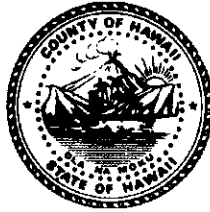


**Harry Kim**  
*Mayor*



**Wil Okabe**  
*Managing Director*

**Barbara J. Kossow**  
*Deputy Managing Director*

## County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553  
KONA 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy, Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740  
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

February 4, 2019

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Hawai'i State Legislature

Dear Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Kidani, and Committee members:

**RE: SB 870, RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS**

The shortage of health care providers in Hawaii has been documented, by all accounts is getting worse, and is of major concern. It appears that a program of loan repayment is currently in operation and is working to attract providers to federally designated health professional shortage areas, areas of Hawaii that are underserved. Unless there is testimony to the contrary, I hope that this Committee will recognize the importance of this issue, see the value of the repayment program, and act favorably on SB 870.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Harry Kim".

Harry Kim  
Mayor



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Tuesday, February 5, 2019 at 2:46 p.m.

By

Jerris Hedges, MD, Dean, John A. Burns School of Medicine  
Kelley Withy, MD, Professor, Department of Complementary and Integrative Medicine  
Hawaii/Pacific Basin Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Director  
John A. Burns School of Medicine

And

Michael Bruno, PhD.  
Vice Chancellor for Research  
Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### SB 870 – RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

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

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of SB 870, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget. This measure permits continuation of the Hawai'i State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, marriage and family counselors and nurses who work for non-profit organizations in federally designated health professional shortage areas of Hawai'i or in a geographic area of Hawai'i found to be underserved. This program is made possible through a grant from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar state match.

Hawai'i has a shortage of just under 800 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawai'i do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is through loan repayment. The Hawai'i State Loan Repayment program has helped 42 health care providers since its inception in 2012. Currently, the Loan Repayment Program supports 20 providers in Hawai'i. Of the program graduates, almost 2/3 are still practicing in underserved areas of Hawai'i.

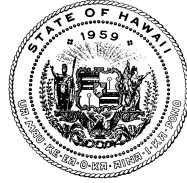
In 2016, 64% of the John A Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) residents and fellows had a current student loan burden. The average student loan indebtedness of our JABSOM MD residents/fellows is \$235,000, with some residents having loans in the \$300,000-600,000 range. These loans, with average minimum monthly payment of \$500, begin repayment while in residency training, in addition to the high cost of living, rent and other living expenses. The high cost of college and medical education results

in large student loan debt -- which detracts from physicians choosing primary care specialties and choosing to practice in underserved or rural communities.

If a physician does his or her medical school AND residency (or Graduate Medical Education or GME) training here in Hawai'i, about 80% of them stay in Hawai'i to practice. Having loan repayment options tied to commitments to serve in neighbor-island, rural and underserved populations will help to reduce the physician shortages in those areas. The loan repayment program has played an important role in bringing needed physicians and healthcare providers to underserved areas.

We respectfully request that the eligible professions be expanded to include at least social work and registered nursing as these are much needed health care providers in rural areas. The funds provided through SB 870 will be matched dollar for dollar from other funding sources and be provided to reduce the debt of our healthcare providers working in areas of need. This will allow for 20 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawai'i and receive at least \$35,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



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

**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB870**  
**RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS.**

SENATOR DONNA MERCADO KIM, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing Date: February 5, 2019

Room Number: 229

1 **Fiscal Implications:** \$500,000 General Fun appropriation.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health concurs that loan repayment programs  
3 encourage recruitment and retention of health care providers in rural and underserved areas.  
4 DOH will continue to work closely with the John A. Burns School of Medicine and other  
5 stakeholders on this program as well as other strategies that address Hawaii's provider shortage.

6 As of 2018, Hawaii is short approximately 750 physician full-time equivalents. The inability to  
7 access care in a timely manner contributes to deferred treatment, poorer outcomes, and increased  
8 costs.

9 **Offered Amendments:** N/A.

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**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 9:25:37 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Elena Cabatu	Testifying for East Hawaii Region of Hawaii Health Systems Corporation	Support	No

Comments:

On behalf of the East Hawaii Region of Hawaii Health Systems, composed of Hilo Medical Center, Kau Hospital, Hale Ho`ola Hamakua, our 13 specialty clinics and our Hawaii Island Family Medicine Residency Program, we fully support SB870 for the provider loan repayment program.

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/2/2019 7:57:08 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lisa Rantz	Testifying for Hilo Medical Center Foundation	Support	No

Comments:

The single largest concern of graduating health professional students is loan repayment. State loan repayment is critical to recruiting and retaining health professionals across Hawaii. The first question we are asked by students who want to come back home to Hawaii and practice is what loan repayment options are available to them.

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/2/2019 6:58:29 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

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

Comments:

Funding this bill is critically important for assisting with the provider workforce shortage!



Tuesday, February 5, 2019 at 2:46 PM  
Conference Room 229

**Senate Committee on Higher Education**

To: Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

From: Michael Robinson  
Vice President, Government Relations & Community Affairs

Re: **Testimony in Support of SB 870**  
**Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals**

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My name is Michael Robinson, Vice President, Government Relations & Community Affairs 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 SB 870** which would appropriate matching state funds for the health care provider loan repayment program administered through the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM).

The continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii plays a vital role in addressing the shortage of healthcare professionals in the state. Hawaii has a shortage of almost 800 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawaii do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on the neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is through loan repayment. JABSOM has successfully administered the program which has helped 43 healthcare providers since the program began in 2012. To date, nearly 2/3 of those providers continue to work in underserved communities.

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



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Tuesday, February 5, 2019; 2:46 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

**RE: SUPPORTING SENATE BILL NO. 0870, RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS.**

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, 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. 0870, RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would:

- (1) Appropriate \$500,000 in general funds for fiscal year 2019-2020, and \$500,000 in general funds for fiscal year 2020-2021, for the Hawaii Rural Health Care Provider Loan Repayment Program ;
- (2) State that the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) at the University of Hawaii be the expending agency; and
- (3) Take effect on July 1, 2019.

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.

The State of Hawaii is experiencing a severe shortage of health care professionals in the workforce, especially in rural areas. Recent studies note that the current shortage of physicians is at 20% of the total full-time equivalent positions throughout the State. The shortage is especially severe in the fields of primary care, infectious diseases, colorectal surgery, pathology, general surgery, pulmonology, neurology, neurosurgery, orthopedic surgery, family medicine, cardiothoracic surgery, rheumatology, cardiology, hematology/oncology, and pediatric

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 0870  
Tuesday, February 5, 2019; 2:46 p.m.  
Page 2

subspecialties of endocrinology, cardiology, neurology, hematology/oncology, and gastroenterology.

This bill would provide additional State resources to enhance the the quality and stock of Hawaii's future healthcare workforce. **Accordingly, the HPCA strongly support this important measure.**

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



Written Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
February 5, 2019 2:46 p.m.

by  
Laura Reichhardt, MS, AGNP-C, APRN  
Director, Hawai'i State Center for Nursing  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

**IN STRONG SUPPORT  
SB 870 RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT**

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Higher Education committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** to this bill, SB 870. This bill makes an appropriation for the Hawai'i rural health care provider loan repayment program administered through the John A. Burns School of Medicine.

The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing conducts biennial research on the nursing workforce supply. The most recent Hawai'i Nursing Supply Report, published in 2017, finds that advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) have grown 104% in 12 years, and are present all over Hawai'i, bringing primary care to the communities where people live and work. Further, 100% of APRNs on Hawai'i, Maui, and Kaua'i Counties and nearly 5% of APRNs on Honolulu City and County work in HRSA defined Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs).

As complex care shifts into the community, our state will need to invest in workforce development efforts to refine, spread, and scale the emerging models to improve access to care in remote, underserved, and understaffed areas. This measure maximizes federal incentives to work in areas that are experiencing provider shortages or in a geographic area in Hawai'i found to be underserved.

Therefore, the Center for Nursing is in strong support of including APRNs, along with the other included health professions, in this loan repayment initiative. Moreover, the Center for Nursing is in strong support for full funding of this initiative. Thank you for your strong support of health care professionals, access to healthcare in Hawai'i, and healthcare equity for those in remote and underserved areas.

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 10:25:37 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lisa Rantz	Testifying for Hawaii State Rural Health Association	Support	No

Comments:

Loan repayment is critical part of our infrastructure to recruit and retain our health care providers and allows for our students to come back home to practice.



February 5, 2019 at 2:46 pm  
Conference Room 229

**Senate Committee on Higher Education**

To: Chair Donna Mercado Kim  
Vice Chair Michelle N. Kidani

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

Re: **Testimony in Support**  
**SB 870, Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals**

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.

We would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to **support** SB 870, which would provide funding for loan repayment at the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) to support various healthcare professionals who practice in underserved areas. Investing in our healthcare workforce is critical because of the shortage of professionals in a number of categories in Hawaii, including physicians and other critical allied professionals. This funding will help to alleviate that shortage by creating opportunities directly in the state to train our healthcare workforce. By training professionals in-state, we are more likely to keep them and their skills here, serving patients in Hawaii.

We are supportive of the legislature's attempts to direct funding towards effective and important programs that will help to ensure that residents have access to needed care.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.



February 4, 2019

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
The Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Higher Education

Re: SB 870 – Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in **support** of SB 870, which makes an appropriation for the Hawaii rural health care provider loan repayment program administered through the John A. Burns School of Medicine.

HMSA strives to improve the health of Hawaii and we believe that the Hawaii rural health care provider loan program is in line with that mission, by getting much needed care to the medically underserved rural areas of Hawaii.

Thank you for allowing us to testify in support of SB 870.

Sincerely,

Pono Chong  
Vice President, Government Relations

Kelley Withy, MD, PhD  
Physician Workforce Researcher  
[withy@hawaii.edu](mailto:withy@hawaii.edu)

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of SB870, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant I have received from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. Limited funds have been provided in the past from HMSA, Queens, AlohaCare, University Health Alliance, Ohana Health Plan, Maui Memorial, Lanai Community Health Center and Kalihi Palama Health Center that allowed the program to begin in 2012. In 2017, the Hawaii State Legislature showed great wisdom in funding the program for \$250,000 a year for two years. This allowed my office to increase the number of loan repayment contracts supported to 42, covering all islands. But, we ran out of money and have six loan repayers right now who have to wait to start repayment until the new fiscal year. This year, the federal program is willing to provide \$344,000, and local funders have committed \$25,000 to date. Without state funds, we will only be able to support \$50,000 in loan repayment (\$25,000 from local funders and \$25,000 match from federal government) and will have to wind down the program.

Hawaii has a shortage of just under 800 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawaii do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is loan repayment. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 42 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 62% are still practicing in underserved areas.

In 2016, 64% of JABSOM residents and fellows had a current student loan burden. The average student loan indebtedness of our JABSOM MD residents/fellows is \$235,000, with some residents having loans in the \$300,000-600,000 range. These loans, with average minimum monthly payment of \$500, begin repayment while in residency training, in addition to the high cost of living, rent and other living expenses. The high cost of college and medical education results in large student loan debt -- which detracts from physicians choosing primary care specialties and choosing to practice in underserved or rural communities.

If a physician does his or her medical school AND residency (or Graduate Medical Education or GME) training here in Hawaii, about 80% of them stay in Hawaii to practice. Having loan repayment options tied to commitments to serve in neighbor island, rural and underserved populations will help to reduce the physician shortages in those areas. The loan repayment program has played an important role in bringing needed physicians and healthcare providers to underserved areas.



SB870 requests \$500,000 for loan repayment for the above listed health professions. This would allow me to pursue additional local funding for matching and could double the loan repayment impact! The funds provided will be matched dollar for dollar from other funding sources and be provided to reduce the debt of our healthcare providers working in areas of need. This will allow for 25 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$35,000 and up to \$50,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need. **I would like to request that we expand the professions supported to include behavioral health, as that is a significant shortage in Hawaii.**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/2/2019 8:06:34 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Tamara Brown	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support SB870. We should do all we can to support our healthcare workers, especially those working in underserved areas. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB870.

Aloha

Tamara Brown

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/2/2019 8:12:56 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Catherine JS Tsang, MD	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of SB870, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health providers who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant to John A. Burns School of Medicine from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. In 2017, the Hawaii State Legislature funded the program for \$250,000 a year for two years. This has allowed for the loans of 42 health care workers from all islands to have their loans paid down. I would like to support the continuation of funding for this program as it will help us meet the growing shortage of physicians because loan repayment is one of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers to areas of need. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 42 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 62% are still practicing in underserved areas which is much better than the retention of National Health Service Corps program of 25%.

This bill supports 20-25 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$35,000 and up to \$50,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need. Please continue this program!

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/2/2019 8:37:58 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jeanne Yagi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of SB1404, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health providers who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant to John A. Burns School of Medicine from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. In 2017, the Hawaii State Legislature funded the program for \$250,000 a year for two years. This has allowed for the loans of 42 health care workers from all islands to have their loans paid down. I would like to support the continuation of funding for this program as it will help us meet the growing shortage of physicians because loan repayment is one of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers to areas of need. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 42 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 62% are still practicing in underserved areas which is much better than the retention of National Health Service Corps program of 25%.

This bill supports 20-25 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$35,000 and up to \$50,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need. Please continue this program!

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Jimmy and Jeanne Yagi

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/2/2019 11:17:32 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Erik Anderson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of SB870, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health providers. I personally benefited from this program while working as a clinician at Kalihi Palama Health Center. The program was very instrumental in making it financially possible for me to work in a community health center while paying off student debt. Mahalo for your consideration.

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/2/2019 12:29:16 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

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

Comments:

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/3/2019 8:46:38 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Anthony Guerrero	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of SB1404, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health providers who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant to John A. Burns School of Medicine from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. In 2017, the Hawaii State Legislature funded the program for \$250,000 a year for two years. This has allowed for the loans of 42 health care workers from all islands to have their loans paid down. I would like to support the continuation of funding for this program as it will help us meet the growing shortage of physicians because loan repayment is one of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers to areas of need. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 42 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 62% are still practicing in underserved areas which is much better than the retention of National Health Service Corps program of 25%.

This bill supports 20-25 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$35,000 and up to \$50,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need. Please continue this program!

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/3/2019 10:57:44 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sara McAllaster	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/3/2019 12:32:12 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jennifer Zelko	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of SB870, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health providers who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant to John A. Burns School of Medicine from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. In 2017, the Hawaii State Legislature funded the program for \$250,000 a year for two years. This has allowed for the loans of 42 health care workers from all islands to have their loans paid down. I would like to support the continuation of funding for this program as it will help us meet the growing shortage of physicians because loan repayment is one of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers to areas of need. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 42 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 62% are still practicing in underserved areas which is much better than the retention of National Health Service Corps program of 25%.

This bill supports 20-25 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$35,000 and up to \$50,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need. Please continue this program!

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**Jennifer Zelko-Schlueter (Hilo resident)**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of SB1404, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health providers who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant to John A. Burns School of Medicine from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. In 2017, the Hawaii State Legislature funded the program for \$250,000 a year for two years. This has allowed for the loans of 42 health care workers from all islands to have their loans paid down. I would like to support the continuation of funding for this program as it will help us meet the growing shortage of physicians because loan repayment is one of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers to areas of need. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 42 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 62% are still practicing in underserved areas which is much better than the retention of National Health Service Corps program of 25%.

This bill supports 20-25 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$35,000 and up to \$50,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need. Please continue this program!

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/3/2019 5:27:05 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michelle Mitchell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of SB870, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health providers who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii.

In 2017, the Hawaii State Legislature funded the program for \$250,000 a year for two years. This has allowed for the loans of 42 health care workers from all islands to have their loans paid down. I would like to support the continuation of funding for this program as it will help us meet the growing shortage of physicians because loan repayment is one of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers to areas of need. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 42 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 62% are still practicing in underserved areas which is much better than the retention of National Health Service Corps program of 25%.

The average medical student debt is in excess of \$200,000, which results in nearly \$2,000/month student loan payments. Add to that an average undergraduate loan burden of \$37,000. We then have a 30 year old doctor (physician training takes 11 years minimum) who wants to be able to afford to start the family he's been putting off during his education, owes over \$2200/month in student debt but is left wondering if he truly afford to fulfill his dream of providing medical care in one of the most expensive states in the U.S.

I am the fortunate recipient of \$25,000 for 2017-2019. Without this repayment program, I would have had no income for the year 2017, during which I participated in HMSA's Payment Transformation. Receiving only \$24 per patient while accepting new complicated patients in a rural setting is not a feasible business model.

Since the insurance company is unwilling to pay physicians a fair and reasonable wage, someone needs to pay them to something to stay in Hawaii. Sadly, their shortfall is pushing the responsibility onto this program, which is funded partially through a grant and partially through local monies. Physicians want to be here, please help support their efforts.

Please continue this program!

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Michelle A. Mitchell, M.D.

Serving Hilo since 2008

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education/  
2/5/2019 2:46pm  
By Warren Yamashita MD MPH  
Family Medicine Resident Physician  
Hawaii Island Family Medicine Residency Program

SB 870 - Relating to the Hawai'i State Loan Repayment Program

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

My name is Warren Yamashita and I am a second-year family medicine resident at the Hawaii Island Family Medicine Residency Program. Thank you for the opportunity to train in a community I hope to stay and serve.

I am writing in **strong support** of SB 870, which seeks state matching funds for the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program. This program repays educational debt for primary care and behavioral health providers who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions shortage Areas of Hawaii.

Hawaii has a shortage of over 700 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. The loan repayment program is one of the best methods of encouraging providers to work in the areas of need.

This program is possible through a grant to John A. Burns School of Medicine from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. In 2017, the Hawaii State Legislature funded the program for \$250,000 a year for two years. This has allowed for the loans of 42 health care workers from all islands to have their loans paid down. I would like to support the continuation of funding for this program as it will help us meet the growing shortage of physicians because loan repayment is one of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers to areas of need. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 42 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 62% are still practicing in underserved areas which is much better than the retention of National Health Service Corps program of 25%.

This bill supports 20-25 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$35,000 and up to \$50,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need. Please continue this program!

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/3/2019 9:20:38 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alicia Turlington	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of SB1404, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health providers who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant to John A. Burns School of Medicine from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. In 2017, the Hawaii State Legislature funded the program for \$250,000 a year for two years. This has allowed for the loans of 42 health care workers from all islands to have their loans paid down. I would like to support the continuation of funding for this program as it will help us meet the growing shortage of physicians because loan repayment is one of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers to areas of need. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 42 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 62% are still practicing in underserved areas which is much better than the retention of National Health Service Corps program of 25%.

This bill supports 20-25 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$35,000 and up to \$50,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need. Please continue this program!

I personally was able to participate in this program and have all of my loans paid off. I am a pediatrician at a community health center and have chosen to stay and work in an underserved community because I want to continue to serve. However, the salary I am receiving and the cost of living in Hawaii would make it much harder to stay at a CHC if my loans were not paid off. I know of many doctors and psychologists who are leaving/have left the CHC setting because of the lower salary and their high debts. If this program could help them, they may reconsider staying and working in an underserved community. These communities deserve continuity of providers and providers who are dedicated to working with them. However, this is just not always feasible especially when more lucrative offers exist. Please help this program survive so that more providers can stay and work in the underserved communities.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 7:08:44 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Edward Johnston	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB1404, because it permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program thus supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health providers who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant to John A. Burns School of Medicine from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. In 2017, the Hawaii State Legislature funded the program for \$250,000 a year for two years. This has allowed for the loans of 42 health care workers from all islands to have their loans paid down. I would like to support the continuation of funding for this program as it will help us meet the growing shortage of physicians because loan repayment is one of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers to areas of need. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 42 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 62% are still practicing in underserved areas which is much better than the retention of National Health Service Corps program of 25%.

This bill supports 20-25 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$35,000 and up to \$50,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need. Please continue this program!

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 7:57:08 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Erica Davis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of SB1404, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health providers who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant to John A. Burns School of Medicine from the federal government but requires a local dollar for dollar match. In 2017, the Hawaii State Legislature funded the program for \$250,000 a year for two years. This has allowed for the loans of 42 health care workers from all islands to have their loans paid down. I would like to support the continuation of funding for this program as it will help us meet the growing shortage of physicians because loan repayment is one of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers to areas of need. The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 42 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 62% are still practicing in underserved areas which is much better than the retention of National Health Service Corps program of 25%.

This bill supports 20-25 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$35,000 and up to \$50,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need. Please continue this program!

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Erica Davis

(808) 861-9745

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 10:18:33 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Daniel H Belcher	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 10:30:17 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anne Scharnhorst	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Written Testimony Presented Before the Senate Committee on Higher Education**

**February 5, 2019 2:46 p.m.**

**by Anne Scharnhorst, MN, RN, UH Maui College Allied Health Dept Chair**

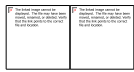
**IN STRONG SUPPORT SB 870 RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT**

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Higher Education committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** to this bill, SB 870. This bill makes an appropriation for the Hawai'i rural health care provider loan repayment program administered through the John A. Burns School of Medicine.

The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing conducts biennial research on the nursing workforce supply. The most recent Hawai'i Nursing Supply Report, published in 2017, finds that advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) have grown 104% in 12 years, and are present all over Hawai'i, bringing primary care to the communities where people live and work. Further, 100% of APRNs on Hawai'i, Maui, and Kaua'i Counties and nearly 5% of APRNs on Honolulu City and County work in HRSA defined Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs).

As complex care shifts into the community, our state will need to invest in workforce development efforts to refine, spread, and scale the emerging models to improve access to care in remote, underserved, and understaffed areas. This measure maximizes federal incentives to work in areas that are experiencing provider shortages or in a geographic area in Hawai'i found to be underserved.

Therefore, **Anne Scharnhorst** is in strong support of including APRNs, along with the other included health professions, in this loan repayment initiative. Moreover, **Anne Scharnhorst** is in strong support for full funding of this initiative. Thank you for your strong support of health care professionals, access to healthcare in Hawai'i, and healthcare equity for those in remote and underserved areas.



**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 10:52:05 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rhonda Roldan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of **SB870**, which permits continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health providers who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii. This program is possible through a grant to the John A. Burns School of Medicine from the federal government, but requires a local dollar for dollar match. In 2017, the Hawaii State Legislature funded the program for \$250,000 a year for two years. This has allowed for the loans of 42 health care workers from all islands to have their loans paid down. I would like to **support the continuation of funding** for this program as it will help us meet the **growing shortage of physicians** because loan repayment is one of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers to areas of need.

The Hawaii State Loan Repayment program has helped 42 providers since its inception in 2012. Of the program graduates, 62% are still practicing in underserved areas which is much better than the retention of National Health Service Corps program of 25%.

This bill supports 20-25 new healthcare providers a year to work in underserved areas across Hawaii and receive at least \$35,000 and up to \$50,000 a year in loan repayment for practicing at least two years in an area of need. **Please continue this program!**


**Mahalo for this opportunity to testify!**

**Rhonda Roldan**



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To: The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
The Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Members, Committee on Higher Education

From:   
Paula Yoshioka, Vice President, Government Relations and External Affairs, The  
Queen's Health Systems

Date: February 4, 2019

Hrg: Senate Committee on Higher Education Hearing; Tuesday, February 5, 2019 at 2:46 PM  
in Room 229

Re: Support for S.B. 870, Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals

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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 appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of S.B. 870, which makes an appropriation for the Hawaii rural health care provider loan repayment program administered through the John A. Burns School of Medicine. The 2018 Hawai'i Physician Workforce Assessment estimated the current shortage for physicians to be over 500. Queen's supports our local medical students and graduates who would like to live and work in Hawai'i through internship and residency programs. In FY 2017 Queen's contributed approximately \$15.2 million in education and training to support current and future health care professionals in the community. The burden of student loans, high cost of living, and the relatively lower income working in these areas act as barriers. Physicians who decide to work in rural areas, or with the underserved, often do so at significant financial disadvantage, and risk not being able to pay off their student loans. Providing financial assistance to students interested in health care careers is one way that we can start to address this issue.

This legislation shows a commitment to and investment in our local students and communities. Loan repayment programs will support efforts to fill in gaps in the state's health care workforce and will also benefit our underserved communities. We ask you to support the health care professionals loan repayment program. Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

**LATE**

Written Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
February 5, 2019 2:46 p.m.

by  
Katherine Finn Davis, PhD, APRN, FAAN  
UH Manoa

**IN STRONG SUPPORT  
SB 870 RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT**

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Higher Education committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** to this bill, SB 870. This bill makes an appropriation for the Hawai'i rural health care provider loan repayment program administered through the John A. Burns School of Medicine.

The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing conducts biennial research on the nursing workforce supply. The most recent Hawai'i Nursing Supply Report, published in 2017, finds that advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) have grown 104% in 12 years, and are present all over Hawai'i, bringing primary care to the communities where people live and work. Further, 100% of APRNs on Hawai'i, Maui, and Kaua'i Counties and nearly 5% of APRNs on Honolulu City and County work in HRSA defined Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs).

As complex care shifts into the community, our state will need to invest in workforce development efforts to refine, spread, and scale the emerging models to improve access to care in remote, underserved, and understaffed areas. This measure maximizes federal incentives to work in areas that are experiencing provider shortages or in a geographic area in Hawai'i found to be underserved.

Therefore, I am in strong support of including APRNs, along with the other included health professions, in this loan repayment initiative. Moreover, I am in strong support for full funding of this initiative. Thank you for your strong support of health care professionals, access to healthcare in Hawai'i, and healthcare equity for those in remote and underserved areas.



**LATE**

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 12:04:35 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kathleen Yokouchi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**LATE**

**SB-870**

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 8:34:26 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:46:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Torrey Lynch	Individual	Support	No

Comments: