself within the Department of Health (DOH) for administrative
5 purposes, and to redefine quorum. As specified in Section 334-10, Hawaii Revised
6 Statutes, the principal state agencies representatives on the Council are: mental health,
7 education, vocational rehabilitation, criminal justice, housing and social services.

8 Since social services is under the Department of Human Services and represents
9 the Child Welfare Services, which provides the Council with perspectives on systems
10 change for children with mental illness, it is also important to add the Medicaid agency
11 which provides services to many of our adult consumers living with mental illness. The
12 passing of this measure will allow the Council to gain the Medicaid agency's knowledge
13 and expertise on issues and trends that influence the direction in which the mental
14 health field is headed in the State of Hawaii.

1 The re-definition of quorum based on the number of currently appointed
2 members and not based on the number of vacancies will enable the Council to conduct
3 business. For example, in Calendar Year 2017, the Council held seven meetings with
4 quorum. Lack of quorum for five Council meetings means that Council members could
5 not meet to discuss agenda items, including pending legislation.

6 We thank the committee for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong
7 support of this measure on behalf of this body of volunteers, who give their time and
8 effort to advocate and support consumers living with mental illness in our State.

9 **Offered Amendments:** None

SB-203

Submitted on: 4/2/2018 5:21:09 PM

Testimony for JUD on 4/4/2018 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-203

Submitted on: 4/3/2018 11:53:37 PM

Testimony for JUD on 4/4/2018 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sandra A. Simms	Hawaii State Council on Mental Health	Support	No

Comments:

Greetings,

Raising awareness of mental health issues and reducing its stigma is of critical importance to our community. The work of the State Council on Mental Health is an important part of the process. I have had the honor of serving on the Council for more than five years. However, when there are unfilled vacancies on the Council, as there are now and have been for several years, our ability to sustain quorum is severely impacted. This reduces our effectiveness in bringing mental health concerns to the attention of our communities and legislators. Changing the quorum to a majority based on the number of positions occupied will be an important step forward.

Judge Sandra A. Simms (retired)

Member, State Council on Mental Health

LATE

SB-203

Submitted on: 4/4/2018 9:25:05 AM

Testimony for JUD on 4/4/2018 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marie Vorsino	State Council on Mental Health	Support	No

Comments:

Re: SB203

Position: Full support

As the Chair of the State Council on Mental Health, I am in full support of this measure. The bill would define quorum as the majority of the filled positions, rather than the majority of the number of positions on the State Council. This change in the definition would be instrumental in our ability to achieve quorum on a more consistent basis, vote on specific activities related to our strategic plan, and achieve the objectives we have in our strategic plan.

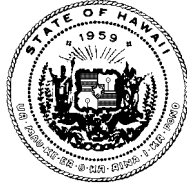
Sincerely,



Dr. Marie Vorsino, LMHC, Psy.D.

Chair, State Council on Mental Health

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



LATE

PANKAJ BHANOT
DIRECTOR

CATHY BETTS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

April 4, 2018

TO: The Honorable Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 202 - RELATING TO SERVICE AREA BOARDS**

SB 203 – RELATING TO STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH

Hearing: Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 325, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports these measures. The proposed measures will facilitate the conducting of meetings, planning, and decision making for service area boards. SB 203 adds a Medicaid representative to the State Council on Mental Health, DHS provides comment that representatives from the Med-QUEST division already participate and attend a number of meetings addressing complex mental health needs of Hawaii's residents.

PURPOSE: The purpose of SB 202 amends statutory provisions relating to quorum and voting requirements for service area boards on mental health and substance abuse. Designates service area boards on mental health and substance abuse within the department of health for administrative purposes.

The purpose of SB 203 amends the membership of the State Council on Mental Health, defines quorum for the Council, and specifies number of votes required to constitute valid acts of the Council. Designates the State Council on Mental Health within the department of health for administrative purposes.

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

LATE

SB 203

Chair Nishimoto and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB 203 and the opportunity it would create in supporting the State Council on Mental Health in consistently conducting meetings, identifying strategic planning issues, addressing various statewide Mental Health concerns and actively engaging community members in collectively improving access to care in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,
Cindi Dang, Psy. D.