

**PRESENTATION OF THE  
BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS**

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE  
Regular Session of 2018

Thursday, March 15, 2018  
10:00 a.m.

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL NO. 2799, S.D. 1, RELATING TO THE  
SUPERVISION OF LICENSED DENTAL HYGIENISTS IN A PUBLIC HEALTH  
SETTING.**

TO THE HONORABLE JOHN M. MIZUNO, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE:

My name is Paul Guevara, D.M.D., M.D.S., and I am the Chairperson of the Board of Dental Examiners ("Board"). Thank you for the opportunity to testify on S.B. 2799, S.D. 1. The Board supports this measure and offers amendments to clarify dental services provided by licensed dental hygienists operating under general supervision in a public health setting.

S.B. 2799, S.D. 1 allows licensed dental hygienists to practice under the general or direct supervision of any licensed dentist providing dental services in a public health setting.

The Board recommends the following amendments to this measure:

On page 1, lines 3-13:

“(d) Notwithstanding subsection 447-1(f), a licensed dental hygienist may operate under the general supervision [as provided in section 447-1(f)] of any licensed dentist providing dental services in a public health setting. As used in this subsection, general supervision means the supervising licensed dentist is available for consultation and shall be responsible for all delegated acts and procedures performed by a licensed dental hygienist.”

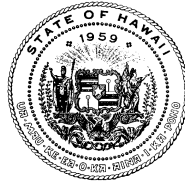
On page 2, lines 7-8:

“ . . . education, dental screenings, teeth cleanings, intra-oral or extra-oral photographs, x-rays if indicated, and fluoride applications . . . ”

On page 2, lines 15-17:

“A licensed dental hygienist shall refer individuals that are seen in a public health setting to a dental facility for further dental care.”

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of S.B. 2799, S.D. 1.



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

**Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 2799 S.D. 1**  
**RELATING TO THE SUPERVISION OF LICENSED DENTAL HYGIENISTS IN A**  
**PUBLIC HEALTH SETTING.**

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN M. MIZUNO, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
Hearing Date: March 15, 2018                      Room Number: 329

1    **Fiscal Implications:** None

2    **Department Testimony:** The Department strongly supports this measure, which is part of the  
3    Governor’s Administrative Package. This bill only amends subsection 447-3(d), Hawaii Revised  
4    Statutes, the general supervision requirements of dental hygienists in a public health setting, not  
5    in other types of settings such as private offices. S.B. 2799 S.D. 1 will support and promote the  
6    expanded access to dental services for the underserved and vulnerable populations in community  
7    settings through community-based programs such as the virtual dental home. Patient safeguards  
8    will still be maintained though the general supervision requirements in a public health setting.

9            Amending the general supervision requirements by dentists for dental hygienists in public  
10    health settings will aid in removing dental practice barriers to providing dental services in public  
11    health settings. Refining “public health setting” and specifically permitting a dental hygienist,  
12    under the general supervision of a dentist, to perform teeth cleanings, x-rays, intra-oral or extra-  
13    oral photographs in public health settings will improve access to dental care.

14            Oral health is a critical component of our general health and well-being. Poor oral health  
15    not only adversely effects a person’s general health, but also impacts a person’s ability to eat,  
16    speak, learn, work and communicate. Hawaii residents have a significantly higher prevalence of  
17    tooth decay than the national average. The “Hawaii Smiles 2015” report confirmed that  
18    Hawaii’s children have the highest prevalence of tooth decay in the United States. There are also

1 significant oral health disparities by income, uninsured status, race/ethnicity, age, disability, and  
2 geography in Hawaii.

3           The Department of Health 2015 “Hawaii Oral Health: Key Findings” report identified  
4 eight strategies to improve oral health, and includes exploring innovative, evidence-based  
5 strategies to expand access to the underserved, high-risk populations including teledentistry.  
6 Furthermore, the “Hawaii Smiles 2015” report identified key strategies to improve the oral health  
7 for children in Hawaii. The strategies are grouped into three general categories: community-  
8 based prevention programs, screening and referral services, and restorative dental care. The  
9 implementation of these key oral health strategies are essential to improving the oral health of  
10 Hawaii residents.

11           Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

March 15, 2018

The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Health and Human Services

Re: SB 2799, SD1 – Relating to the Supervision of Licensed Dental Hygienists in a Public Health Setting

Dear Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Kobayashi, and Committee Members:

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify on SB 2799, SD1, which allows licensed dental hygienists to practice under the general or direct supervision of any licensed dentist providing dental services in a public health setting. HMSA supports the intent of this Bill, to remove barriers to providing dental services to underserved and vulnerable populations in public health settings.

Thank you for allowing us to testify in support of SB 2799, SD1.

Sincerely,

Pono Chong  
Vice-President, Government Relations



March 15, 2018

To: Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair  
Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Health and Human Services

From: Mandy Finlay, Director of Public Policy  
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **SB 2799, SD1 – Relating to the Supervision of Licensed Dental Hygienists in a Public Health Setting**  
**Hawaii State Capitol, Room 329, March 15, 2018, 10:00 AM**

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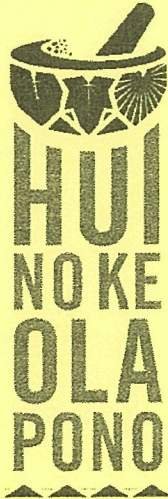
**On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), we are writing to support SB 2799, SD1, which would allow licensed dental hygienists to practice under the general or direct supervision of any licensed dentist providing dental services in a public health setting.**

Hawaii's children have the highest rate of tooth decay in the nation. This is particularly true for children in low-income households who reside in rural areas. These figures underscore the need to expand access to comprehensive dental care services, especially for underserved and vulnerable communities. This measure seeks to improve the dental health of our state's children by allowing dental hygienists to operate under the general supervision of a dentist in public health settings. This means that licensed dental hygienists will be able to perform necessary dental procedures such as teeth-cleanings, x-rays, and examinations in locations such as public schools and public housing. This allows for greater community outreach and breaks down some of the barriers that communities often face in obtaining dental health services. We believe this will expand access to dental services and provide immediate health benefits to our state's children.

**For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests your Committee to support this measure.**

*HCAN is committed to building a unified voice advocating for Hawaii's children by improving their safety, health, and education.*





March 13, 2018

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. John M. Mizuno, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

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SERGEANT-AT-ARMS  
HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES

**Testimony in Support of SB2799, SD1**

**Relating to the Supervision of Licensed Dental Hygienists in a Public Health Setting**

**Thursday, March 15, 2018 10:00 a.m. Conference Room 329**

On behalf of Hui No Ke Ola Pono, Native Hawaiian Health Care System, and me on Maui, we strongly support this bill to allow licensed dental hygienists to practice under the general or direct supervision of any licensed dentist providing dental services in a public health setting. It is vital to amend the general supervision requirements by dentists for dental hygienists in public health settings to reflect the law prior to July 1, 2017, as it will help in removing dental practice barriers to providing dental services in public health settings.

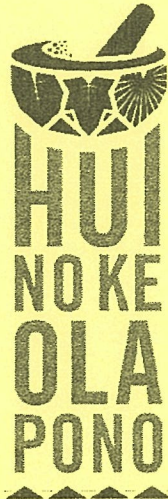
Currently, the Hawaii dental practice act only allows general supervision of a dental hygienist by a licensed dentist in a public health setting if the patient is a patient of record, has an existing treatment plan, and has been examined by a licensed dentist. These general supervision requirements are basically identical for private and public health settings. With the implementation and expansion of teledentistry in the public health setting, this law is proving to be a hindrance in increasing access to care to the underserved populations. Currently, a dental hygienist must first take records (tooth and periodontal charting and photographs) on a patient at a community site and schedule a subsequent appointment to complete the radiographs and prophylaxis cleaning and fluoride application after a dentist has established this patient as a patient of record and included these procedures in a "treatment plan". This decreases the chance that the patient will receive these needed services. Despite the treatment being completed at a community site, variables such as dropping out from the preschool/Headstart program or absences still exist. This method is also much more time-consuming, decreasing the number of individuals that these dental programs can assist.

SB2799 will help in removing dental practice barriers to providing dental services in public health settings. This bill refines the definition of a "public health setting", and specifically permits a dental hygienist under the general supervision

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of a dentist to perform teeth cleanings, x-rays, intra-oral or extra-oral photographs in public health settings. It also requires a dental hygienist to take feasible action to refer individuals that are seen in a public health setting to a dental home. These amendments help in supporting and promoting the expanded access to dental services for the underserved and vulnerable populations in public health settings. This bill will specifically aid us on Maui when Hui No Ke Ola Pono implements their teledentistry program in the upcoming months. We will be providing services at Early Headstart, Headstart, WIC clinics, and Hale Makua on the island of Maui, but already have other sites interested in participating in future years, if this program proves successful.

We strongly encourage the committee to pass this bill and give dental hygienists the confidence that they have to perform in a public health setting.

Sincerely,

Emi Eno Orikasa  
Oral Health Director

*Serving the Native Hawaiians on Maui for 25 years*

95 Mahalani Street, Suite 21, Wailuku, Hawaii 96793 - (808) 244-4647 - [www.hknop.org](http://www.hknop.org)





## Hawaii Dental Association

To: The House Committee on Health & Human Services  
Time/Date: 10:00 a.m., March 15, 2018  
Location: Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 329  
Re: SB 2799 SD1, RELATING TO THE SUPERVISION OF LICENSED DENTAL HYGIENISTS IN A PUBLIC HEALTH SETTING.

Aloha Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Kobayashi and members of the committee! My name is Kim Nguyen and I serve as the executive director of the Hawaii Dental Association, a professional association comprised of approximately 950-member dentists. The Hawaii Dental Association (HDA) is a statewide professional membership organization representing dentists practicing in Hawaii and licensed by the State of Hawaii Board of Dental Examiners. HDA members are committed to protecting the oral health and well-being of all of the people of Hawaii, from keiki to kupuna and everyone in between.

Our understanding of SB 2799 SD1 is that it restores needed flexibility in the public health setting. We support this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Health and Human Services  
Thursday, March 15, 2018; 10:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 329**

**RE: SUPPORTING SENATE BILL NO. 2799, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO THE SUPERVISION OF LICENSED DENTAL HYGIENISTS IN A PUBLIC HEALTH SETTING.**

Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Kobayashi, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill No. 2799, Senate Draft 1, RELATING TO THE SUPERVISION OF LICENSED DENTAL HYGIENISTS IN A PUBLIC HEALTH SETTING.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would clarify the scope of practice of dental hygienists working in a public health setting by:

- (1) Permitting general supervision of dental hygienists (in addition to direct supervision) by a licensed dentist, provided that the licensed dentist is available for consultation;
- (2) Prohibiting the dental hygienist from performing any "irreversible procedure" or administering any intra-oral block anesthesia under general supervision;
- (3) Clarifying that the supervising licensed dentist be responsible for all delegated acts and procedures performed by the licensed dental hygienist;
- (4) Providing that a "public health setting" include a public school, a community center, and a public housing facility;
- (5) Authorizing the licensed dental hygienist in a public health setting to perform teeth cleanings, x-rays, intra-oral or extra-oral photographs, and permitting services to be performed on individuals who are not yet patients of record, have not been examined by a licensed dentist, or do not have a treatment plan.

Furthermore, the bill would direct all licensed dental hygienists to take feasible actions to refer individuals that are seen in a public health setting to a dental home.

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health by creating a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of health, FQHCs experience even greater challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified health care professionals to service the ever-growing volume of patients.

Preventative and restorative dental care is an essential component of effective primary health care. In particular, preventive dentistry emphasizes the importance of ongoing hygiene procedures and daily practices to prevent tooth decay and other dental diseases and conditions. Effective preventive dentistry combines at-home oral care by patients with chairside treatments and counseling by dental professionals.

Oral diseases can interfere with eating, speaking, daily activities and self-esteem. In children, severe decay can affect growth and development. Preventive dentistry can result in less extensive – and less expensive – treatment for any dental conditions that may develop, and help you keep your natural teeth for a lifetime.

In 2015, the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) issued its report entitled, "*Hawaii Oral Health, Key Findings*", in which they reported, among other things, that:

- There appear to be substantial dental health disparities in Hawaii, with low-income residents more likely to have dental problems and less likely to see a dentist each year.
- Hawaii children enrolled in the publicly funded Medicaid program, QUEST, see dentists more often than national estimates. However, Hawaii children receive more dental treatment services rather than preventive care compared to national estimates.
- Most pregnant women in Hawaii do not see a dentist even though national health and dental groups assure that dental visits are safe and recommended to help prevent dental problems in the women and their developing babies.
- Many Hawaii residents are seeking care at hospital emergency departments for dental problems, although dental services are generally not available there.

**Testimony on Senate Bill No. 2799, Senate Draft 1**  
**Thursday, March 15, 2018; 10:00 a.m.**  
**Page 3**

The HPCA commends the DOH for proposing this bill as a practical means of expanding the accessibility of preventative dental care in public health settings. By improving access to preventive dental care for Hawaii's low income populations, the State will be proactively taking steps to improve the overall health of Hawaii's most vulnerable populations.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT** this bill and urge your favorable consideration.

In advance, thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



# HDS

Hawaii Dental Service

March 14, 2018

The Honorable Rep. John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Rep. Betrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair  
Committee on Health and Human Services

**RE: Testimony in Support of SB 2799 - Relating to the Supervision of Licensed Dental Hygienists in a Public Health Setting**

**Hearing: Thursday, March 15, 2018 at 10:00 am**

Aloha Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Kobayashi, and other members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services:

Hawaii Dental Service (HDS), the state's largest dental benefits provider, fully supports this bill which will help to increase access to care to underserved populations by allowing licensed dental hygienists under general supervision of a licensed dentist to provide oral health services efficiently in various public health settings.

Access to oral health care, especially in rural communities remains an ongoing challenge in our state. HDS has invested more than \$630,000 in the Hawaii State Department of Health's effort to explore a new way to serve Hawaii's children and adults through teledentistry programs. I have seen, first hand, how the teledentistry program has the potential to serve many more people in our state who face barriers to visiting a traditional dental office.

Allowing licensed dental hygienists to perform teeth cleanings, x-rays, intra-oral or extra-oral photographs for individuals in a public health setting who are not yet patients of record, have not yet been examined by a licensed dentist, or do not have a treatment plan will help to make the teledentistry program most efficient and sustainable. This measure will also allow dental hygienists to play a key role in expanding care to underserved populations throughout the state.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 2799.

Sincerely,



Mark Yamakawa  
President & Chief Executive Officer

# Petition to Submit Testimony in Support of SB2799,SD1

<p>Petition summary and background:</p>	<p>As Registered Dental Hygienists in the state of Hawaii, we are in SUPPORT of SB2799, SD1. We are asking Legislature to amend the general supervision requirements by dentists for dental hygienists in <b>public health settings</b> to reflect the law prior to July 1, 2017. This will help to remove dental practice barriers that provide dental services in a public health setting and will allow dental hygienists to refer individuals to a dental home. Currently, the Hawaii Dental Practice Act only allows general supervision of a dental hygienist in a private and public health setting to see a patient of record, has an existing treatment plan and has been examined by a licensed dentist.</p>
<p>Action petitioned for:</p>	<p>We, the undersigned, are concerned citizens who urge our leaders to act now to SUPPORT SB2799, SD1. These amendments will help to support and promote expanded access to dental services for the underserved and vulnerable population in a public health setting.</p>

Printed name	Email Address	Comment	Date
Shirley Chun, RDH	<a href="mailto:scpinsky@gmail.com">scpinsky@gmail.com</a>		
Jamie Tengan, RDH	<a href="mailto:jamzan10@gmail.com">jamzan10@gmail.com</a>		
Faye Fox, RDH	<a href="mailto:fnf1464@gmail.com">fnf1464@gmail.com</a>		
Darlee Motosue, RDH	<a href="mailto:dkmotosue@yahoo.com">dkmotosue@yahoo.com</a>		
Audra Dennis, RDH	<a href="mailto:oceanbreeze@gci.net">oceanbreeze@gci.net</a>		
Gaea Tunnissen, RDH	<a href="mailto:gaea.tunnissen@gmail.com">gaea.tunnissen@gmail.com</a>		
Arimxay Varel, RDH	<a href="mailto:aavarel19@gmail.com">aavarel19@gmail.com</a>		
Ariel Ita, RDH	<a href="mailto:ariel1214@yahoo.com">ariel1214@yahoo.com</a>		
Jennifer Shiroma, RDH	<a href="mailto:jshiroma@hawaiifamilydental.com">jshiroma@hawaiifamilydental.com</a>		
Christine Schroeder, RDH	<a href="mailto:dnqtrdh808@gmail.com">dnqtrdh808@gmail.com</a>		
Cynthia Taylor, RDH	<a href="mailto:cynktaylor@gmail.com">cynktaylor@gmail.com</a>		
Chelsea Acob, RDH	<a href="mailto:cjba@hawaii.edu">cjba@hawaii.edu</a>		
Lorie Calma, RDH	<a href="mailto:l0121376@aol.com">l0121376@aol.com</a>		
Linda Kang, RDH	<a href="mailto:lindakan@hawaii.edu">lindakan@hawaii.edu</a>		
Andrea Hetherington, RDH	<a href="mailto:ajh.rdh13@gmail.com">ajh.rdh13@gmail.com</a>		

Printed name	Email Address	Comment	Date
Susan Eladnani, RDH	<a href="mailto:susaneladnani@gmail.com">susaneladnani@gmail.com</a>		
Iris Woolsey, RDH	<a href="mailto:igttwink@hawaii.rr.com">igttwink@hawaii.rr.com</a>		
Crystal Egusa, RDH	<a href="mailto:cegusa@gmail.com">cegusa@gmail.com</a>		
Samantha Fisher, RDH	<a href="mailto:samjfisher@yahoo.com">samjfisher@yahoo.com</a>		
Kim Schneider, RDH	<a href="mailto:kschneider@hawaii.rr.com">kschneider@hawaii.rr.com</a>		
Marilyn Nonaka, RDH	<a href="mailto:texaninhawaii@gmail.com">texaninhawaii@gmail.com</a>		
Stacy Matsuyama, RDH	<a href="mailto:smsekioka@gmail.com">smsekioka@gmail.com</a>		
Tabitha Kukahiko, RDH	<a href="mailto:tabitha4avon@yahoo.com">tabitha4avon@yahoo.com</a>		
Marie Duke, RDH	<a href="mailto:maduke92254@gmail.com">maduke92254@gmail.com</a>		
Rayann Bautista Echavez, RDH	<a href="mailto:ryanrdh@gmail.com">ryanrdh@gmail.com</a>		
Anna Akaka, RDH	<a href="mailto:annaakaka@gmail.com">annaakaka@gmail.com</a>		
Kyoko Tomita, RDH	<a href="mailto:kyotokomrdh@gmail.com">kyotokomrdh@gmail.com</a>		
Candace Kawakami, RDH	<a href="mailto:denniskawakami@hawaii.rr.com">denniskawakami@hawaii.rr.com</a>		
Tori Clegg, RDH	<a href="mailto:tlegg09@gmail.com">tlegg09@gmail.com</a>		
Melorie Yuen, RDH	<a href="mailto:melorieyuen@gmail.com">melorieyuen@gmail.com</a>		
Michelle Estakaya, RDH	<a href="mailto:estamichelle@gmail.com">estamichelle@gmail.com</a>		
Donna Christman, RDH	<a href="mailto:dchristman76@gmail.com">dchristman76@gmail.com</a>		
Tracy Furukawa, RDH	<a href="mailto:alanandracy@hawaiiantel.net">alanandracy@hawaiiantel.net</a>		
Caroline Kanno, RDH	<a href="mailto:smile@hawaiidentaltemp.com">smile@hawaiidentaltemp.com</a>		
Chanda Park, RDH	<a href="mailto:chandapark@gmail.com">chandapark@gmail.com</a>		
Maile Mokulehua, RDH	<a href="mailto:41dash@gmail.com">41dash@gmail.com</a>		
Jan Migita, RDH	<a href="mailto:migitajans@gmail.com">migitajans@gmail.com</a>		
Steffany Giammalvo, RDH	<a href="mailto:steffgiammalvo@gmail.com">steffgiammalvo@gmail.com</a>		
Mavis Gushiken, RDH	<a href="mailto:mavisg808@hawaii.rr.com">mavisg808@hawaii.rr.com</a>		
Shori Patten, RDH	<a href="mailto:shori21@aol.com">shori21@aol.com</a>		
Jackie Sawai, RDH	<a href="mailto:jackiesawai@gmail.com">jackiesawai@gmail.com</a>		
Valerie Zukeran, RDH	<a href="mailto:theheartofbusiness@gmail.com">theheartofbusiness@gmail.com</a>		
Stacie Okihara, RDH	<a href="mailto:skye_lar@hotmail.com">skye_lar@hotmail.com</a>		
Jaimie Yuen, RDH	<a href="mailto:jyuen001@hawaii.rr.com">jyuen001@hawaii.rr.com</a>		
Sandy Bangert, RDH	<a href="mailto:skirkoski@icloud.com">skirkoski@icloud.com</a>		
Natasha Fong, RDH	<a href="mailto:fongn@hawaii.edu">fongn@hawaii.edu</a>		
Gerraine Hignite, RDH	<a href="mailto:gerrainehignite@gmail.com">gerrainehignite@gmail.com</a>		

Printed name	Email Address	Comment	Date
Kimi Yagi, RDH	<a href="mailto:kannyagi@gmail.com">kannyagi@gmail.com</a>		
Jessica Busby, RDH	<a href="mailto:jessica_mowder@hotmail.com">jessica_mowder@hotmail.com</a>		
Samantha Boroff, RDH	<a href="mailto:boroff.212@osu.edu">boroff.212@osu.edu</a>		
Alaina Pacheco, RDH	<a href="mailto:amprdh555@gmail.com">amprdh555@gmail.com</a>		
Emeraude Thai, RDH	<a href="mailto:amythai@msn.com">amythai@msn.com</a>		
Audra Nakamatsu, RDH	<a href="mailto:anakamatsu@hotmail.com">anakamatsu@hotmail.com</a>		
Nahoku Keala, RDH	<a href="mailto:nahokukeala@gmail.com">nahokukeala@gmail.com</a>		
Beverly Duyan, RDH	<a href="mailto:bslduyan@gmail.com">bslduyan@gmail.com</a>		
Carly Takara, RDH	<a href="mailto:cftakara@gmail.com">cftakara@gmail.com</a>		
Gayle Chang, RDH	<a href="mailto:gchang50@gmail.com">gchang50@gmail.com</a>		
Nicole Pikini, RDH	<a href="mailto:nicole.pikini64@gmail.com">nicole.pikini64@gmail.com</a>		
Mikiel Lina Agoy, RDH	<a href="mailto:m.linardh@gmail.com">m.linardh@gmail.com</a>		
Allie Jefferies, RDH	<a href="mailto:alliejefferiesrdh@gmail.com">alliejefferiesrdh@gmail.com</a>		
Carolyn Nacapuy, RDH	<a href="mailto:battulayan@yahoo.com">battulayan@yahoo.com</a>		
Elsie Santos, RDH	<a href="mailto:nontoxic808@gmail.com">nontoxic808@gmail.com</a>		
Janice Blaser, RDH	<a href="mailto:alohajuice@hotmail.com">alohajuice@hotmail.com</a>		
Jennifer Fajardo, RDH	<a href="mailto:healthysmile@yahoo.com">healthysmile@yahoo.com</a>		
Erica Tabalba, RDH	<a href="mailto:etabalba@gmail.com">etabalba@gmail.com</a>		
Nicole Florendo-Serai, RDH	<a href="mailto:localgirl521@yahoo.com">localgirl521@yahoo.com</a>		
Gail Pang, RDH	<a href="mailto:batsnookums@yahoo.com">batsnookums@yahoo.com</a>		
Deb Mapel, RDH	<a href="mailto:dmapel@hawaii.edu">dmapel@hawaii.edu</a>		
Karen Nagamine, RDH	<a href="mailto:cn1cn2605@yahoo.com">cn1cn2605@yahoo.com</a>		
Amy Tsubota-Cruz, RDH	<a href="mailto:aimsstsu@gmail.com">aimsstsu@gmail.com</a>		
Shirley Li, RDH	<a href="mailto:sara_li88@ymail.com">sara_li88@ymail.com</a>		
Brenda Yospe, RDH	<a href="mailto:byospe@hotmail.com">byospe@hotmail.com</a>		
Megumi Kodama, RDH	<a href="mailto:megu2_4@hotmail.com">megu2_4@hotmail.com</a>		
Yvette Like, RDH	<a href="mailto:kaiulani67@yahoo.com">kaiulani67@yahoo.com</a>		
Mie Choe, RDH	<a href="mailto:mrainbow0220@gmail.com">mrainbow0220@gmail.com</a>		
Diane Clements, RDH	<a href="mailto:clements002@hawaii.rr.com">clements002@hawaii.rr.com</a>		
Theresa Brown, RDH	<a href="mailto:terri4brown@aol.com">terri4brown@aol.com</a>		
Sarah Kolar, RDH	<a href="mailto:skolar.rdh@gmail.com">skolar.rdh@gmail.com</a>		
Michelle Baniaga, RDH	<a href="mailto:michellehullrdh@hotmail.com">michellehullrdh@hotmail.com</a>		







Printed name	Email Address	Comment	Date

**SB-2799-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/14/2018 8:30:13 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Diana Shaw	Lanai Community Health Center	Support	No

Comments:



March 13, 2018

House Committee on Health and Human Services

SUPPORT of **SB 2799, SD1**

Ellie Kelley-Miyashiro, RDH, BS

Hawaii Dental Hygienists' Association, Regulations and Practice Chairperson

Chairperson Chairperson Mizuno, Vice Chair Kobayashi and Committee Members:

The Hawaii Dental Hygienists' Association (HDHA) fully **supports SB 2799, SD1**. We would like to congratulate you on your leadership in clarifying the scope of practice afforded Dental Hygienists under general supervision in Public Health settings. Having one of the worst dental decay rates in the nation, Hawaii's underserved adults and children can only benefit from legislation allowing them the greatest access to care.

- Currently, the Hawaii dental practice act only allows general supervision of a patient of record, has an existing treatment plan, and has been examined by a licensed dentist. The general supervision requirements are basically identical for private and public health settings.
- By amending the general supervision requirements by dentists for dental hygienists in public health settings to reflect the law prior to July 1, 2017, it will help in removing dental practice barriers to providing dental services in public health settings.
- This bill also refines the definition of a "public health setting", and specifically permits a dental hygienist under the general supervision of a dentist to perform teeth cleanings, x-rays, intraoral or extra-oral photographs in public health settings. It also requires a dental hygienist to take feasible action to refer individuals that are seen in a public health setting to a dental home. These amendments help in supporting and promoting the expanded access to dental services for the underserved and vulnerable populations in public health settings.

As the largest association representing Hawaii's licensed dental hygienists', HDHA **strongly supports SB 2799, SD1** to address the prevention of dental disease among Hawaii's people in Public Health settings.

Thank you for your consideration.

**SB-2799-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/13/2018 1:50:45 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

To: The Committee on Health and Human Services, Rep. John M. Mizuno, Chair, Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair, and the Consumer Protection and Health

Re: SB2799 scheduled for a hearing on Thursday (03/15/18) at 10:00 am.

RELATING TO THE SUPERVISION OF LICENSED DENTAL HYGIENISTS IN A PUBLIC HEALTH SETTING. Allows licensed dental hygienists to practice under the general or direct supervision of any licensed dentist providing dental services in a public health setting.

From: Nicole Pikini Registered Public Health Dental Hygienist at Malama I Ke Ola Community Health Center on the island of Maui

I am in full support for the SB2799 bill. I believe that Amending the general supervision requirements by dentists for dental hygienists in public health settings will aid in removing dental practice barriers to providing dental services in public health settings. Refining "public health setting" and specifically permitting a dental hygienist, under the general supervision of a dentist, to perform teeth cleanings, x-rays, intra-oral or extra oral photographs in public health settings will improve access to dental care.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Sincerely,

Nicole Pikini RDH, BS

**SB-2799-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/14/2018 8:52:21 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities Committee, Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2799-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/14/2018 8:52:58 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Tercia L. Ku	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



**SB-2799-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/14/2018 9:48:38 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Becky Tyksinski	The Arc in Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

The Arc in Hawaii strongly supports passage of SB2799 SD1.

**SB-2799-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/14/2018 12:17:36 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michele Ku	Arc of Kona	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2799-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/14/2018 10:08:36 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Anthony S. Kim, DMD	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB2799

Aloha Legislators,

I am writing in support of SB2799.

In my years here at Waimanalo Health Center, I have had the honor of providing care to an amazing community. This bill would help build health care and oral disease prevention infrastructure for Hawaii.

With the loss of the State Dental Hygiene program in 2009, we have not recovered and have much work to accomplish in educating and treating dental disease. By allowing qualified dental hygienists to expand the impact of preventive care, we are improving the safety net for keiki around the State of Hawaii.

Please support SB2799.

Mahalo,

Anthony S. Kim, DMD

**SB-2799-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/14/2018 12:32:37 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Susan Oshiro-Taogoshi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 2799 SD1 which improves access to dental care by providing care in public health settings.

The mouth is a window into one's overall health. Dental hygiene and health are directly linked to other areas of the body and like other chronic diseases, prevention and early detection is vital and the reason why good dental health coverage is key.

Dental care could mean teeth cleaning twice per year or thousands of dollars for dental procedures trying to fix dental decay and infection.

I strongly support SB 2799 SD1 and respectfully ask your support as well.

Sincerely,

Susan Oshiro-Taogoshi

Date: March 13, 2018

To: The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair  
Committee on Health & Human Services

Date/Time: Thursday, March 15, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

Location: Conference Room 329  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

Re: Support of SB 2799 SD1, Relating to the Supervision of Licensed Dental Hygienists in a Public Health Setting

Aloha Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Kobayashi, and Members of the Committee on Health & Human Services:

My name is Kristine Osada, and I serve as the Department Chair of Dental Hygiene at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene. I strongly support SB2799, SD1 which allows licensed dental hygienists to practice under general and direct supervision of any licensed dentists providing dental services in a public health setting.

School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene at the University of Hawaii at Manoa received a 5-year grant to increase the dental health workforce to serve children 0-5 years of age in underserved and vulnerable areas. We are currently working with many agencies who have already submitted testimony for SB2799 and are collaborating to ensure that our children have the appropriate oral health care, as we have the highest rate of decay in the nation.

This bill allows licensed dental hygienists to practice under general and direct supervision of any licensed dentist providing dental services in a public health setting which will increase and expand access to care and allow the licensed dental hygienists to perform teeth cleaning, x-rays, intra-oral or extra-oral radiographs, fluoride application, dental screenings and dental education.

I strongly support SB2799 SD1 and this testimony does not represent the position of the University of Hawaii.



**LATE**

Date: March 15, 2018

To: The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

From: Trish La Chica, Policy and Advocacy Director, Hawai'i Public Health Institute

Re: **Support for SB 2799 SD1, Relating to the Supervision of Licensed Dental Hygienists in a Public Health Setting**

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00 am at Capitol Room 329

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Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of SB 2799, which would allow licensed dental hygienists to practice under the general or direct supervision in a public health setting.

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.

Oral health in our state is a public health crisis, with Hawaii receiving a failing grade of "F" in three recent oral health report card released by The Pew Center for the States. In addition the lack of Medicaid adult dental benefits has resulted in many low-income adults only seeking dental care for acute conditions that have been allowed to reach a crisis stage. Expanding public health settings to public schools, community centers, and public housing in which dental hygienists can provide care would help to address this crisis. In addition, a 2015 Department of Health report entitled Hawaii Oral Health: Key Findings revealed that:

- Only 52% of low-income adults in Hawai'i saw a dentist, compared to 82% of high-income adults.
- 51% of low-income adults lost teeth due to dental disease, compared to only 32% of high-income adults.
- In 2012, there were more than 3,000 emergency room visits due to preventable dental problems, 67% more than in 2006. As a result, aggregate hospital charges for dental emergency visits were \$8,500,000 compared to \$4,000,000 in 2006.

The goal of public health is to improve and protect the health of individuals, families, and communities. It looks at the health of a population as a whole rather than on the treatment of an individual. Barriers to oral health care include limited income and/or no dental insurance, transportation issues, and the

lack of specialty services especially in neighbor islands. In addition, special patient populations, such as those with developmental and physical disabilities and older adults who are homebound, may face additional obstacles when seeking oral health care. Allowing dental hygienists to work in various community settings beyond the dentist's office can begin to address these disparities and improve access to oral health care.

SB 2799 expands the settings in which dental hygienists are allowed to practice allowing more people to receive the oral health care services they need. Please pass this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trish', written in a cursive style.

Trish La Chica, MPA  
Policy and Advocacy Director