

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/19/2021 10:35:49 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maddalynn Seseapasara	HHHRC	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Honorable Members,

Please pass HCR59/HR48 to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B, and C. This measure aligns with the [Hep Free Hawai'i strategic plan](#) and would be a huge benefit for our entire community.

Mahalo,

Maddalynn Seseapasara

Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center

Kua'ana Project, Project Manager

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/19/2021 2:08:23 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sarah Hamid	AF3IRM Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Honorable Members,

Please pass HCR59/HR48 to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B, and C. This measure aligns with the [Hep Free Hawai'i strategic plan](#) and would be a huge benefit for our entire community.

Mahalo,

AF3IRM Hawai'i

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 6:14:05 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Patrick Uyemoto	Times Pharmacy	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 11:31:09 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kenson Alik	Hep Free Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support of Bill HR48 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to mov towards no new hepatistis A, B or C infections in aHawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and /or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 11:43:37 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rensely Alik	Micronesian Education for Liver Wellness Program	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HR48 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



DATE 22 March 2021

To: Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair
Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair
House Committee on Health and Human Service

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: Strong Support of HR 48 RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING ONGOING COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT A STATEWIDE STRATEGY TO ELIMINATE VIRAL HEPATITIS A, B, AND C IN HAWAI'I

Hrg: 23 March 2021, 9:00 am in conference room 329 Via Videoconference

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 500 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. Our mission is to promote public health in Hawai'i through leadership, collaboration, education and advocacy. Issues around social justice and equity in areas that extend beyond the traditional context of health (e.g., education, digital equity, cultural sensitivity), can have profound impacts on health equity and well-being. Therefore, as stewards of public health, HPHA is advocating for equity in all policies.

HPHA strongly supports HR 48, to implement a statewide strategy to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B and C in Hawai'i. Viral hepatitis A, B and C have been long-term public health issues that result in serious morbidity and mortality among infected individuals. In 2013, viral hepatitis was the leading cause of death worldwide with a death toll that exceeded that from HIV, tuberculosis or malaria [1]. The majority of the burden is due to advanced liver disease from hepatitis B (HBV) and hepatitis C virus (HCV). HCV specifically is the top indication for liver transplant and a leading cause of liver cancer in the U.S. and HBV is the leading cause of liver cancer world-wide. The risk of transmission of hepatitis A (HAV), B and C varies among different populations. However, a commonality between each of these three infections is the disproportionate burden of infection among vulnerable populations such as the homeless, individuals impacted by substance abuse (specifically IV drug use as a main risk factor for HCV transmission), and foreign-born populations from HBV endemic countries. Acute HAV and HBV infection can be prevented with vaccination. Chronic HBV and progression of liver disease can be managed by proven treatments and routine screening for liver cancer. Acute HCV infection can be prevented by programs such as safe needle exchange. Chronic HCV infection can be cured by new treatments that offer a high success rate. Equally vital to prevention and management is screening for chronic HBV and HCV as a large percentage of individuals with HBV or HCV infection are unaware they are infected. Individuals with chronic HBV or HCV are often asymptomatic until they encounter symptoms of advanced liver disease.



Both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), have called for the eliminate hepatitis B and C worldwide by 2030 and have published detailed and evidence-based strategies for prevention and management [1,2]. These strategies include vaccination efforts (applicable to HAV and HBV); harm reduction programs for persons who inject drugs (most applicable to HCV); and screening and treatment (applicable to HBV and HCV).

The elimination of viral hepatitis A, B, and C is a top public health priority both nationally and globally. It is imperative that action is taken and proven evidence-based strategies are deployed to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B and C in Hawai'i. HPHA strongly supports HR 48.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Leocadia Conlon, PhD, MPH, PA-C
Legislative Committee Co-Chair
Hawaii Public Health Association

References:

1. World Health Organization. *Combating Hepatitis B and C to reach elimination by 2030*. https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/206453/WHO_HIV_2016.04_eng.pdf;jsessionid=3D3313A564F45D1D27CDA4273DDA80FE?sequence=1
2. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. *Progress Toward Viral Hepatitis Elimination in the United States, 2017*. <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/policy/pdfs/nationalprogressreport.pdf>

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/19/2021 1:55:59 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sarah Michal Hamid	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Honorable Members,

Please pass HCR59/HR48 to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B, and C. This measure aligns with the [Hep Free Hawai'i strategic plan](#) and would be a huge benefit for our entire community.

Mahalo,

Sarah Michal Hamid

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 3:59:01 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha HHH Committee,

As a public health professional and concerned citizen, I write in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HCR59, which requests the Legislature to recognize and support hepatitis elimination in Hawai'i, as detailed in the Hep Free 2030 strategy.

Hawai'i has one of the highest rates of liver cancer in the country, mostly due to hepatitis. The CDC recently recommended that all adults get tested for hepatitis C, which means that hepatitis in Hawai'i affects all communities. Many of the communities most affected by hepatitis (people who are houseless, people who are foreign born, people who are incarcerated) are also disparately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, this resolution would support a community-driven strategy to support communities to eliminate hepatitis and related harms.

Please support HCR59.

Mahalo,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 5:58:17 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Katz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C, and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis B), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 11:46:38 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Acasia Fukuda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

This innovative approach has been and will continue to lay the foundation for other programs to address the rise in infectious diseases and lack of equitable care for our marginalized populations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 12:34:55 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Daniel Saltman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59.

This bill highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii. It will increase access to screening and surveillance for these treatable infections and access to treatment for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C. Given our very high rates of liver cancer, a consequence of high rates of hepatitis, I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Hepatitis C (HCV) is an infection with a cure! In over 30 years of primary care practice in Hawaii, I have never seen anything like this. I started treating HCV in 2011 when treatment was a year of weekly injections that made patients feel ill. For the next 4-5 years, almost every year, newer treatments were approved that each made the prior ones obsolete. These were not "me too" drugs; they were more effective with less side effects. Now, we can **cure** 95+% of hepatitis C infections with only 8 weeks of pills taken once daily, with minimal side effects. This is incredible! HCV is a special case where the virus is not able to hide out inside of the cells. We test patients 12 weeks after the end of treatment to verify persisting absence of detectable virus. It really works! That is why the World Health Organization, countries like Russian Georgia, states like Louisiana and New York, and populations like the Navaho nation all have goals to eliminate HCV by 2030. Hawaii is a leader in the country in adopting these goals and moving forward with plans. As an island state, we are an ideal location to achieve these outcomes.

Further, I believe a coordinated effort to identify and treat hepatitis C infections is an excellent model for team care and for how a high functioning health system can work. The steps needed are well-defined as are the outcomes measures.

Please support HRC 59 as one step in the direction to eliminate hepatitis A, B and C in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 7:49:08 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kunane Dreier	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:10:41 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Beatrice Zovich	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:39:11 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Shaku	HHHRC	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HR-48

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:41:00 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anika Martin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.