



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
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By
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and
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GM 606 – SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE HAWAII MEDICAL EDUCATION COUNCIL, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, JOSEPH STERBIS, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 06-30-2023.

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of GM 607 which seeks consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Medical Education Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, Joseph Sterbis, for a term to expire 06-30-2023.

Dr. Joseph Sterbis is currently the director for Medical Education at Tripler Army Medical Center (TAMC). In this role, he oversees all graduate medical education (GME) programs as well as our JABSOM students and residents who do rotations at Tripler. Tripler is one of our critical Federal partners to help address the workforce issues in Hawai'i. Although the trainees generally have military commitments, a significant percentage of these trainees return to Hawai'i to practice. After retiring from military service, many stay and join the JABSOM faculty. Dr. Sterbis' leadership experiences, passion for teaching and commitment to serve the peoples of Hawai'i and the Pacific will make him a valuable asset for the Council. Dr. Sterbis represents a "different hospital at which accredited graduate medical education programs are conducted", as required by HMEC charter.

Dr. Sterbis obtained his MD degree at Northwestern University of Medical School in 2002, completed his internship and residency at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in 2008, as well as a fellowship in Urologic Oncology at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in 2009. He specializes in urologic oncology and minimally invasive surgery. Dr. Sterbis previously served as the Program Director for the TAMC Urology program and also the Transitional Year program. He is also active at the National level for several areas related to medical education. Dr. Sterbis is an accomplished academician and a recognized leader in medical education.

The University of Hawai'i System (UH) and its John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) administer two (2) statutes related to graduate medical education (GME) and addressing the severe physician shortage needs in Hawai'i.

- [HRS § 304A-1702] – Graduate Medical Education (GME) Program, was established to formally encompass the administration of UH JABSOM's institutional graduate medical education (GME) program.
- [HRS §§304A-1703, 1704, 1705] – Medical Education Council, was created within UH JABSOM and called "The Hawai'i Medical Education Council" (HMEC). HMEC was given the administrative duties and powers to:
 - (1) Analyze the State healthcare workforce for the present and future, focusing in particular on the State's need for physicians;
 - (2) Assess the State's healthcare training programs, focusing on UH JABSOM's institutional GME enterprise to determine its ability to meet the workforce needs identified by HMEC;
 - (3) Recommend to the Legislature and UH Board of Regents (BOR) ways in which identified GME and other healthcare training programs can improve and change in order to effectively meet the HMEC assessment;
 - (4) Work with other entities and state agencies, and in consultation with the Legislature and BOR, develop and implement a Plan to ensure the adequate funding of healthcare training programs in the State, with an emphasis on UH JABSOM GME programs;
 - (5) Seek funding to implement the funding Plan from all public (county, state and federal government) and private sources;
 - (6) Monitor and continue to improve the funding Plan; and,
 - (7) Submit an annual report to the Legislature no later than twenty days before the convening of each regular Legislative session.

Per statute, the HMEC is comprised of eight Governor-appointed and Legislature-confirmed individuals and five ex-officio members, including the Dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine who serves as the Chair. The HMEC is administered by the Designated Institutional Official and Director of the Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs.

Solving Hawai'i's physician (and health professions) workforce shortage requires multi-sector engagement and ownership, a multi-pronged and longitudinal approach, as well as ideas and resources from the private sector (i.e., insurers, hospitals, businesses and private health care organizations committed to improving and maintaining healthy citizens and communities) the public sector (i.e., primary-, secondary-, and higher education, legislature, Departments of Health and Human Services and Federal agencies) and the larger communities of Hawai'i.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony for Dr. Sterbis.