



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

**Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 1150, SD1**  
**RELATING TO SKILLED NURSING FACILITY LICENSING**

REPRESENTATIVE RYAN I. YAMANE, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS

Hearing Date: Tuesday, March 23, 2021

Room Number: Video Conf.

1 **Fiscal Implications:** No negative fiscal implications.

2 **Department Testimony:** Thank you for the opportunity to testify in STRONG  
3 SUPPORT on this measure.

4 This bill seeks to mimic Section 321-14.5, Hawaii Revised Statute (HRS) on hospital  
5 licensing by allowing the Department to accept accreditation or certification of a skilled nursing  
6 facility (SNF) by a nationally recognized accreditation or certification organization.

7 Organizations such as the Joint Commission accredit SNFs and the U.S. Centers for  
8 Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) certifies SNFs. The Joint Commission's and CMS's  
9 requirements are more stringent than Hawaii's administrative rules and are updated more  
10 frequently as well.

11 The Department's Office of Health Care Assurance (OHCA) conducts Medicare  
12 certification surveys, including initial certification, recertification, and federal complaint  
13 investigation surveys on behalf of CMS as authorized by the U.S. Social Security Act Section  
14 1864 (1864 Agreement). CMS requires recertification surveys annually and OHCA conducts  
15 state license renewal surveys simultaneously with the CMS recertification surveys.

1           With this bill the Department could accept accreditation surveys from a private  
2 accreditation organization or use the CMS recertification survey for state licensing purposes.  
3 This could allow OHCA to redeploy its staffing resources to other equally important surveys or  
4 investigations especially during periods of limited staffing resources while maintaining oversight  
5 of SNFs to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the public.

6           The accreditation information or the CMS recertification survey report will be public  
7 record and OHCA will post such information of its webpage of survey reports. OHCA has  
8 posted the recent federal and state survey reports on the Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home and  
9 other federal reports on SNFs will be posted as well.

10           Finally, the bill would continue to allow the Department to conduct state licensing  
11 surveys and complaint investigations.

12           Thank you for the opportunity to testify in STRONG SUPPORT on this measure.

13   **Offered Amendments:** None.



**March 23, 2021 at 9:00 am**  
**Via Videoconference**

**House Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness**

To: Chair Ryan I. Yamane  
Vice Chair Adrian K. Tam

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

Re: **Submitting Comments**  
**SB 1150 SD 1, Relating to Skilled Nursing Facility Licensing**

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 healthcare 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 **comments** on this bill, which would allow the Department of Health to accept accreditation or certification from a qualified organization for the purposes of licensing a skilled nursing facility in the state. We appreciate the intent of the bill and appreciate that the use of an outside accreditation or certification program remains voluntary, rather than compulsory.

Our skilled nursing facilities are constantly reviewing federal guidance, regulations, and best practices and strive to provide the highest quality of care to patients, even during this difficult time. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill.