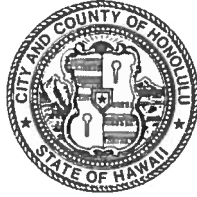


POLICE DEPARTMENT  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

801 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET · HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
TELEPHONE: (808) 529-3111 · INTERNET: www.honoluluupd.org



KIRK CALDWELL  
MAYOR

SUSAN BALLARD  
CHIEF

JOHN D. McCARTHY  
CLYDE K. HO  
DEPUTY CHIEFS

OUR REFERENCE

GB-KK

February 13, 2020

The Honorable John M. Mizuno Chair  
and Members  
Committee on Health  
House of Representatives  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street, Room 329  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Mizuno and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 676, Relating to Health Care Workers

I am Gail Beckley, Captain of the Criminal Investigation Division of the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), City and County of Honolulu.

The HPD supports House Bill No. 676, Relating to Health Care Workers.

This bill appropriately extends the protection of health care workers to include administrators, students, and volunteers who are supporting the functions of the health care facilities. These workers should be equally afforded the same legislative protection as other professionals who are covered under Hawaii Revised Statutes, Section 707-711, Assault in the Second Degree.

Signing these measures into law will help better protect these workers from harm by providing an additional deterrent to potential violators.

The HPD urges you to support House Bill No. 676, Relating to Health Care Workers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

APPROVED:

Handwritten signature of Susan Ballard in black ink.

Susan Ballard  
Chief of Police

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Gail Beckley in black ink.

Gail Beckley, Captain  
Criminal Investigation Division



## THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

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To: The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair  
The Honorable Stanley Chang, Vice Chair  
Members, Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health

From: Michael Holmberg, The Queen's Medical Center - West  
Date: Monday, February 10, 2020  
Hrg: Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health; Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 9:30 AM in Room 229

Re: **Support for SB3044, Relating to Offenses Against Health Care Security Professionals**

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My name is Michael Holmberg and I am the Director of Security & Safety Services at The Queen's Medical Center - West. I would like to express my **strong support** for SB3044, Relating to Offenses Against Health Care Security Professionals. Under current law, it is a misdemeanor to assault a health care security professional. This bill would make it a Class C felony to intentionally or knowingly cause bodily harm to health care security professionals in a health care facility.

I believe this legislation recognizes the risk that health care security professionals face every day. For example, The Queen's Medical Center – West Oahu, opened in May of 2014, since the opening, we have had 62 assault incidents. Of those 62, 20 were against Security Officer with 2 resulted in injury and loss time from work.

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.*

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

From: Boyd Hurley, Security Manager, The Queen's Medical Center

Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2020

Hrg: House Committee on Health; Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 9:00 AM in Room 329

Re: **Support for HB676 HD1, Relating to Health Care Security**

---

My name is Boyd Hurley and I am a Security Manager at The Queen's Medical Center. I would like to express my **strong support** for HB676 HD1, Relating to Health Care Security. Under current law, it is a misdemeanor to assault a health care security professional. This bill would make it a Class C felony to intentionally or knowingly cause bodily harm to health care security professionals at a health care facility.

I have been employed at The Queen's Medical Center for about 25 years. Within the past few years there has been a big increase in violence against hospital staff, especially assault cases that are intentional and unprovoked. Below are two examples of firsthand accounts collected from health care security professionals at The Queen's Medical Center Punchbowl campus.

#### Assault on a Security Officer

One of my security officers was called to an outpatient department on a report of a male sitting in the waiting room for a while with no appointment. The security officer responded and approached the male to ask if he had an appointment. The male did not answer, got up, and walked out towards the lobby. He forgot to grab a bag that was alongside his chair so the security officer grabbed the bag and followed the male to the lobby to return it to him. When the officer approached the male and told him he forgot his bag on the floor, the male without any warning turned and punched my officer in the face causing him to fall to the ground. The male then jumped on the officer and continued to assault him. The officer was limp and defenseless during the assault. Just at that moment, another security officer saw the assault occurring, detained the male, and put him in handcuffs. The injured officer was transported to the Emergency Department (ED) where he was treated for injuries to his nose and left eye socket. The perpetrator was arrested by HPD.

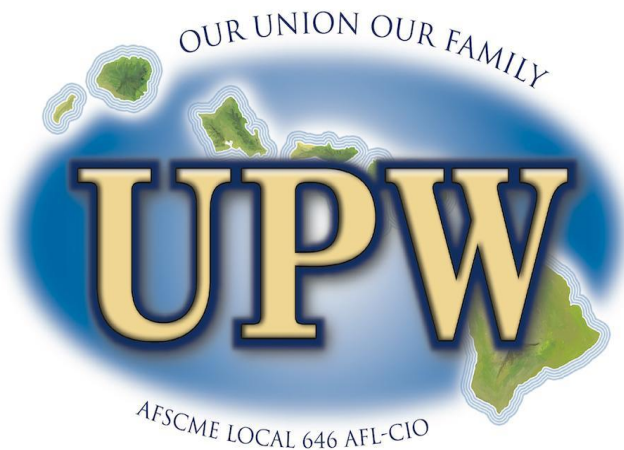
#### Assault on a Security Supervisor

A security supervisor was called by staff to stand by the room of a patient who had already assaulted four nurses during his stay. The security supervisor arrived on the unit and stood by the doorway while staff prepared to go in the room to provide treatment. When the security supervisor turned his back to the patient to answer a question from a staffer outside the room, the patient got out of bed and struck him in the face with a closed fist. The security supervisor fell to

the ground, but managed to protect himself and subdue the patient while other staff responded to assist. The security supervisor suffered injury to the nose and eye socket and HPD was called.

These are just a few examples of the kind of violence our hospital security professionals face every day. I believe that this legislation would rightfully recognize the risks that our health care security professionals face just going to work. It is currently a felony to assault certain classes of workers including: correctional workers, education workers, employees of state operated or contracted mental health facilities, emergency medical service workers, firefighters, and water safety officers. The threats that we face every day qualifies health care security professionals to be included in this group.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.



House of Representatives  
The Thirtieth Legislature  
Regular Session of 2020

Committee on Health (HLT)  
Rep. John M. Mizuno, Chair  
Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Date of Hearing: Thursday, February 13, 2020  
Time of Hearing: 9:00 a.m.  
Place of Hearing: Conference Room 329  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania St.

**Testimony in Support of HB676 Proposed HD1 Relating to Health Care Workers**

By: Dayton M. Nakanelua,  
State Director of the United Public Workers,  
AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO

The UPW is the exclusive bargaining representative for approximately 13,000 public employees and 1,500 private sector employees in Bargaining Unit 01 and Bargaining Unit 10 in the State of Hawaii and four counties.

HB676 proposed HD1 makes intentionally or knowingly causing bodily injury to certain health care facility workers a Class C felony.

The UPW supports this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.



## THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

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

From: Jason C. Chang, President, The Queen's Medical Center and Chief Operating Officer,  
The Queen's Health Systems  
Shereen Johnson, Director, Security and Safety, The Queen's Health Systems

Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2020

Hrg: House Committee on Health Hearing; Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 9:00 AM in Room  
329

Re: **Support for HB676 HD1, Health Care Security**

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The Queen's Health Systems (Queen's) is a not-for-profit corporation that provides expanded health care capabilities to the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin. Since the founding of the first Queen's hospital in 1859 by Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV, it has been our mission to provide quality health care services in perpetuity for Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i. Over the years, the organization has grown to four hospitals, 66 health care centers and labs, and more than 1,600 physicians statewide. As the preeminent health care system in Hawai'i, Queen's strives to provide superior patient care that is constantly advancing through education and research.

Queen's would like to express our **strong support** for HB676 HD1, Relating to Health Care Security. Under current law, it is a misdemeanor to assault a health care security professional. This bill would recognize the critical role health care security professionals play as frontline staff in violent situations and as a member of the care team. The bill makes it a Class C felony to intentionally or knowingly cause bodily harm to health care security professionals while engaged in the performance of duty at a health care facility.

Queen's recognizes that health care workers, particularly our health care security professionals, face increased risks of workplace violence. It is currently a felony to assault certain classes of workers including: correctional workers, education workers, employees of state operated or contracted mental health facilities, emergency medical service workers, firefighters, and water safety officers. We believe that health care security professionals are at increased risk of sustaining violent injuries due to the nature of their profession and such risks qualifies them to be included in this group.

The United States Office of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) found that on average, incidents of serious workplace violence were four times more common in health care

*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.*

than in private industry.<sup>1</sup> Health care security personnel play a critical role in the care team at Queen's. They provide for a safe work place environment for all staff and patients by intervening in potentially violent situations. Although, incidences workplace violence is severely under reported, Queen's internal reports from Risk Management found that in calendar year 2019 there were over 75 incidences of threats of violence and physical assault at The Queen's Medical Center, Punchbowl and West Oahu campuses. These incidences did not include those involving behavioral health patients.

Over the years, Queen's has tracked Workers' Compensation claims related costs from combative patients cost the system and found that in FY2018, our system incurred costs over \$200,000. Workplace violence incidents have led to serious injuries for our staff resulting in medical treatment, disability claims, and leaves of absence. Costs to the health care system are also significant.

Hospital security personnel are unarmed and do not lay hands on patients unless direct to by clinical staff. In a review of The Queen's Medical Center, Punchbowl Security Dispatch data, total incidents have increased from 27,918 dispatches in 2018 to 28,328 in 2019. Not including incidences involving behavioral health patients, in 2018, there were over 25 assault related dispatch calls to the Queen's Security Team and 5 of them involved a Security Officer being assaulted.

We ask for your support in including health care security professionals in the protections afforded to others in high-risk occupations. This legislation will address this costly, emotional issue and help our health care security professionals to feel better protected while they carry out their line of work and help raise morale.

I commend the legislature for introducing this measure and thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

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<sup>1</sup> Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA); (2015), Workplace Violence in Healthcare: Understanding the Challenge. <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3826.pdf>



**February 13, 2020 at 9:00 am**  
**Conference Room 329**

**House Committee on Health**

To: Chair John M. Mizuno  
Vice Chair Bertrand Kobayashi

From: Paige Heckathorn Choy  
Director of Government Affairs  
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Testimony in Support**  
**HB 676 Proposed HD 1, Relating to Health Care Workers**

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), established in 1939, serves as the leading voice of healthcare on behalf of 170 member organizations who represent almost every aspect of the health care continuum in Hawaii. Members include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities and durable medical equipment suppliers. In addition to providing access to appropriate, affordable, high quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 20,000 people statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **support** for this measure. Preventing violence against healthcare workers remains a priority for HAH and its member organizations. Our members have expressed that this problem is expanding beyond hospitals into more settings of care, including long-term care facilities. We continue to work on this issue by collecting data and providing education and resources for our members, who are committed to protecting their employees against violence.

We appreciate the continued focus on ensuring the safety of healthcare professionals, including specially-trained healthcare security officers who keep clinical staff safe while they provide life-saving care, and for patients and their loved ones. The legislature has recognized that other staff in healthcare settings should be given increased protections under the law if they are attacked while on duty, and we would underscore the important role that trained healthcare security officers play in our hospitals and other settings of care.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



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

From: Krystle Fujikawa, The Queen's Medical Center

Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2020

Hrg: House Committee on Health; Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 9:00 AM in Room 329

Re: **Support for HB676 HD1, Relating to Health Care Security**

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I am in **strong support** of HB676 HD1, Relating to Health Care Security. Hospital security is an invaluable and integral component to the safety of patients, visitors, families, and staff here at The Queen's Medical Center. They are expected to place themselves in harm's way to serve and protect any and all persons on campus. As it stands, there is little consequence to violent or aggressive persons who do not respect and comply with security directives.

My name is Krystle Fujikawa and I am a critical care registered nurse in the cardiac ICU here at The Queen's Medical Center. I have worked as a critical care nurse for 10 years; and during the course of my career I have seen an escalation of violent, abusive, aggressive, and unsafe behavior from patients and guests. I have been in situations where verbal abuse turns to physical assaults; where weapons in every conceivable form are used against staff; or direct threats against a person's safety are made. Unfortunately, it seems that long gone are the days in which health care workers can expect to come to work to exclusively focus on healing.

I have had numerous personal encounters in which security support was called to the bedside to help with dangerous situations. One that specifically comes to mind is a person who was successfully helped out of methamphetamine withdrawal which complicated his heart failure. When he awoke with the clarity of his situation, he became extremely verbally abusive with staff and threw items at the staff such as hot coffee, forks, spit, used urinals, and a bloody self-discontinued IV. Staff could not enter the room safely to care for this patient, at which time it was decided that he should be discharged from our care due to his refusal for treatment and his recovered medical state. He refused to leave the room, only accepting his son to come in and visit him. We soon found out that the son was bringing in methamphetamines to the patient, and when we tried to bar the son from coming, both the patient and the son got extremely physically aggressive. Our security team provided continuous check-ins and onsite support. They were helpful in trying to diffuse the situation, and were ready and willing to put themselves in harm's way to protect the staff and other patients in the hospital. In my experience, it appears that aggressive and violent persons think that they are immune from the consequence of abusive behavior in the hospital. Our health care security professionals have been an integral part of the health care delivery system by protecting the patients, guests, staff, and the healing culture of the hospital. Their safety is highly at risk because of the unexpected nature of the calls they receive. It is for these reasons that I strongly support the passing of HB676 HD1.

*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.*

K. Fujikawa, The Queen's Medical Center  
Page 2

Thank you,  
Krystle Fujikawa, R.N., B.S.N.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Health  
Thursday, February 13, 2020; 9:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 329**

**RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 0676, PROPOSED HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE WORKERS.**

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** House Bill No. 0676, Proposed House Draft 1, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE WORKERS.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would state the Legislature's intent to establish the offense of assault in the second degree on a health care security professional a class C felony. [**See**, page 4, lines 3 through 14].

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

As employers, FQHCs have an obligation to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of their employees, volunteers, patients, and patients' friends and family who accompany or visit patients at FQHC facilities. To the extent that this measure serves as a deterrent to violence perpetrated against health care workers or at health care facilities, HPCA wholeheartedly supports this effort.

Yet, it should also be noted that when violence is committed against a health care professional, especially when it occurs at a health care facility, a crime is committed not only against the individual, but against all of society. When persons go to a health care professional, it is when that person is most vulnerable -- he or she is sick, or injured, or stressed from concern over a loved one. These places have long been held as sanctuary. During war, hospitals were marked on their rooftops with red crosses so that they would not be bombed.

**Testimony on House Bill No. 0676, Proposed House Draft 1**  
**Thursday, February 13, 2020; 9:00 a.m.**  
**Page 2**

When violence is committed against a health care professional or at a health care facility, it harms all of society. It causes sick or injured persons to hesitate before seeking help, which might exacerbate their condition. It also dissuades persons from entering the field of health care. At a time when Hawaii is facing unprecedented shortages in physicians, nurses, specialists, and other health care professionals, especially in rural areas, incidents of violence against health care professionals or at health care facilities may likely cause youths to consider other fields for future employment.

**The HPCA urges your favorable consideration of this measure.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or [eabe@hawaiiipca.net](mailto:eabe@hawaiiipca.net).



Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 9:30 AM  
Conference Room 329

**House Committee on Health**

To: Representative John Mizuno, Chair  
Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

From: Fego Alconcel  
Safety and Security Director, Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children

**Re: Testimony in Support of HB 676 Proposed HD1  
Relating to Offenses Against Health Care Workers**

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My name is Fego Alconcel and I am the Safety and Security Director at Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women and Children (Kapi'olani) is an affiliate of Hawaii Pacific Health. Kapi'olani Medical Center is the state's only maternity, newborn and pediatric specialty hospital. It is also a tertiary care, medical teaching and research facility. Specialty services for patients throughout Hawai'i and the Pacific Region include intensive care for infants and children, 24-hour emergency pediatric care, air transport, maternal-fetal medicine and high-risk perinatal care.

**I write in support of HB 676 Proposed HD1** which classifies the offense of assault in second degree of a health care security professional as a Class C felony.

All health care and human services professionals today face a significant increase in the number of job related violent incidents while on duty compared to other workers. Statistics show that workers in hospitals, nursing homes and other health care settings face significant risks of workplace violence. OSHA also found that health care accounts for nearly as many serious violent injuries as all other industries combined, and this is of great concern. At Kapi'olani our staff has been experiencing an increase in encounters with violent patients.

Under existing law, health care security professionals are not included as one of the protected categories of health care professionals who may press felony charges when they are assaulted while performing their duties on the job. Health care security professionals are unarmed and do not lay hands on patients unless directed to do so by hospital or clinic staff. As our health care security staff must intervene when patients and other individuals become physically violent, they should be afforded the protection the

law allows other health care professionals. HB 676 Proposed HD1 would give our health care security professionals that protection.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**HAWAII  
PACIFIC  
HEALTH**

**WILCOX**  
MEDICAL CENTER

Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 9:30 AM  
Conference Room 329

**House Committee on Health**

To: Representative John Mizuno, Chair  
Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

From: Donald Pilker  
Safety and Security Director

Re: **Testimony in Support of HB 676 Proposed HD1  
Relating to Offenses Against Health Care Workers**

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My name is Donald Pilker, and I am the Safety and Security Director for Wilcox Medical Center. Founded in 1938, Wilcox Memorial Hospital is a not-for-profit hospital dedicated to providing the Kaua'i community with accessible, quality health care. Wilcox is the largest medical facility on Kaua'i and has been recognized as one of the nation's best small hospitals. With 185 physicians on staff, Wilcox Memorial Hospital offers island residents and visitors expert diagnosis and treatment for more than 22 specialties.

**I write in support of HB 676 Proposed HD1** which classifies the offense of assault in second degree of a health care security professional as a Class C felony.

All health care and human services professionals today face a significant increase in the number of job related violent incidents while on duty compared to other workers. Statistics show that workers in hospitals, nursing homes and other health care settings face significant risks of workplace violence. OSHA also found that health care accounts for nearly as many serious violent injuries as all other industries combined, and this is of great concern. At HPH our staff has been experiencing an increase in encounters with violent patients.

Under existing law, health care security professionals are not included as one of the protected categories of health care professionals who may press felony charges when they are assaulted while performing their duties on the job. Health care security professionals are unarmed and do not lay hands on patients unless directed to do so by hospital or clinic staff. As our health care security staff must intervene when patients and other individuals become physically violent, they should be afforded the protection the law allows other health care professionals. HB 676 Proposed HD1 would give our health care security professionals that protection. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**HAWAII  
PACIFIC  
HEALTH**KAPI'OLANI  
PALI MOMI  
STRAUB  
WILCOX

Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 9:30 AM  
Conference Room 329

**House Committee on Health**

To: Representative John Mizuno, Chair  
Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

From: Susan Masumoto-Nonaka  
Vice President, General Services

Re: **Testimony in Support of HB 676 Proposed HD1  
Relating to Offenses Against Health Care Workers**

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My name is Susan Masumoto-Nonaka, Vice President of General Services at Hawai'i Pacific Health. Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system comprised of its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox and over 70 locations statewide with a mission of creating a healthier Hawai'i.

**I write in support of HB 676 Proposed HD1** which classifies the offense of assault in second degree of a health care security professional as a Class C felony.

All health care and human services professionals today face a significant increase in the number of job related violent incidents while on duty compared to other workers. Statistics show that workers in hospitals, nursing homes and other health care settings face significant risks of workplace violence. OSHA also found that health care accounts for nearly as many serious violent injuries as all other industries combined, and this is of great concern. At HPH our staff has been experiencing an increase in encounters with violent patients.

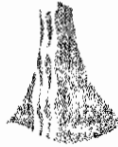
Under existing law, health care security professionals are not included as one of the protected categories of health care professionals who may press felony charges when they are assaulted while performing their duties on the job. Health care security professionals are unarmed and do not lay hands on patients unless directed to do so by hospital or clinic staff. As our health care security staff must intervene when patients and other individuals become physically violent, they should be afforded the protection the law allows other health care professionals. HB 676 Proposed HD1 would give our health care security professionals that protection.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**HAWAII  
PACIFIC  
HEALTH**

**PALI MOMI  
MEDICAL CENTER**



Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 9:30 AM  
Conference Room 329

**House Committee on Health**

To: Representative John Mizuno, Chair  
Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

From: Anthony Miranda  
Safety and Security Manager, Pali Momi Medical Center

Re: **Testimony in Support of HB 676 Proposed HD1  
Relating to Health Care Workers**

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My name is Anthony Miranda, and I am the Safety and Security Manager at Pali Momi Medical Center (Pali Momi). Pali Momi is a not-for-profit hospital located in West O'ahu, and is dedicated to the health and well-being of all Hawai'i residents. With 128 beds and more than 400 physicians on its medical staff, Pali Momi offers a full range of services. The hospital has delivered many medical firsts for the community, including Central and West O'ahu's only interventional cardiac catheterization unit to detect and treat heart disease, a fully integrated minimally invasive surgical suite, CT scan and MRI services and the state's first retina center. The hospital is an affiliate of Hawai'i Pacific Health, the state's largest health care provider.

**I write in support of HB 676 Proposed HD1** which classifies the offense of assault in second degree of a health care security professional as a Class C felony.

All health care and human services professionals today face a significant increase in the number of job related violent incidents while on duty compared to other workers. Statistics show that workers in hospitals, nursing homes and other health care settings face significant risks of workplace violence. OSHA also found that health care accounts for nearly as many serious violent injuries as all other industries combined, and this is of great concern. At Pali Momi our staff has been experiencing an increase in encounters with violent patients.

Under existing law, health care security professionals are not included as one of the protected categories of health care professionals who may press felony charges when they are assaulted while performing their duties on the job. Health care security professionals are unarmed and do not lay hands on patients unless directed to do so by hospital or clinic staff. As our health care security staff must intervene when patients and

other individuals become physically violent, they should be afforded the protection the law allows other health care professionals. HB 676 Proposed HD1 would give our health care security professionals that protection.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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

From: Cindy Kamikawa, President, Queen's North Hawai'i Community Hospital

Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2020

Hrg: House Committee on Health Hearing; Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 9:00 AM in Room 329

Re: **Support for HB676 HD1, Health Care Security**

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The Queen's Health Systems (Queen's) is a not-for-profit corporation that provides expanded health care capabilities to the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin. Since the founding of the first Queen's hospital in 1859 by Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV, it has been our mission to provide quality health care services in perpetuity for Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i. Over the years, the organization has grown to four hospitals, including Queen's North Hawai'i Community Hospital, 66 health care centers and labs, and more than 1,600 physicians statewide. As the preeminent health care system in Hawai'i, Queen's strives to provide superior patient care that is constantly advancing through education and research.

Queen's North Hawai'i Community Hospital (QNHCH) would like to express our **strong support** for HB676 HD1, Relating to Health Care Security. Under current law, it is a misdemeanor to assault a health care security professional. This bill would recognize the critical role health care security professionals play as frontline staff in violent situations and as a member of the care team. The bill makes it a Class C felony to intentionally or knowingly cause bodily harm to health care security professionals while engaged in the performance of duty at a health care facility.

Queen's recognizes that health care workers, particularly our health care security professionals, face increased risks of workplace violence. It is currently a felony to assault certain classes of workers including: correctional workers, education workers, employees of state operated or contracted mental health facilities, emergency medical service workers, firefighters, and water safety officers. We believe that health care security professionals are at increased risk of sustaining violent injuries due to the nature of their profession and such risks qualifies them to be included in this group.

The United States Office of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) found that on average, incidents of serious workplace violence were four times more common in health care than in private industry.<sup>1</sup> Health care security personnel play a critical role in the care team at

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<sup>1</sup> Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA); (2015), Workplace Violence in Healthcare: Understanding the Challenge. <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3826.pdf>

Queen's. They provide for a safe work place environment for all staff and patients by intervening in potentially violent situations. Although, incidences workplace violence is severely under reported, Queen's internal reports from Risk Management found that in calendar year 2019 there were over 75 incidences of threats of violence and physical assault at The Queen's Medical Center, Punchbowl and West Oahu campuses. These incidences did not include those involving behavioral health patients.

Over the years, Queen's has tracked Workers' Compensation claims related costs from combative patients cost the system and found that in FY2018, our system incurred costs over \$200,000. Workplace violence incidents have led to serious injuries for our staff resulting in medical treatment, disability claims, and leaves of absence. Costs to the health care system are also significant.

Hospital security personnel are unarmed and do not lay hands on patients unless direct to by clinical staff. In a review of The Queen's Medical Center, Punchbowl Security Dispatch data, total incidents have increased from 27,918 dispatches in 2018 to 28,328 in 2019. Not including incidences involving behavioral health patients, in 2018, there were over 25 assault related dispatch calls to the Queen's Security Team and 5 of them involved a Security Officer being assaulted.

We ask for your support in including health care security professionals in the protections afforded to others in high-risk occupations. This legislation will address this costly, emotional issue and help our health care security professionals to feel better protected while they carry out their line of work and help raise morale.

I commend the legislature for introducing this measure and thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

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

From: Robert Baird, Security Officer, The Queen's Medical Center, Honolulu, Hawaii

Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2020

Hrg: House Committee on Health; Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 9:00 AM in Room 329

Re: **Support for HB676 HD1, Relating to Health Care Workers**

My name is Robert Baird and I am a Security Officer at The Queen's Medical Center. I would like to express my **strong support for HB676 HD1, relating to Health Care Workers.**

March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019, I was attacked by a patient at The Queen's Medical Center. This happened while a healthcare professional was trying to help this patient. During treatment, the patient became agitated and unwilling to cooperate. Eventually the patient turned and started to attack the Registered Nurse (RN). I was able to intervene, by distracting the patient, so the RN was able to escape. Subsequently, the patient took several swings at me where he was eventually able to hit me in the face with a closed fist. After safely securing the patient into his room, I was taken to an Emergency Department room and treated for head trauma including eight orbital facial fractures around my right eye.

As a security professional, I am part of a team committed to save lives, reduce the risk of injury and protect property. We strive to provide a safe environment to all. Without security protection, Healthcare Workers would not be able to provide the quality of service that patients currently receive. Protection under the law should be equally provided to Security Officers. As a Security Officer at a hospital, I am not part of a protected class of co-workers. If this patient was able to injure the nurse, instead of myself, he would have been subjected to greater penalties. He didn't because of my actions. Current laws provide Security Officers unequal protection.



It has been almost one year since this incident. I have healed but, healing has been a long-term process. I missed work due to this injury. Today, I continue to have complications from this injury. So far, I have been unable to return to a full work schedule nor enjoy sport activities. Complications, from this incident, will affect me for the rest of my life.

**I believe HB676 HD1 legislation would help to rightfully recognize the risks that Security Officers face in an increasingly dangerous environment. Again, I would like to express my strong support for HB676 HD1, relating to Health Care Workers.**

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.



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

From: Anthony Talley, Security Officer, The Queen's Medical Center

Date: Monday, February 10, 2020

Hrg: House Committee on Health Hearing; Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 9:00 AM in Room 329

Re: **Support for HB676 HD1, Relating to Health Care Security**

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My name is Anthony Talley and I am a Security Officer at The Queen's Medical Center. I would like to express my **strong support** for HB676 HD1 Relating to Health Care Security. Under current law, it is a misdemeanor to assault a health care security professional. This bill would make it a Class C felony to intentionally or knowingly cause bodily harm to health care security professionals in a health care facility.

In current law it is a felony to assault certain classes of workers, such as: correctional workers, education workers, employees of state operated or contracted mental health facilities, firefighters, water safety officers, and emergency medical service workers including those work in Emergency Departments. As a Security Officer at a hospital, I am not part of the protected class of workers; however, I often work alongside staff who are and yet someone who assaults me would be subject to a misdemeanor and not a felony.

For example, one day while I was working in the back of the Emergency Department (ED), I was asked by ED staff to standby and assist with a patient in the hallway. The patient was visibly intoxicated and became belligerent. I called another Security Officer to assist and there were about three other ED staff present as well. The patient stood up off the gurney, yelled, and punched me in the mouth for no known reason. All staff and myself escorted the patient to the floor for his safety and to prevent further injury to anyone else. We then escorted the patient into a different room where he spat onto the face of the other Security Officer. I checked into the ED for my injuries and called the Honolulu Police Department (HPD) to file charges. I was later subpoenaed to court where the accused was sentenced to serve about a month of time and ordered to take classes. They counted time served so he was released the same day of the ruling. However, if he had punched an ED staffer standing next to me in the incident, that would have been a felony instead of a misdemeanor.

I believe that this legislation rightfully recognizes the risks that our health care security professionals face just going to work. The threats that we face every day qualifies health care security professionals to be included in this group.

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.*