

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
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**Testimony COMMENTING on HCR66**  
**REQUESTING THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH TO ESTABLISH A TELEHEALTH**  
**AND TELEPHONIC SERVICES WORKING GROUP TO ADDRESS THE**  
**COMPLEXITIES SURROUNDING THE APPROPRIATE USE OF TELEHEALTH**  
**AND TELEPHONIC SERVICES, BY SPECIALTY CARE AREA, AND COVERAGE**  
**OF THESE SERVICES BY HEALTH INSURANCE.**

REP. RYAN I. YAMANE, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: March 29, 2022

Room Number: 329 & Video

1 **Fiscal Implications:** N/A.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Commerce and  
3 Consumer Affairs, as well as numerous stakeholders have organized support behind establishing  
4 telehealth as a community standard of care since at least 2015. Landmark legislation in 2016 and  
5 2017, supported by Hawaii's congressional delegation, have propelled the State of Hawaii into a  
6 position of leadership for telehealth policy. Health insurers are required to reimburse telehealth  
7 visits at the same level as in-person office visits, and numerous other burdens such as establishing  
8 provider-patient relationships have been liberalized.

9 HCR66 focuses on reimbursement for audio-only telephonic behavioral health services for which  
10 a working group led by DOH is not required. This issue is solely and specifically a matter of  
11 reimbursement policy and scope of practice for licensed clinicians for which DOH does not  
12 possess authority nor expertise. As a result, DOH respectfully requests to be removed from the  
13 leadership of the working group, though the department may contribute as a subject-matter  
14 expert for eligibility-based public mental health and substance abuse programs.

15 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN  
LT. GOVERNOR

**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

335 MERCHANT STREET, ROOM 310  
P.O. BOX 541  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809  
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CATHERINE P. AWAKUNI COLÓN  
DIRECTOR

JO ANN M. UCHIDA TAKEUCHI  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs**

**Before the  
House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness  
Monday, March 29, 2022  
10:00 a.m.  
Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:  
H.C.R. 66, REQUESTING THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH TO ESTABLISH A  
TELEHEALTH AND TELEPHONIC SERVICES WORKING GROUP TO ADDRESS  
THE COMPLEXITIES SURROUNDING THE APPROPRIATE USE OF TELEHEALTH  
AND TELEPHONIC SERVICES, BY SPECIALTY CARE AREA, AND COVERAGE OF  
THESE SERVICES BY HEALTH INSURANCE**

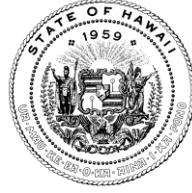
Chair Yamane and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ahlani Quiogue, and I am the Licensing Administrator of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' (Department) Professional and Vocational Licensing Division (Division). The Department appreciates the intent of and offers comments on this resolution.

The purpose of this measure is to request that the Director of Health establish a telehealth and telephonic services working group to address the complexities surrounding the appropriate use of telehealth and telephonic services, by specialty care area, and coverage of these services by health insurance. The working group shall include representatives of government and various other organizations.

The Department appreciates the intent of this resolution because it proposes to study very important matters that could ultimately result in better access to care for the consumers of this State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this resolution.



DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN  
LT. GOVERNOR

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**Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs**

**Before the  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, AND HOMELESSNESS  
Tuesday, March 29, 2022  
10:00 a.m.  
Room 329 and Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:  
H.C.R. 66, REQUESTING THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH TO ESTABLISH A  
TELEHEALTH AND TELEPHONIC SERVICES WORKING GROUP TO ADDRESS  
THE COMPLEXITIES SURROUNDING THE APPROPRIATE USE OF TELEHEALTH  
AND TELEPHONIC SERVICES, BY SPECIALTY CARE AREA, AND COVERAGE OF  
THESE SERVICES BY HEALTH INSURANCE.**

Chair Yamane and Members of the Committee:

My name is Colin M. Hayashida, and I am the Insurance Commissioner of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' (Department) Insurance Division. The Department offers comments on these resolutions.

These resolutions request the Director of Health to establish a working group on telehealth and telephonic services to address the complexities surrounding the appropriate use of telehealth and telephonic services, by specialty care area, and coverage of these services by health insurance.

The resolutions further provide that the working group is to include as a member, the Insurance Commissioner, or the Insurance Commissioner's designee.

The adoption of telehealth services has reduced barriers to care during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The law on coverage for telehealth currently

provides that reimbursement levels for telehealth and for the same service provided via face-to-face contact are equivalent. The National Association of Insurance Commissioners commented in a January 27, 2022 letter to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that the use of telehealth should be one factor in determining sufficient network coverage, but its value should be carefully considered and balanced with making in-person care sufficiently available. Telehealth is clinically different than in-person care and may not provide the same level of care in some situations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on these resolutions.



March 25, 2022

The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
The Honorable Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness

Re: HCR 66 / HR 60 – Requesting the Director of Health to establish a telehealth and telephonic services working group to address the complexities surrounding the appropriate use of telehealth and telephonic services, by specialty care area, and coverage of these services by health insurance.

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) is in strong support of HCR 66 and HR 60, which requests the establishment of a telehealth and telephonic services working group to address appropriate use and insurance coverage of these services.

HMSA is a strong supporter of telehealth and was the first health plan in the nation to provide a telehealth platform: HMSA Online Care. We believe that the ability to provide remote audio-visual patient-provider interaction allows for increased access and quality health care. We also acknowledge that digital health disparities are an important issue facing our community. Therefore, for those who lack access to the audio-visual technology necessary for telehealth visits, we support the appropriate use of audio-only telephonic services when an equitable level of clinical outcome is achieved.

As the technology and understanding of appropriate use of these services has changed and evolved in the years since the creation of the original telehealth state statutes and regulations, we believe that the establishment of this working group is timely. We are interested in participating as one of the two representatives from the health insurance industry if that is the pleasure of the working group chairperson.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support on this measure. Your consideration of our comments is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Matthew W. Sasaki  
Assistant Vice President  
Government & External Relations



**March 29, 2022 at 10:00 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  
Associate Vice President, Government Affairs  
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Testimony in Support**  
**HCR 60 and HR 66, Requesting the Director of Health to establish a telehealth and telephonic services working group to address the complexities surrounding the appropriate use of telehealth and telephonic services, by specialty care area, and coverage of these services by health insurance**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this resolution, which seeks to create a better understanding of and opportunities for the use of telephonic telehealth in the state. The pandemic radically changed patient and provider use of telehealth and it is clear that this modality of care will become a permanent preference for many. However, there are remaining questions about how to best use and provide telehealth, whether that be through store and forward technology, audio-visual platforms, or through telephonic means.

Hawaii has long been at the forefront of telehealth policy and a working group that discussing the appropriate use and expansion of telephonic telehealth in the state will allow continued innovation on this issue. We would suggest that it would be appropriate to include a representative from the Healthcare Association of Hawaii on this measure since the use of telehealth for individuals receiving post-acute care in nursing facilities or through home health and hospice should be part of this discussion.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.



## THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

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To: The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
The Honorable Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair  
Members, House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness

From: Jacce Mikulanec, Director, Government Relations, The Queen's Health Systems

Date: March 28, 2022

Re: Support of HCR66: REQUESTING THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH TO ESTABLISH A TELEHEALTH AND TELEPHONIC SERVICES WORKING GROUP TO ADDRESS THE COMPLEXITIES SURROUNDING THE APPROPRIATE USE OF TELEHEALTH AND TELEPHONIC SERVICES, BY SPECIALTY CARE AREA, AND COVERAGE OF THESE SERVICES BY HEALTH INSURANCE.

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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 1,600 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 comments in support of HCR66, which requests the Director of Health to establish a telehealth and telephonic services working group to address the complexities surrounding the appropriate use of telehealth and telephonic services, by specialty care area, and coverage of these services by health insurance.

Throughout the COVID19 pandemic Queen's has relied increasingly on various modes of telehealth to deliver critical medical services to our patients – including those delivered through telephonic means. This is particularly beneficial to patients who may have limited mobility, reside in rural areas, or otherwise cannot access services in an office setting. Queen's has particular interest in the deployment and utilization of telehealth services for our neighbor island patients and facilities (Molokai General Hospital and North Hawai'i Community Hospital). As such, Queen's would welcome the opportunity to be a member of the working group.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HCR66.

*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.*



**HCR-66**

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 8:34:24 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/29/2022 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kaili	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

i support HCR66 i use telehealth technology to go the doctors appointments

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



ELIZABETH A. CHAR, M.D.  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
STATE COUNCIL  
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING  
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543  
March 29, 2022

The Honorable Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
House Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness  
The Thirty-First Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawai'i  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Representative Yamane and Committee members:

SUBJECT: HCR66

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities **SUPPORTS HCR66**, which requests the director of Health to establish a telehealth and telephonic services working group to address the complexities surrounding the appropriate use of telehealth and telephonic services, by specialty care area, and coverage of these services by health insurance.

COVID has shown that our intellectual and or developmental disability (I/DD) community members must turn more and more to internet-based supports. Some of these supports come in the form of telehealth appointments and Zoom based communication. COVID proved that many individuals within our I/DD community are part of a high-risk group that needed to rely on staying at home and using telehealth services more so than the average citizen. Many of our I/DD community members live in rural areas of our state and do not have easy access to highspeed broadband. These individuals found themselves without internet and many times without any form of support during the pandemic.

Telehealth and telephonic health are key ways to provide health care for individuals with developmental disabilities (DD). A working group to explore in more detail the nuances of implementing and maximizing the use of telehealth and telephonic services would help our DD community.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support of HCR66**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daintry Bartoldus".

Daintry Bartoldus  
Executive Administrator



## **DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD**

1010 Richards Street, Room 118 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V) • Fax (808) 586-8129

March 29, 2022

### **TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, & HOMELESSNESS**

**House Concurrent Resolution 66 / House Resolution 60 –  
Requesting the Director of Health to Establish a Telehealth and Telephonic Services  
Working Group to Address the Complexities Surrounding the Appropriate Use of  
Telehealth and Telephonic Services, by Specialty Care Area, and  
Coverage of these Services by Health Insurance**

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports House Concurrent Resolution 66 and House Resolution 60.

Telehealth is a valuable option for people with disabilities. Telehealth appointments assist patients with mobility disabilities who may have transportation difficulties in attending in-person appointments. Patients with disabilities who have certain underlying conditions may be at a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 and will have an option to schedule telehealth appointments.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kirby L. Shaw".

**KIRBY L. SHAW**  
Executive Director



March 25, 2022

The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
The Honorable Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness

**HCR 66 / HR 60 – Requesting the Director of Health to establish a telehealth and telephonic services working group to address the complexities surrounding the appropriate use of telehealth and telephonic services, by specialty care area, and coverage of these services by health insurance.**

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Committee Members:

The Hawaii Association of Health Plans (HAHP) appreciates the opportunity to testify in **support** of HCR 66 / HR 60. HAHP is a statewide partnership of Hawaii’s health plans and affiliated organizations to improve the health of Hawaii’s communities together. The vast majority of Hawaii residents receive their health coverage through a health plan associated with one of our organizations.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how valuable telehealth and other remote forms of care are important modalities of health care service delivery. Greater access to quality health care services is needed throughout the state and especially in rural areas where the shortages of health care providers are most severe.

Therefore, we support the establishment of a working group to further discuss and identify the appropriate use and insurance coverage levels of telehealth and telephonic services in the state.

Thank you for allowing us to testify in support of HCR 66 / HR 60.

Sincerely,

HAHP Public Policy Committee

cc: HAHP Board Members

[hahp.org](http://hahp.org) | 818 Keeaumoku St., Honolulu, HI 96814 | [info@hahp.org](mailto:info@hahp.org)