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**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 23, 2017

TO: The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2 SD 1- RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: February 23 2017, 9:35 a.m.
Conference Room 211, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of the bill and offers comments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of measure SB 2 SD 1 is to require the auditor to conduct a study to assess the impact of using Medicaid funds to provide coverage for the treatment for homelessness.

DHS recognizes and appreciates that there is an integral link between health and housing, especially for individuals who are chronically homeless. Without housing, individuals struggle to address their health conditions; and without addressing their health challenges, people struggle to obtain and retain housing. We also recognize the need for transformative approaches to providing and paying for services to address Medicaid.

For the past nine months, DHS Med-QUEST (MQD) actively engaged with various key Departments, community social service providers, health plans and community advocates for mental health and substance use recovery services on the expansion of "tenancy supports" or "permanent supported housing" benefits for chronically homeless individuals. These supportive services include behavioral health and case management services. Having the auditor conduct a study to assess the impact of using Medicaid funds to provide coverage for the "treatment of

homelessness” would allow an informed discussion of this concept. DHS will be happy to collaborate and assist the auditor however we are able.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on these measures.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
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February 23, 2017

TO: The Honorable Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Scott Morishige, MSW, Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness

SUBJECT: SB 2 SD1 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

Hearing: Thursday, February 23, 2017, 9:35 a.m.
Conference Room 211, State Capitol

POSITION: The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness appreciates the intent of this measure and offers the following comments.

The Coordinator recognizes the strong intersection between healthcare and homelessness, and notes that the Department of Human Services (DHS) Med-QUEST Division is pursuing an amendment to its 1115 Medicaid waiver, which would expand eligibility for case management and supportive services for Medicaid-eligible individuals that are identified as chronically homeless.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to require the State Auditor to conduct a study to assess the impact of using Medicaid funds to provide coverage for the treatment of homelessness.

The Coordinator notes that section 23-51, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), requires that, before any legislative measure that mandates health insurance coverage for specific health services can be considered, the Legislature shall pass a concurrent resolution requesting the State Auditor to prepare and submit a report assessing the social and financial effects of the proposed mandated coverage. As a result, even if this bill moves forward, it may still be necessary for the Legislature to pass a concurrent resolution so that the proposed coverage for treatment of homelessness can be considered.


The Coordinator defers to DHS in regard to issues related to health care services provided through MQD health plans, as well as contracting and implementation of homeless services. While the Coordinator establishes and coordinates State policy to address homelessness, the DHS Homeless Programs Office is responsible for the administration and implementation of homeless programs, and the Med-QUEST division leads Medicaid programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

To: The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair
Members, Committee on Ways and Means

From:  Paula Yoshioka, Senior Vice President, The Queen's Health Systems

Date: February 21, 2017

Hrg: Senate Committee on Ways and Means Hearing; Thursday, February 23, 2017 at 9:35AM
in Room 211

Re: **Support for SB 2, SD1, Relating to Homelessness**

My name is Paula Yoshioka, and I am a Senior Vice President at The Queen's Health Systems (QHS). QHS would like to express our **support** for SB 2, SD1, Relating to Homelessness. This bill requires that the Auditor conduct a study to assess the impact of using Medicaid funds to provide coverage for the treatment of homelessness, including the costs to provide coverage for the chronically homeless population in the State.

At QHS we are committed to providing care for Hawaii's most underserved. Quality health care and preventive services go a long way to mitigating the demand for high cost medical services down the road. The costs to the entire continuum of care—from hospitals to long-term care facilities to home-based services—of treating the homeless population are large and growing.

QHS shoulders majority of the burden of care for Hawaii's homeless population experiencing a net loss of \$10.6 million in FY15 providing unfunded and underfunded care for homeless patients. The Hawaii Health Information Corporation (HHIC) reports that QHS hospitals provided 64 percent of the care for homeless individuals seeking treatment with 10,459 total encounters as opposed to 5,381 encounters at all other facilities in FY15. Over 90 percent of the care QHS provided occurred in the emergency room setting.

We commend the legislature for introducing this measure and urge you to support it. Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

The mission of The Queen's Health Systems is to fulfill the intent of Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV to provide in perpetuity quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i.

SB2

Submitted on: 2/23/2017

Testimony for WAM on Feb 23, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kimo K. Carvalho	IHS, The Institute for Human Services	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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SB2

Submitted on: 2/22/2017

Testimony for WAM on Feb 23, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kristen Koba-Burd	Hawaii Association for Behavior Analysis	Support	No

Comments:

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To: The Honorable Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair Senate Committee on Commerce,
Consumer Protection, and Health.
The Honorable Senator Josh Green, Chair Senate Committee on Human Services

Subject: RE: SB2SDI

My name is Liz Brown and I am student at the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Worker at the University of Hawaii. I support this bill. When a homeless person goes to the ER and does not have medical coverage the ensuing costs end up affecting society as a whole. It makes sense to insure our most vulnerable populations in getting the medical attention they need. Health insurance would minimize the cost of Emergency rooms visits and the burden of cost to the hospitals.

Mahalo,

Liz Brown, Social Worker Graduate Student

SB2

Submitted on: 2/22/2017

Testimony for WAM on Feb 23, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Paul Normann	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Housing homeless individuals and families is the most effective way to improve their health and well being. Housed individuals are more likely to successfully get regular mental and physical health care, take medication regularly, participate in substance abuse treatment, and learn the essential life skills to be a productive member of society.

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SB2

Submitted on: 2/22/2017

Testimony for WAM on Feb 23, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathleen Penland	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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