

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

Testimony in OPPOSITION to H.B. 1635 H.D. 2, S.D. 1
RELATING TO HEALTH CARE

SENATOR ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

SENATOR DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date: 4/1/2022

Room Number: 211 and via
Videoconference

1 The Department appreciates the intent of H.B. 1635 H.D., 2 S.D. 1 but respectfully opposes this
2 measure as it duplicates the current efforts of the Hawaii State Center for Nursing (HSCN). The
3 Department acknowledges the critical importance of addressing registered nurse recruitment and
4 retention in Maui County and is willing to participate in the task force. However, the Department
5 does not have the expertise and resources to lead this request as outlined in this measure, which
6 includes a needs assessment at each rural health care facility; managing the ratio of registered
7 nurses to patients in each rural health care facility; recommendations for affordable workforce
8 housing; surveying telehealth demand; identifying travel nurse options; analyzing nurse retention
9 impact on rural health care facilities; researching best practices on retaining registered nurses;
10 and preparation of a legislative report. Additionally, there may be insufficient time to convene
11 the task force, develop actionable recommendations, propose legislation, and complete the report
12 by the end of December 2022.

13 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers
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Director of Council Services
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

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David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

March 30, 2022

TO: Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Affairs

Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair

DATE: March 30, 2022

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF HB 1635, HD2, SD1, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to establish the Rural Health Task Force within the Department of Health to develop solutions and make recommendations on registered nurse recruitment and retention in rural areas of East Maui, Moloka'i, and Lāna'i.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **SUPPORT** this measure for the following reasons:

1. There is a vital need for healthcare workers in the rural areas of East Maui, Moloka'i, and Lāna'i.
2. These communities will benefit from the implementation of the Task Force's solutions and recommendations regarding the recruitment and retention of registered nurses in rural areas.
3. The measure appropriately includes representation on the Rural Health Task Force from Maui County's federally qualified health centers and rural health care facilities: Mālama I Ke Ola Health Center, Molokai Community Health Center, Molokai General Hospital, Lāna'i Community Health Center, and Hāna Health.

For the foregoing reasons, I **SUPPORT** this measure.



TESTIMONY TO:
**THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE
AND CONSUMER PROTECTION**
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Friday, April 1, 2022; 10:00 am

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1635, HD2, SD1 RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

Chairs Baker and Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs Chang and Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committees:

My name is Cheryl Vasconcellos and I am the Executive Director of Hana Health a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) providing essential primary care to patients residing in one of the most remote locations in the state. I am testifying in SUPPORT of this bill.

Hana Health has served the people of Hana, Maui for almost twenty-five years. We are the only primary health care provider in the district requiring that we provide urgent/emergent care 24/7 in addition to routine health, dental and behavioral health services. The majority of our patients are low-income Native Hawaiians. Due to the special needs and challenges facing this population, as well as the difficulties experienced in providing care in this remote, isolated region, Hana Health has also focused on addressing the social determinants of health in order to impact the health care outcomes of our patients.

We experience firsthand how the lack of an adequate supply of competent and trained health care professionals in the State has exacerbated the cost and demands we face in providing essential care for patients.

In Maui County, the four FQHCs work in tandem in support of our mission to service the people of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai. We stand together committed in doing this crucial work and look forward to working with the Rural Health Task Force to address the serious shortage of health care workers in our communities. **Hana Health respectfully asks that this measure be approved.**

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 808-248-7515, extension 26.

LĀNA'Ī COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

P. O. Box 630142
Lāna'ī City, HI 96763-0142



Phone: 808-565-6919
Fax: 808-565-9111
dshaw@lanaicommunityhealthcenter.org

The Community is our Patient -- men, women, children, uninsured, insured!

March 30, 2022

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
and Ways and Means
Friday, April 1, 2022; 2:00 p.m.

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1635, Senate Draft 1, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

Chair Baker, Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Diana Shaw and I am the Executive Director of Lāna'ī Community Health Center (LCHC), a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) providing essential primary care to patients residing in one of the most remote locations in the state. I am testifying in SUPPORT of this bill and respectfully request an amendment.

LCHC has served the people of Lāna'ī, for over 15 years. Many of our patients are at or below the federal poverty level; in addition, a large number receive health care as Medicaid recipients. Because of the special needs and challenges facing this population, LCHC has had to establish strong links throughout the community to provide for not only their immediate health needs, but also address the social determinants of health that drastically impact the health care outcomes of our patients.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would establish a Rural Health Task Force (Task Force) within the Department of Health (DOH) to prepare and develop solutions and make recommendations regarding rural areas of east Maui, Molokai, and Lanai, with specific emphasis on the recruitment and retention of registered nurses.

E Ola nō Lāna'ī
LIFE, HEALTH, and WELL-BEING FOR LĀNA'Ī

The bill would take effect on July 1, 2060

This bill would provide DOH with assistance from the health care providers in East Maui, Molokai, and Lānaʻi in developing tangible action steps to assist with recruitment and retention of registered nurses in these areas.

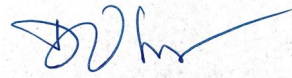
We greatly appreciate the amendments made by the House Committee on Finance to include on the Task Force all of the FQHCs that provide primary care to patients in this region. On behalf of Hana Health, Lanai Community Health Center, Malama I Ke Ola Health Center, and Molokai Community Health Center, the HPCA stands committed to assisting in this endeavor.

While we understand the Senate Committee on Health's finding that the Department of Human Services (DHS) does not have expertise in the recruitment, employment, or management of registered nurses, the HPCA asserts that the DHS plays an integral role in the reimbursement of the services nurses provide under Medicaid. From our perspective, because so many of our patients are Medicaid recipients, the manner in which providers are reimbursed for services will greatly impact the ability of FQHCs to continue to provide primary care for isolated and rural communities. **As such, we respectfully request that DHS be added back as a member of this Task Force.**

For this reason, LCHC respectfully urges your favorable consideration of his bill.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 808-565-6919 or by email, dshaw@lanaihealth.org.

Very Truly Yours,



D. M. V. Shaw, PhD, MPH, MBA, FACMPE
Executive Director

cc: B.J. Ott, Malama I Ke Ola Health Center
Helen Kekalia, Molokai Community Health Center
Cheryl Vasconcellos, Hana Community Health Center
Representative Linda Clark
Senator Lynn DeCoite



THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

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

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Janice Kalanihulia, President, Molokai General Hospital – The Queen's Health Systems

Jace Mikulanec, Director, Government Relations, The Queen's Health Systems

Date: April 1, 2022

Re: Support for HB 1635 HD2 SD1: Relating to Health Care

The Queen's Health Systems (Queen's) is a nonprofit 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, and more than 1,500 affiliated physicians and providers 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 HB 1635 HD2 SD1, which establishes the rural health task force within the department of health to make recommendations on registered nurse recruitment and retention in rural areas of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai. Since 2019, Hawaii has experienced more than 900 nurses leaving the workforce due to the rise of Covid-19, cost of living, and the lack of affordable housing; this shortage has impacted our rural communities the most. We appreciate the legislature taking this proactive approach to help address our current nursing workforce shortage.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1635 HD2 SD1.

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.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection and
Ways and Means
Friday, April 1, 2022; 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211
Via Videoconference**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1635, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

Chair Baker, Chair Dela Cruz, 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. 1635, Senate Draft 1, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live 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.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would establish a Rural Health Task Force (Task Force) within the Department of Health (DOH) to prepare and develop solutions and make recommendations regarding rural areas of east Maui, Molokai, and Lanai, with specific emphasis on the recruitment and retention of registered nurses.

The bill would take effect on July 1, 2060.

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

Testimony on House Bill No. 1635, Senate Draft 1
Friday, April 1, 2022; 10:00 a.m.
Page 2

Physicians are not the only professionals in high demand. The same also applies to registered nurses.

This bill would provide the DOH with assistance from the health care providers in east Maui, Molokai, and Lanai in developing tangible action steps to assist with the recruitment and retention of registered nurses in these areas.

We greatly appreciate the amendments made by the House Committee on Finance to include on the Task Force all of the FQHCs that provide primary care to patients in this region. On behalf of Hana Health, Lanai Community Health Center, Malama I Ke Ola Health Center, and Molokai Community Health Center, the HPCA stands committed to assisting in this endeavor.

For this reason, the HPCA urges your favorable consideration of this bill.

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.



March 31, 2022

Chair Baker
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Ways and Means
State Capitol, Conference Room 211
Honolulu, Hawaii. 96813
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1635, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

Dear Chair Baker, Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committee:

Molokai Ohana Health Care, Inc., dba Molokai Community Health Center (MCHC) is the only Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) located on Molokai and one of four FQHC's in Maui County. MCHC provides primary care, dental services, mental health services, and care enabling services to patients on Molokai, regardless of their ability to pay for such services. MCHC is in **SUPPORT House Bill No. 1635, Senate Draft 1, Relating to Health care.**

MCHC has served the people of Molokai for eighteen years. Over half of our patients are low-income Native Hawaiians and today we proudly serve 40% of the total Molokai population. Due to the special needs and challenges facing this population, as well as the difficulties experienced in providing care in this remote, isolated region, Molokai Community Health Center has also expanded services to addressing the social determinants of health in order to impact the health care outcomes of our patients ranging from the island's largest on-site food pantry to offering mobile in-person primary care and soon specialty care via telehealth services in our mobile unit, complete with our own broadband capabilities, for our most rural neighborhoods.

We experience firsthand how the lack of an adequate supply of competent and trained health care professionals in the State has exacerbated the cost and demands we face in providing essential care for patients. Because of this, we want to thank the introducer, newly-appointed Representative Linda Clark for submitting this very important proposal and appreciate the amendments made by the House Committee on Finance to include on the Task Force all of the FQHC's that provide primary care to patients in this region and are committed to assisting this endeavor together.

This bill would provide the DOH with direct assistance from the health care providers in this region of east Maui, Molokai and Lanai in developing tangible action steps to assist with the recruitment and retention of registered nurses in our district.


*Mission: To provide and promote accessible comprehensive individual and community health care to the people of Molokai with respect and aloha.
Visit us at <http://molokaichc.org>*

MOLOKAI OHANA HEALTH CARE, INC.

For these reasons, MCHC supports HB1635, HD2 and respectfully asks that this measure be approved.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 808-660-2630.

Very Truly Yours,



Helen Kekalia Wescoatt
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Representative Linda Clark

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to the people of Molokai with respect and aloha.
Visit us at <http://molokaichc.org>*



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

LATE

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON
COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION and WAYS AND MEANS
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 211
THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2022 AT 10:00 A.M.**

To The Honorable Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
The Honorable Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Members of the committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
To The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Members of the committee on Ways and Means

SUPPORTING HB1635 HD2 SD1 RELATING TO HEALTH CARE

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **supports HB1635 HD2 SD1** which establishes the rural health task force within the department of health to prepare and develop solutions and make recommendations on registered nurse recruitment and retention in rural areas of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai.

The Chamber would like to thank the legislature for include representation on the rural health taskforce from Maui County's four federally qualified health centers (FQHCs): Malama I Ke Ola Health Center, Molokai Community Health Center, Lāna'i Community Health Center, and Hana Health.

We feel there is a vital need for healthcare workers in rural areas of East Maui, Molokai, and Lanai and these communities will benefit from the implementation of the taskforce's solutions and recommendations regarding the recruitment and retention of registered nurses in rural areas. Since Maui has only one (major) hospital and it attracts most of the healthcare workers on Maui, this taskforce is sorely needed.

For this reason, we **support HB1635 HD2 SD1** and request it be passed.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.



Hawaii State Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Hawaii State Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Friday, April 1, 2022, at 10:00 am
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

LATE

HB1635 HD2 SD1 Relating to Health

Good morning, Chair Baker, Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection and the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.

My name is Jocelyn Saccamago and I serve as the Regional Vice President for Hawaii and Guam of Liberty Dialysis. We are an affiliate of Fresenius Kidney Care.

Liberty Dialysis stands in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB1635 HD2 SD1 Relating to Health Care.

As a provider of healthcare services in the rural areas of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai, we have experienced first-hand the many challenges of recruiting and retaining registered nurses to care for patients. Hawaii, like the rest of the nation, is faced with a nursing shortage and the pandemic of the past two years has exacerbated this shortage. Shortages in any area of healthcare – whether it be in a hospital or outpatient or specialty setting – affects all providers in healthcare because each of our patients utilize services from multiple providers. Depending on traveling nurses is not always practical nor is having multiple employers continuing to go after the same pool of nurses that is too small, and quite candidly stretched too thin, to meet all our needs.

Maui's rural areas are faced with unique challenges in attracting and retaining registered nurses. The island geography and accessibility of these areas makes it difficult to find staff who are open to relocating and/or commuting. Yet, these areas are often the places that require consistent and well skilled nurses the most. Public health nurses are vital connections to the community and health promotion activities. Registered nurses for clinics, hospitals, and specialty settings like our dialysis clinics are similarly critically needed to maintain the health of families and persons living in these communities.

The Task Force that this bill proposes will be key to developing solutions that benefit these communities. We stand ready to join together with our colleagues to help develop strategies and solutions for growing a viable workforce of registered nurses in the rural areas of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai.

Liberty Dialysis Hawaii strongly urges you to please pass this bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

2226 Liliha Street, Suite 226 Honolulu, HI 96817