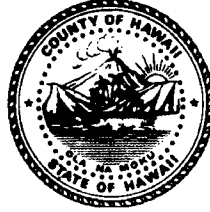




Harry Kim
Mayor



Wil Okabe
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

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February 19, 2019

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members:

RE: SB 526, SD1 Relating to Human Services

There are so many good bills for your consideration dealing with the homeless that I am hesitant to weigh in on any one in particular. I know that the needs are great and resources limited.

Nevertheless, I thought I would offer a comment on SB 526, SD1, although I would ask that you not interpret a lack of testimony on other measures as a sign of indifference or lack of support.

I am in favor of SB 526, SD1, as well as any other initiative that can have a positive impact on the homeless population, make their lives a bit easier, and move them toward conventional shelter.

As a neighbor island Mayor, I appreciate the recognition that homelessness is a statewide problem, and I am pleased that one of the two mobile clinics has been earmarked for an ohana zone on an island other than O'ahu. (It is my understanding that the Executive Committee of the Community Alliance Partners (CAP) is endorsing this bill and making a similar request.) Whether that earmark should be specifically for Hawai'i County, or more generally for any neighbor island, I leave to your judgment, although we appreciate being singled out and pledge to make good use of the clinic if we are fortunate enough to receive it.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Kim
MAYOR

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



PANKAJ BHANOT
DIRECTOR

CATHY BETTS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

February 19, 2019

TO: The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 526 SD1 – RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES**

Hearing: February 20, 2019, 10:05 a.m.
Conference Room 211, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this bill and amendments made by the Committee on Human Services, and offers comments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this measure is to appropriate funds for DHS to purchase, staff, and operate two mobile clinics to serve the homeless persons residing in 'Ohana zones. Requires matching funds.

DHS acknowledges that homeless individuals may experience high disease burdens and mortality rates. Consequently, homeless individuals are more likely to be frequent users of emergency medical services.

A report from the National Health Care for the Homeless Council spotlighted the homeless mobile clinics in the Dallas community. It described having four mobile clinics and one mobile dental clinic at twenty-eight mobile clinic locations in Dallas County and two fixed sites that operate Monday through Friday. The populations hardest to reach at the fixed sites are those with mental illness and active drug users. The mobile clinic in Dallas partners with mental health and drug treatment agencies and brings the mobile clinics to the sites where

homeless population are congregating. See <https://www.nhchc.org/2017/08/hch-day-spotlight-health-care-for-the-homeless-mobile-clinics-bring-value-to-dallas-community/>

DHS Homeless Programs Office (HPO) currently contracts homeless outreach services with providers statewide. Outreach services may include housing identification, linkages to supportive services, assistance with public benefits, and referrals to healthcare. This bill will complement additional services needed in both continua of care on Oahu and neighbor islands. Furthermore, diverting frequent users of the emergency medical services may result in some savings after evaluation of the cost of a mobile clinic.

With regard to an appropriation for services provided by health care professionals, DHS HPO does not currently procure for professional medical services, and defers to the Department of Health if the intent is to compensate health care professionals with general funds. However, if health care professionals were enrolled as Medicaid providers of one or more of the QUEST Integration (QI) plans, it would be possible for them to bill the individual's QI plans for allowed health care services delivered at the mobile clinic.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony of this bill.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

February 20, 2019

TO: The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

SUBJECT: **SB 526 SD1 – RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES**

Hearing: Wednesday, February 20, 2019, 10:05 a.m.
Conference Room 211, State Capitol

POSITION: The Governor's Coordinator appreciates the intent of this measure, and respectfully offers comments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds for the Department of Human Services (DHS) to purchase, staff, and operate two mobile clinics to serve homeless individuals, provided that one of the mobile clinics is allocated to the County of Hawaii. The bill requires that matching funds must be provided on a dollar-for-dollar basis for the mobile clinic program.

The Coordinator acknowledges the critical intersection between healthcare and homelessness and recognizes the impact that increasing access to treatment for homeless individuals has in improving the overall health of the individual and reducing healthcare costs. For example, an analysis by the University of Hawaii Center on the Family, based upon reports of 107 Housing First clients participating in the Hawaii Pathways Project, found an estimated healthcare cost savings of \$6,197 per client per month for clients that were housed. (see Hawaii Pathways Project Final Report, 2018, University of Hawaii Center on the Family.¹)

Within the past year, a number of additional programs have been implemented that aim to improve health conditions and reduce healthcare costs for homeless individuals. These new programs include DHS emergency department assessment and medical respite pilot programs

¹ See full report at: http://uhfamily.hawaii.edu/publications/brochures/bb9f9_Hawaii_Pathways_Final_Report.pdf

with Queen's Medical Center, the recently approved 1115 Medicaid waiver amendment to provide tenancy supports for chronically homeless individuals and individuals at risk of homelessness, and the Honolulu Police Department's Chinatown Joint Outreach Center that co-locates medical urgent care and homeless outreach services.

In addition, the John A. Burns School of Medicine's Homeless Outreach and Medical Education (H.O.M.E.) project currently provides mobile medical services at several shelters on Oahu, as well as in areas near established homeless encampments. As there appears to be overlap between current initiatives and the mobile clinics established by this bill, the Coordinator respectfully requests that the bill offer support for current efforts underway.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

SB-526-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2019 10:05:27 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/20/2019 10:05:00 AM

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

Comments:



Hawai'i Psychological Association

For a Healthy Hawai'i

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Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S. C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of SB526 SD1 with Amendment

Wednesday, February 20, 2019, 10:05 a.m., Conference Room 211

The Hawai'i Psychological Association (HPA) supports a modified version of SB 526 SD1, which appropriates funds for establishing, staffing, and operating two mobile clinics to serve the homeless population.

HPA strongly recommends inclusion of a clinical psychologist in the mobile clinic minimum staffing requirements. The homeless population suffers from extremely high rates of mental illness and a more comprehensive approach to their care is required. There is a strong body of scientific evidence that clearly demonstrates that psychotherapy along with medication is more effective than pharmaceutical intervention alone. The combination results in a faster, more complete and enduring response to treatment. Given the critical shortage of psychiatrists in the State of Hawai'i, it may be difficult to recruit a psychiatrist for these mobile clinic positions and even if a psychiatrist is identified, it is unlikely that provider will have the time to provide more than medication management. Including a clinical psychologist on the team will allow for the provision of psychotherapy and will result in more effective treatment.

In addition, if at some point psychologists are authorized to prescribe, the Department of Human Services will be able to select from a larger pool of available providers, with the advantage that prescribing psychologists will be able to offer the full-range of behavioral health services (psychotherapy *and* medication).

Including a clinical psychologist as a required member of the mobile staff will significantly improve treatment outcome and success. We request the following amendment to Section 2(a)(3) (page 3, lines 7-11):

“The staff may include one primary care provider, one nurse, one pharmacist, one psychiatrist, one clinical psychologist, and other staff as needed, including a social worker, an outreach worker, and students pursuing a degree in medicine, behavioral health, or nursing: and”

We support the bill with this recommended modification.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Takishima-Lacasa, PhD
Chair, HPA Legislative Action Committee

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ASHLEY L. KIERKIEWICZ

HAWAII COUNTY COUNCIL – DISTRICT 4

Chair: Committee on Planning, and Committee on Government Relations & Economic Development
25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

February 17, 2019

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair

**RE: Support for SB526, SD1
relating to Mobile Clinics**

Aloha, Senators:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB526, SD1 which would allocate resources for mobile healthcare and social services outreach to those experiencing homelessness.

I am appreciative that this measure calls for allocating one of two mobile clinics to Hawai'i Island. Reaching these individuals where they're at is critical as they often have barriers to transportation, and lack of access to care puts a heavy strain on emergency room services.

I humbly ask this body consider appropriating funds to existing mobile health outreach clinics and programs, in lieu of or as a supplement to building new mobile systems, so critical services can be deployed immediately and in a cost effective way.

Mahalo nui loa,

Ashley Lehualani Kierkiewicz
Hawai'i County Council, District 4

LATE

SB-526-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2019 12:22:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/20/2019 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stefani jeremiah	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

To: Hawai'i State Senate, Committee on Ways and Means
Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Hearing: Wednesday, February 20, 2019
10:05am
Conference Room 211
State Capital
415 South Beretania Street

From Carlton A.-A. Ruley

RE: In support of S.B. NO. 526, SD 1-Relating to Human Services

My name is Carlton A.-A. Ruley, and thank you for taking the time to review my testimony in support of S.B. NO. 526, SD 1. I am currently a graduate social work student in my final year at the University Of Hawai'i Myron B. Thompson School Of Social Work. My current internship placement is with the Hawai'i County Office of the Prosecuting Attorney. My testimony does not represent the Prosecutors Office in any way though my experiences and the knowledge gained while here have shaped my opinions concerning SB 526.

I would like to submit my testimony in support of Senate Bill 526 and its goal of establishing, running and maintaining two mobile clinics. The targeted population for these mobile clinics would be the homeless persons and at least one of these mobile units would be for residents of Hawai'i County.

As we all know homelessness is one of the most challenging social issues confronting the state of Hawai'i and or nation as a whole. According to a report from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Hawai'i was tied with New York for the highest per capita rate of homelessness in 2018. For reference, New York State's population was 19.4 million compared to Hawai'i's which was 1.43 million. And although, as reported in the 2018 Point-in Time count that the homeless population in the State Hawai'i has decreased by 9.6% in comparison to 2017, healthcare for the homeless is still an issue.

As a past provider of services to the severely mentally ill population, who in a majority instances are homeless or were at some point homeless, I understand the complexities that occur when dealing with a population that has no permanent residence. Providing follow up support services, be it mental or physical health, is next to impossible when:

- a) you do not know if your client will be able to come to a facility for their appointment, and
- b) the public transportation system is not reliable
- c) you do not where clients are
- d) and they are constantly mobile due to homeless camp "sweeps" conducted state and county officials.

During my internship with the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney I have had the opportunity to sit in on court proceeding. Many defendants are from the homeless population and suffer from both physical and mental ailments. Requiring services, in lieu of criminal penalties is

common. Delivering those services to persons without a permanent residence is extremely challenging. Releasing individuals, with orders to get services is common, but due to homeless people not having permanent address this option does not apply this population. They instead are held in custody until they get the appropriate services in custody.

The proposed services to be offered via the mobile units would be a great help to the state's and specifically to Hawai'i County's homeless population. In particular the following services noted in SB526 are in immediate need in Hawaii County:

- a) Non-emergency medical services;
- b) Behavioral health and substance abuse services;
- c) Mental health services;
- d) Pharmacy services;
- e) Health insurance enrollment;
- f) And referral services

The above services along the associated professionals they employ (physicians, nurses, pharmacist, psychiatrists, social workers, outreach workers, and students trainees/ interns) would be a welcomed relief on a strained system. Having a mobile unit that can go out into the community to reach a population with limited access to transportation would be a monumental gain for the Hawai'i island community.

Homeless people who are sick of suffering from mental illnesses tend to utilize emergency room services that are more expensive than receiving care from primary care facilities. Many homeless persons receiving services at hospital never pay for the services charged, leading to increased costs to cover those losses. Having non-emergent services available in the mobile units will save money to all consumers of health care services.

As a social worker to be I am charged with advocating for the underserved and vulnerable. The homeless population is often one of the most vulnerable populations and is often overlooked. As a social worker that plans his future career to focus on the mentally ill adult population, the intersection of homelessness and healthcare are of particular importance. My support of SB 526, is rooted in my desire to assess, and respond to the needs of this population. Due to the fact that some consumers of the services offered by Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD) are homeless, it is only logical that I support legislation that will increase services to this often ignored and unprotected population.

My hope is that these mobile clinics are successful and spawn more of the same services for other vulnerable populations. I enthusiastically encourage the members of the Ways and Means Committee to support the passage of SB 526.

With much respect and Aloha,

Carlton A.-A. Ruley

