

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 1, 2022

TO: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 1294 SD1– RELATING TO MEDICAID BENEFITS.**

**HEARING:** Thursday, March 3, 2022, 10:10 am  
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this measure to fund the restoration of adult dental benefits for the Medicaid program. However, we respectfully request that the Legislature consider adding the appropriation to the executive budget. As noted in STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2036, the Governor's budget priorities include funding to restore a basic adult dental benefit of preventive, diagnostic, and some restorative dental services.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this measure is to appropriate funds to reinstate the basic package of diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees. Effective 12/31/2050. (SD1) The SD1 amended the measure by:

- (1) Replacing the purpose section with the updated language for Senate Bill No. 2401, Regular Session of 2022;
- (2) Clarifying that the funds appropriated by this measure are for the purpose of reinstating coverage of the basic package of diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits for adult Medicaid enrollees;
- (3) Inserting an appropriation amount of \$10,195,082;
- (4) Inserting an effective date of December 31, 2050, to allow further discussion on whether the funding in the Executive Supplemental Budget for fiscal year 2022-2023

- for the Department of Human Services (HMS 401) to reinstate certain adult dental benefits will be appropriated or authorized; and
- (5) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

DHS appreciates the SD1 amendments and supports the restoration of a basic oral health benefits for adult Medicaid and QUEST Integration beneficiaries. The current limited benefit of emergency-only coverage does not support the goals of whole-person care. Lack of access to preventive oral health care can have a negative impact on a person's health, especially for individuals with chronic diseases, pregnant women, and the health of their newborns. For these reasons, the executive budget includes \$10,195,082 (\$3,466,328 A funds/\$6,728,754 N funds) to restore dental services for adult Medicaid beneficiaries. This amount is the equivalent of Option 1: Limited dental benefit focused only on prevention and oral disease control (e.g., dental procedures such as diagnostics (x-rays), cleanings, and fillings). The SD 1 clarified restoration of a limited adult dental benefit, the equivalent of Option 1 below. The appropriation amount was for the full \$10,195,082 amount with no specification of general funds (A funds) or federal funds (N funds).

As background, in 2020, DHS Med-QUEST Division (MQD) with the Health Policy Institute of the American Dental Association (HPI ADA) released a study that updated cost estimates for the restoration of the adult dental benefit. MQD identified three coverage options, ranging from a basic dental coverage to a comprehensive option, which is also referenced in this bill.

**Option 1.** Limited dental benefit focused only on prevention and oral disease control (dental procedures such as diagnostics (x-rays), cleanings, and fillings).

**Option 2.** Basic dental benefit focused on oral disease control and some restoration of chewing functions (diagnostics, cleanings, fillings, some root canals, some crowns, and some dentures).

**Option 3.** Comprehensive coverage that includes most dental procedures with some limits.

Since the study's release in 2020, the number of adult beneficiaries has increased substantially. Accordingly, the costs of each option were also updated:

	Option 1 (Gov recommended)	Option 2	Option 3
Total Cost	10,195,082	25,952,297	47,384,075
Federal Funds	6,728,754	17,128,516	31,273,490
State Funds	3,466,328	8,823,781	16,110,586

Lastly, if an appropriation is forthcoming, we respectfully request that the Legislature consider adding the appropriation to the executive budget. Including an appropriation via this measure would only be a one-time appropriation which would not support the necessary continuity of an adult dental program. However, if the appropriation will be via this measure, DHS requests that Section 2 be revised to accurately reflect the appropriation by the means of financing (MOF) or source of funds.

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

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND  
MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

**WRITTEN ONLY**  
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
ON  
SENATE BILL NO. 1294, S.D. 1

**March 3, 2022**  
**10:10 a.m.**  
**Room 211 and Videoconference**

**RELATING TO MEDICAID BENEFITS**

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill No. 1294, S.D. 1, appropriates \$10,195,082 in general funds in FY 23 to the Department of Human Services to restore diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees.

B&F notes that the FY 23 Executive Supplemental Budget already includes \$3,466,328 in general funds and \$6,728,754 in federal funds in HMS 401's budget in FY 23 to restore certain adult dental benefits.

B&F also notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Thursday, March 3, 2022 at 10:10 a.m.

By

Jerris Hedges, MD, Dean and  
Lee Buenconsejo-Lum, MD, FAAFP  
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs & DIO, UH JABSOM  
John A. Burns School of Medicine

And

Michael Bruno, PhD  
Provost  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### SB 1294 SD1 – RELATING TO MEDICAID BENEFITS

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today. The John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) supports SB 1294 SD1 which appropriates funds to restore diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees.

Oral disease is a significant health problem for many Hawai'i residents, affecting their overall health and well-being. 223,438 adult Medicaid recipients have no diagnostic, preventive, or restorative dental coverage. In 2009, the State terminated all preventive and restorative dental care services for adult Medicaid recipients and reduced coverage to emergency-only care that is limited to pain relief, injuries, trauma, and tooth removal and extraction. The lack of preventive and restorative dentistry services for adult Medicaid beneficiaries increases potential health care complications for persons with co-existing chronic diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease. Poor oral health, combined with co-existing conditions like these, have been shown to lead to increased disability and death.

In Hawai'i, a disproportionate number of adult Medicaid enrollees ages twenty-one to forty-four use the emergency department for emergency dental services. Between 2016-2020, 29,536 adults aged 21 and older visited the emergency department with a dental-related diagnosis, and forty-nine percent (49%) of emergency department visits with a principal dental-related diagnosis were Medicaid recipients. On average during 2016-2020, Medicaid enrollees made two thousand seven hundred emergency department visits per year for acute oral health conditions, totaling \$21,700,000 in charges for outpatient emergency services only. Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders were disproportionately represented in emergency department visits for dental-related diagnoses.

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

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**LATE**

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 03, 2022

The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
The Thirty-First Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawai'i  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Senator Dela Cruz and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: SB1294 SD1 Relating to Medicaid Benefits

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities **STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB1294 SD1** which appropriates funds to restore diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees.

The Council cannot emphasize the importance of dental care services that include preventive, restorative, prosthetic, and emergency services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We are all aware of how oral health, or the lack thereof, affects all aspects (emotional, psychological, and social) of our lives. Numerous individuals can share with you their experience of having a tooth or teeth extracted or acquiring severe health problems because necessary dental services were not available because of the termination of the Medicaid adult dental benefit coverage in 2008. Compounding these issues is the limited number of dentists on the Neighbor Islands who are available and willing to serve Medicaid enrollees.

Not only does lack of preventative oral care affect one's overall health. It profoundly impacts these individuals' abilities to obtain gainful employment. It is hard to have self-confidence during an interview when you are missing teeth or have poor dental care. Many individuals with intellectual and or developmental disabilities are already at a disadvantage within our current job market; our population does not need poor dental care to add to this issue.

SB1294 SD1 Relating to Medicaid Benefits

March 03, 2022

Page 2 of 2

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **strong support of SB1294 SD1.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daintry Bartoldus". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Daintry Bartoldus

Executive Administrator





**HO'OLA LAHUI HAWAI'I**  
*P.O. Box 3990; Līhu'e, Hawai'i*  
*Phone: 808.240.0100 Fax: 808.246.9551*

February 22, 2021

**COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS**

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

**Testimony in Support of SB 1294, SB1**  
Restoration of Full Adult Dental Medicaid Benefits

Thursday 03-3-2022, 10:10 Am  
CR 308 & Videoconference.

Ho'ola Lahui Hawaii the only Federally Qualified Health Center and Native Hawaiian Health Care System on Kauai is strongly **SUPPORTING** this bill to restore adult dental benefits for those on Medicaid.

HLH believes that the committee should restore the adult dental benefit to its full capacity and that includes what the program covered in 2009 including restorative services (crowns, dentures, partials, fillings, root canals) along with preventive services (screenings, cleanings, treatments). Without the full range of dental benefits patients will not get the necessary care to maintain their oral health which affects the entire health of the patient.

Treating patient in the emergency room for dental care is financially prudent nor does it address the dental health of the patient as they will still need a dentist upon discharge to manage their long-term treatment. Covering preventive and restorative services are vital to the overall health of the patient.

Since 2009 when this benefit was removed, we have witnessed increasing numbers of individuals who are in dire need of care including major decay and infection. Therefore, it is necessary to include restorative services.

This is the one of the most important bills currently in the legislature to our patients. We strongly encourage the committee to pass this bill and restore full benefits to those most in need.

Respectfully,

David Peters  
Chief Executive Officer



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**The State Legislature**  
**The Senate Committee on Ways and Means**  
**Thursday, March 3, 2022**  
**10:10 a.m.**

TO: The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
RE: Support for S.B. 1294 S.D.1, Relating to Medicaid Benefits

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i Lopez and I am the State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a membership organization of people age fifty and over, with over 140,000 members in Hawai'i.

**AARP strongly supports S.B. 1294 S.D.1** which appropriates funds to restore diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees.

- According to an issue paper on improving dental coverage for older adults, (Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, July 2021), nearly one half of the Medicare population (47%) or 24 million beneficiaries 65 years and older, do not have dental coverage.
- Almost half of all Medicare beneficiaries did not have a dental visit within the past year (47%), with higher rates among those who have low incomes (73%), or who are in fair or poor health (63%), as of 2018.
- Average out-of-pocket spending on dental services among Medicare beneficiaries who had any dental service was \$874 in 2018. One in five Medicare beneficiaries (20%) who used dental services spent more than \$1,000 out-of-pocket on dental care.

Cost concerns and lack of dental coverage contribute to many older adults foregoing routine and other dental procedures. Inadequate dental care can exacerbate chronic medical conditions such as diabetes and heart conditions, and lead to preventable complications that sometimes result in costly emergency room visits. Adults who are disabled, homebound, or institutionalized have an even greater risk of dental diseases. Many of them would be Medicaid recipients. Broadening the dental benefit to the adult Medicaid enrollee will greatly improve their overall health and reduce the risk of costly medical care and emergency room visits.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to **support S.B. 1294 S.D.1**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keali'i S. Lopez".

Keali'i S. López  
State Director

**SB-1294-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2022 1:12:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/3/2022 10:10:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Louis Erteschik	Testifying for Hawaii Disability Rights Center	Support	No

Comments:

Strong support.



## KŌKUA KALIHI VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE FAMILY SERVICES

2239 N. SCHOOL STREET ♦ HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819 ♦ TEL: 808-791-9400 ♦ FAX: 808-848-0979 ♦ [www.kkv.net](http://www.kkv.net)

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**To:** Senate Ways and Means Committee

**Hearing Date/Time:** Thursday, March 3, 2022, 10:10 AM

**Re:** SB 1294, SD 1, RELATING TO ADULT DENTAL MEDICAID BENEFITS.

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to *testify in support* on SB 1294, SD 1, relating to adult dental Medicaid benefits. I strongly support this bill and urge funding at the Option 2 level.

In 2009, Hawaii eliminated diagnostic, preventive and restorative dental services for adults on Medicaid. Hawaii is currently one of only 13 states that provide emergency care only. Since 2009, we have seen increased emergency department (ED) utilization, particularly by Medicaid recipients, and increased costs related to otherwise preventable conditions.

The Hawaii Med-QUEST Division and the State Legislature received the Hawaii-specific fiscal analysis from the Health Policy Institute of the American Dental Association in February 2020 that projected both costs and cost benefits to restore Hawaii adult dental benefits. Three options for reinstating dental benefits were provided at that time.

It is recommended that the House advocate for Option 2, which would enable Medicaid recipients to get a range of diagnostic, preventive and restorative services, as well as basic prosthodontic and periodontal services, as needed. The difference in State funding would be \$8,823,781 in state funds for option 2, versus \$3,466,328 in State funds for option 1. Federal funding would provide the remainder of the costs under the Federal Medicaid Assistance Percentage (FMAP). Limited coverage under option 1 would be capped per recipient and may only cover an annual exam, fluoride treatment, bi-annual cleanings, one set of bite wing X-rays per year and one non-emergency tooth extraction or filling per year. As you can imagine, dental care for someone who has been without any for a while (12 years since benefits were reduced!) is likely to exceed this limited benefit. It seems that reinstating coverage to the second option makes more sense, given the high costs paid for poor oral health exacerbated co-conditions and visits to the ER for acute dental care.

What is important to note that this fiscal analysis also projects that over time, additional medical care cost savings are expected due to health status improvements in cooccurring health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, pregnancy, and fewer ER visits for services

Thank you for your time to testify in support of this bill,

David Derauf, MD, MPH

Executive Director

Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services

Providing Medical & Dental Services, Health Education, Family Planning, Perinatal, WIC and Social Services to  
Kalihi Valley residents since 1972. Neighbors being neighborly to neighbors.

Providing Medical & Dental Services, Health Education, Family Planning, Perinatal, WIC and Social Services to  
Kalihi Valley residents since 1972. Neighbors being neighborly to neighbors.

## Testimony in Support of SB1294, SD1

March 1, 2022

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Respected Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

The Hawaii Dental Hygienists' Association (HDHA) strongly **SUPPORTS SB 1294, SD1**. The bill appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services to restore basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid and QUEST enrollees. We congratulate you on your initiative to expand Medicaid dental services for adults to include preventive, diagnostic and restorative treatment. This provision would directly benefit Hawaii's seniors, as well as adults with developmental and physical disabilities, allowing them to gain access to necessary oral health treatment.

HDHA cannot emphasize enough the importance of dental care services that include preventive, restorative, prosthetic, and emergency services for all residents of Hawaii. As prevention specialists, dental hygienists are keenly aware of how oral health, or the lack thereof, can affect all aspects (physical, emotional, psychological, and social) of our lives. Time and again, research has shown that oral health has a direct correlation to over-all health. The mouth, is not a separate entity unto itself, it is connected to and shares a circulatory system with the rest of the body. Ignoring or limiting oral healthcare places Hawaii's adult Medicaid population at significant risk for increased health problems.

As the largest association representing Hawaii's licensed dental hygienists', HDHA strongly **SUPPORTS SB 1294, SD1 if Option 2 or 3 presented in the measure were passed**. Option 1 offers minimal coverage and will not be sufficient to adequately address the significant needs of the adult Medicaid population, due to the previous 12 years of no preventive or restorative coverage.

Thank you for your consideration.



Date: March 1, 2022

To: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
The Honorable Gilbert S. C. Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair  
Committee on Human Services

From: Peggy Mierzwa, Community and Government Relations

RE: **SB1294** Relating to Medicaid Benefits-Support

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT of SB1294**. This measure would appropriate funding to Department of Human Services to restore basic adult dental benefits, including diagnostic, preventative and restorative services to Medicaid members.

Founded in 1994 by Hawai`i's community health centers, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving over 80,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members on all islands. We are the only health plan in Hawai`i that exclusively serves Medicaid beneficiaries. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating for access to quality health care for all. We believe that health is about supporting whole-person care.

For over a decade, Hawai`i's Medicaid program has covered only emergency dental services for adult beneficiaries. Preventative and restorative dental services, as cleanings and x-rays, are not covered for adults. As a result, individuals resort to the emergency room in order to get treatment for complicated infections and excruciating pain. Many times the individual has little options beyond tooth extractions in order to address problem areas. Many of these catastrophic events could have been avoided had preventative care been available.

Oral care has a significant impact on a person's overall health. Individuals with chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease lead to increased disability and death. A lack of preventive services commonly leads to gum disease, which is associated with an increased risk of heart disease. Poor dental health increases the risk of a bacterial infection in the blood stream, which can affect the heart valves; tooth loss patterns are connected to coronary artery disease; strong connection between diabetes and cardiovascular disease and evidence that people with diabetes benefit from periodontal treatment.<sup>1</sup> Pregnant women are at much greater risks to periodontal disease. Periodontitis has been associated with poor pregnancy outcomes, including preterm birth and low birth weight.<sup>2</sup> Women with poor dental health are more than 3 times more likely to have a child with cavities.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/expert-answers/heart-disease-prevention/faq-20057986>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/publications/features/pregnancy-and-oral-health.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/publications/features/pregnancy-and-oral-health.html>





As written, basic coverage provided in the bill is inadequate for meeting the needs of Medicaid enrollees. Adult dental benefits were terminated from Hawai'i Medicaid coverage in 2009. After 13 years of oral health neglect, greater coverage is necessary to address the many complications that arise from years with no preventative care. We ask you consider increasing the funding to at least provide Option 2 coverage, which would include the basic package plus core prosthodontic services to better serve those who have had no oral health care for 13 years and now are faced with catastrophic oral health complications.

We also request funding be included in the state budget to ensure stable funding for this important benefit.

Restoring dental coverage to adults with Medicaid will allow people to gain good oral health through prevention and maintenance for avoidable health conditions. Adequate oral health coverage ensures whole person health, so people are able to care for their families, stay out of emergency rooms, and live fulfilling lives. This benefit will positively impact the overall well-being our communities.

We are grateful for your consideration of this important measure.



March 2, 2022

Senate Ways and Means Committee

**Strong SUPPORT of SB1294 Relating to Adult Dental Medicaid Benefits**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee:

I am testifying to advocate for the adult Medicaid population across the State of Hawaii. In my capacity as a Medicaid dental provider and Director of a community health center dental program, I've witnessed a direct correlation between oral disease and serious adverse health outcomes over the last decade since adult dental benefits were cut.

**Please SUPPORT the comprehensive restoration of Adult Dental Medicaid Benefits.**

This is an opportunity for the State to provide a sensible and compassionate response to over a decade of untreated oral disease in Hawaii. There is a substantial difference between a minimal show of support and more comprehensive restoration of these benefits as it relates to specific treatment options for the individuals impacted.

Please consider these points and **SUPPORT the comprehensive restoration** of Adult Dental Medicaid Benefits.

(Comprehensive coverage includes diagnostic (exams, xrays), preventive (cleanings), restorative (fillings), periodontal (deep cleanings and gum treatments), endodontic (root canals), and prosthodontic (crowns, ALL denture types), orthodontic (teeth alignment for severe dysfunction), and surgical (tooth removal and jaw surgery) services.)

- Oral health is a vital part of overall health.
- Comprehensive dental coverage is part of any responsible health plan.
- Comprehensive dental care can help eliminate the loss of teeth and infections.
- Comprehensive dental care reduces the impact of chronic disease.
- If adults do not have the resources to go to the dentist they will wait until there are symptoms (pain, bleeding, swelling); conditions become impossible to reverse and costly to treat.
- Medicaid adults have been driven to the hospital emergency rooms for dental problems.
- Families share health care attitudes. Dental neglect of parents impact their keiki.

Mahalo,

Anthony S. Kim, DMD

Dental Director

Waimanalo Health Center



949 Kamokila Boulevard, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Suite 350, Kapolei, HI 96707  
808.675.7300 | www.ohanahealthplan.com

March 3, 2022  
10:10 a.m.

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

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

From: 'Ohana Health Plan  
Rachel Wilkinson, Government Relations Manager

Re: SB1294 SD1, Relating to Medicaid Benefits; **In Support**

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'Ohana Health Plan offers our **support** of SB1294 SD1, which appropriates funds to reinstate the basic package of diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees.

'Ohana Health Plan is a wholly owned subsidiary of Centene Corporation, a leading multi-national healthcare enterprise committed to helping people live healthier lives. Since 2008, 'Ohana Health Plan has provided government-sponsored managed care services to families—from keiki to kupuna—and individuals with complex medical needs primarily through QUEST Integration (Medicaid), Medicare Advantage and Medicare Prescription Drug Plans across the state.

Poor oral health is one of the most important issues facing our state, particularly with the Medicaid population. In 2009, drastic budget cuts were made and essential dental services for Medicaid enrollees were reduced to emergency-only extractions and pain management. To date, Hawaii is one of only 13 states that provide emergency dental care only. And while oral health can often be overlooked, there is a clear correlation between oral health and overall health.

According to the Hawaii Department of Health's 2012 *Hawaii Oral Health: Key Findings* report, there were more than 3,000 emergency room visits in Hawaii for preventable dental problems, resulting in \$8.5 million in hospital charges. Studies have shown links between gum disease and higher risks of heart attack, stroke, diabetes, and rheumatoid arthritis. Oral health diseases have also been shown to cause low-birth rates and pre-term births for pregnant women.

The state's investment to restore diagnostic, preventive and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees would be relatively small in comparison to the downstream cost savings to the entire healthcare system.

We strongly urge the passage of SB1294 SD1. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Thursday, March 3, 2022; 10:10 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: SENATE BILL NO. 1294, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO MEDICAID BENEFITS.**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, 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** the reinstatement of dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees at federally qualified health centers (FQHCs).

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 appropriate \$10,195,082 in general funds for fiscal year 2022-2023, to reinstate the basic package of diagnostic, preventative, and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees.

This bill would take effect on December 31, 2050.

Since 2008, the HPCA has consistently urged the reinstatement of this essential benefit. At that time, the Legislature faced enormous fiscal challenges that forced your predecessors to make many difficult decisions. The elimination of adult dental Medicaid benefits was just one of many painful cuts that needed to be made for the good of all. As the economy rebounded, most of the programs cut were reorganized and many were reinstated to ensure that the needs of our citizens are met. Yet, adult dental Medicaid was never returned..

To ensure seamless transition should the Legislature agree to provide the state's portion for the reinstatement of the benefit, the benefit should appropriately be integrated into the State Medicaid Plan. The State would also need to show a continual funding source for this additional benefit.

**Testimony on Senate Bill No. 1294, Senate Draft 1**  
**Thursday, March 3, 2022; 10:10 a.m.**  
**Page 2**

We note that the approval of a "stand alone" bill such as this vehicle would only provide a one-time appropriation for this purpose.

To ensure that the benefit would be eligible for federal match, it would need to be incorporated into the State budget. We note that according to the Budget-in-Brief submitted by the Governor in his Supplemental Budget request, that document contains a provision that indicates that funds for this expanded benefit is indeed contained in the proposed budget bill under Line Item HMS-401. Specifically, the Administration requests \$3,466,328 in general funds and \$6,728,754 in federal funds to "restore and expand. . . adult dental benefits". (See, 2023 Budget in Brief, pp. 744-745.).

We further note that as part of the Administration's Executive Budget request to the 2017 Hawaii State Legislature, DHS requested \$4,704,480 in general funds and \$7,056,720 in federal funds for fiscal year 2018, and \$9,408,960 in general funds and \$14,113,440 in federal funds for fiscal year 2019 for "the restoration of the adult dental benefits. (See, 2018 Budget in Brief, pages 1056-1059.).

In the purpose clause, three options were offered to address the need for dental benefits for Medicaid recipients:

- OPTION 1.                    Basic package of diagnostic, preventative, and restorative services;
- OPTION 2.                    Basic package plus core prosthodontic services; and
- OPTION 3.                    A further expansion to a more robust set of prosthodontic services.

These packages of benefits, and the costs associated, were published by the American Dental Association's Health Policy Institute, in a report dated February 2020. (See, [https://www.ada.org/-/media/project/ada-organization/ada/ada-org/files/resources/research/hpi/hpibrief\\_0220\\_1.pdf](https://www.ada.org/-/media/project/ada-organization/ada/ada-org/files/resources/research/hpi/hpibrief_0220_1.pdf))

The HPCA asserts that the prolonged damage caused to the oral health of adult dental Medicaid recipients from fourteen (14) years of neglect and apathy by the State will necessitate significant resources to remediate this population. **After all, what good are x-rays and cleanings if you don't provide the necessary resources to adequately treat these patients?**

The HPCA further proclaims that the State has a moral obligation to provide the most robust package of benefits possible for this underprivileged and underserved population. At the very minimum, until such time as the oral health conditions of Hawaii's adult Medicaid population is stabilized, the benefit package should be at the OPTION 3 level.

**Testimony on Senate Bill No. 1294, Senate Draft 1**  
**Thursday, March 3, 2022; 10:10 a.m.**  
**Page 3**

In sum, the HPCA asks this Committee approve an increase to Line Item HMS-401 in House Bill No. 1600, and that the amount of the increase be equal to the OPTION 3 level of benefits recommended in the American Dental Association's report dated February 2020.

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](mailto:eabe@hawaiiipca.net).





## HAWAI'I ORAL HEALTH COALITION

Date: March 3, 2022

To: The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
The Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Re: Support for SB1294 SD1, Relating to Medicaid Benefits

Hrg: March 3, 2022 at 10:10am - Conference Room 211 & via Videoconference

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The Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition<sup>i</sup>, covered by the Hawai'i Public Health Institute, is in **support of SB1294 SD1**, relating to the reinstatement adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees.

SB1294 SD1 appropriates funds to the DHS to restore basic diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental coverage to adult Medicaid enrollees. In a 2021 survey conducted by Ward Research for HIPHI<sup>ii</sup>, 9 in 10 registered Hawaii voters (92%) strongly agreed that preventative dental benefits should be included in adult Medicaid coverage. Additionally, 38 health and community organizations have expressed support for the reinstatement of dental coverage.

Oral health is critical to overall physical, psychological, social, and economic wellbeing. Adults with poor oral health often struggle to manage chronic co-conditions such as diabetes. Researchers have linked poor oral health with cardiovascular disease, stroke and bacterial pneumonia. Pregnant women with poor oral health are at an increased risk of delivering preterm and/or low-birth-weight infants. Missing or broken teeth also create social barriers for adults to find and maintain gainful employment in our service-based economy.

Unfortunately, oral health in our state is a public health crisis, with Hawaii receiving a failing grade of "F" in three recent oral health report cards released by the Pew Center for the States<sup>iii</sup>. Drastic cuts in 2009 eliminated essential dental services for Medicaid enrollees and reduced coverage to emergency only (extraction and pain management).

As a consequence of these cuts, many in Hawai'i and across the nation have turned to emergency rooms for oral health care. The ADA reported in 2016 that ER visits nationwide continued to increase in 2012, costing the US health care system \$1.6 billion per year at an average cost of \$749 per visit<sup>iv</sup>. In Hawai'i, recent data<sup>v</sup> show that between 2016 and 2020 there was a total of 29,536 ER visits with a dental related diagnosis among adults aged 21 years and older, with an average of 10% of patients who visited ER for principal dental-related conditions having revisited the ER at least twice in the same year. Sixty-seven percent (19,691) of these visits had a principal dental diagnosis as the reason they visited the ER. In that same time period, Medicaid claims constituted 45% of the cumulative total charges for the ER visits with a principal dental-related diagnosis, about \$12.3 million. This does not include the total charges for secondary dental-related diagnoses. An estimated 79% of ER dental visits could be diverted to community settings, saving about 48% of the cost of each visit<sup>vi</sup>.

SB1294 SD1 is a necessary health equity measure. The lack of coverage for diagnostic, preventative, and restorative dental services has had a disparate impact on Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander populations, and those on Neighbor Islands, who are at greater risk for poor oral health and limited access to oral health care. Hawai'i County and Kaua'i County saw the state's highest rates of ER visits with a dental-related diagnosis, and a large portion of Medicaid claims for ER visits with a principal diagnosis between 2016 and 2020 were submitted for Native Hawaiians/Part Native Hawaiian (about 31%, or 2,991) patients.

In 2020, the Health Policy Institute of the American Dental Association published a specific fiscal analysis for Legislative consideration about the costs versus cost-savings in reinstating preventive and restorative dental benefits for adults on Medicaid<sup>vii</sup>. This analysis highlights three funding options for coverage ranging from basic to comprehensive. The federal government does match up to 50% of the state's investment in reinstating diagnostic, preventative and restorative dental coverage for all adult Medicaid recipients and, to date, 34 states do offer limited or comprehensive benefits for its adult Medicaid recipients<sup>viii</sup>.

**In order to adequately address the high needs of this population**, due to the lack of access to preventive and restorative care since 2009, adults on Medicaid will require greater coverage than what is offered in Option 1, as detailed in the ADA-HPI analysis. While covering exams, cleanings, and limited restorations is a step in the right direction, patients may continue to seek dental care from emergency departments across the state, or simply defer care due to continued lack of restorative care.

We strongly support the reinstatement of diagnostic, preventative, and restorative dental coverage for adults in Hawai'i enrolled in Medicaid and respectfully ask you to pass this important measure with careful consideration for what services and strategy will most effectively and sustainably address the oral health needs of this population. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,



Patrick Donnelly  
Statewide Oral Health Coalition Manager  
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

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<sup>i</sup> The Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition is community driven and led with fiscal sponsorship from the Hawaii Public Health Institute. Its members represent all Hawai'i islands and diverse sectors across the State. The mission of the Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition is to improve the overall health and wellbeing of all Hawai'i residents by increasing access and equity in oral health care through collaborative partnerships, advocacy, and education.

<sup>ii</sup> Findings from a Ward Research Study commissioned by the Hawai'i Public Health Institute that summarizes findings from a phone survey among n=810 Hawaii registered voters (+/-3.3 margin of error) conducted between October 26 to November 30, 2021. A copy of the results are available upon request.

<sup>iii</sup> Hawai'i Oral Health: Key Findings, Hawai'i Department of Health. August 2015.

<sup>iv</sup> Emergency department use for dental conditions continues to increase. Health Policy Institute Research Brief. American Dental Association. April 2015.

<sup>v</sup> Lailima Data Alliance Hawai'i inpatient and Outpatient dental ER data (2016-2020). Accessed October 12, 2021.

<sup>vi, vii</sup> Estimating the Cost of Introducing Comprehensive Medicaid Adult Dental Benefits in Hawai'i, Health Policy Institute Research Brief. American Dental Association. February 2020.

<sup>viii</sup> Medicaid Adult Dental Benefits Coverage by State, Center for Health Care Strategies, Inc., September 2019.

**Testimony on Senate Bill 1294 SD1**  
Relating to Medicaid Benefits

Submitted by Dr. Steven Pine, DDS., Dental Director, West Hawaii Community Health Center

March 1, 2022

I, Dr. Steven Pine, DDS, currently work as the Dental Director at West Hawaii Community Health Center, (WHCHC) and I strongly support Senate Bill 1294 which appropriates funds for the restoration of adult dental benefits to Medicaid patients.

At WHCHC we believe that oral health indicates much more than simply healthy teeth, as the mouth can be both a cause and a window to individual and population health and well-being. Oral health is critical to general health and well-being as the mouth is the gateway to the rest of the body, providing clues about overall health. It is sometimes the first place where signs and symptoms of other diseases are noticed. Causes of poor oral health are complex and access to dental care for adults is crucial for overall health and well-being. However, adults in West Hawaii are less likely to see a dentist than adults on average for the state. 35.6% of West Hawaii adults have had no dental care compared to the state rate of 29%. In addition, higher rates of ER visits with a dental-related diagnosis were found for both Hawaii County and Kauai County in 21–44-year-old patients.

Between 2016 and 2020, Medicaid recipients averaged 2,700 emergency room visits per year for acute oral health conditions, totaling \$21,700,000 in charges for outpatient emergency room services alone. Neighbor island ERS on Hawaii island and Kauai have higher rates of ER use for acute dental conditions.

Limited coverage under option 1 would be capped per recipient and may only cover an annual exam, fluoride treatment, bi-annual cleanings, one set of bite wings radiographs per year and one non-emergency tooth extraction or filling per year. As a provider who actually treats patients, the dental needs of these patients far exceed this basic requirement.

The difference in State funding would be \$8,823,781 in state funds for option 2, versus \$3,466,328 in state funds for option 1. Federal funding from would provide the remainder of the costs of the benefits under the Federal Medicaid Assistance Percentage (FMAP).

Fiscal analysis also projects that over time, additional medical care cost savings estimates range from \$1.9 million per year to \$5.3 million due to health status improvements in cost-occurring acute and chronic diseases.

Research shows that adults who receive Medicaid frequently go without comprehensive oral treatment due to high treatment costs which must be paid for out-of-pocket (Hawaii Oral Health: Key Findings, 2015). A recent CDC report shows that the cost of treatment or lack of insurance was the main reason 42% of adults, 18-64 years of age, went without a dental visit for an oral health problem in the past 6 months

Consistent with national statistics that demonstrate disparity in dental care for the low-income vs high income adults, a recent survey on Hawaii Oral Health noted there are substantial dental health disparities in Hawaii. Adults with low income are more likely to have dental problems and less likely to see a dentist each year.

WHCHC provides care to the most under-served people in our community who have the most complicated health needs. Individuals with a range of chronic conditions are more susceptible to oral disease. Oral disease can also exacerbate chronic disease symptoms.

By passing this bill you will improve oral health outcomes for the most disadvantaged adults in our community. Providing adult dental services for those living in poverty will serve the public in the following ways:

- Reduce costs associated with emergency department visits for preventable oral health problems.
- Improve pregnancy outcomes for low- income women.
- Improve self-esteem, employability, decrease absenteeism, and improve mental health of disadvantaged adults.
- Improve chronic health condition for underserved and disadvantaged adults.
- Improve access to dental services for adults living in poverty.

For these reasons I strongly support **SB 1294 option 2**. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Steven C. Pine D.D.S., Dental Director  
West Hawaii Community Health Center



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

Re: **SB 1294 SD1 - RELATING TO MEDICAID BENEFITS**

Hearing: Thursday, March 3, 2022, 10:10 a.m., Conference Room 211, and via  
Videoconference

Position: Strong support.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

The Health Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i strongly supports SB 1294 SD 1 and humbly requests that this bill pass in your committee. This bill would appropriate funds to reinstate the basic package of diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees. This bill has an effective date of 12/31/2050.

Adult dental care is a critical service for our vulnerable populations of 400,000 residents who rely on Medicaid for their health insurance, especially Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders who are disproportionately represented in emergency room visits for dental-related diagnoses.

In 2009, during the massive budget cuts to state programs, routine adult dental care was dropped from Medicaid and never restored; coverage was instead reduced to emergency-only care, limited to pain relief, injuries, trauma, and tooth extraction.

The lack of preventive and restorative dentistry services for adult Medicaid beneficiaries increases potential health care complications for persons with co-existing chronic disease, like diabetes and heart disease; thus, poor oral health, and co-existing conditions have been shown to lead to increased disability and death.



March 2, 2022

Page 2

Per a 2021 study by the Hawaii Oral Health Coalition with the University of Hawaii's John A. Burns School of Medicine, between 2016 and 2020, 29,536 adults visited the ER with a dental-related diagnosis at a cost of \$54.37 million, of which \$21.7 million was paid by Medicaid; this was a high cost and burden on emergency rooms, and an even greater societal cost causing much human suffering.

Since 2010, Hawaii has received a failing grade of "F" in three oral health report cards by the Pew Center due to multiple policy and systems issues that have left the real health of Hawaii's families and children worse than the rest of the nation.

A disproportionate number of Medicaid enrollees ages 21 to 44 years use the ER for emergency dental services; however adult Medicaid beneficiaries represent only 25% of Hawaii's population but represent 47% of all dental services provided by emergency rooms.

In February 2020, the American Dental Association's Health Policy Institute and Hawaii DHS's MedQuest division found a medical care cost savings of \$1.9 million to \$5.3 million per year attributable to a reduction in ER visits for dental conditions and reduced medical care costs among beneficiaries with diabetes, coronary artery disease, and pregnancy.

Medicaid coverage for dental benefits should be reinstated to cover diagnostic, preventive, restorative services; however, it would be much more beneficial for Medicaid enrollees to be able to receive core and expanded prosthodontic services for better oral health, self-esteem, and well-being.

The Health Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii urges the restoration of Medicaid's dental services as soon as possible and humbly requests that SB 1294 SD 1 passes out of your Committee.

Mahalo nui loa,

Melodie Aduja, Chair

Stephen Kemble, M.D.

Marion Poirier, R.N., Vice Chair

Alan Burdick, Esq., Treasurer

Charley Ice

Dennis Miller

and Members of the Health Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii

# HDS

Hawaii Dental Service

## Testimony in Support of SB1294 SD1 to Restore Adult Dental Medicaid Benefits

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

March 1, 2022

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members:

**Hawaii Dental Service (HDS)**, the state's leading dental benefits provider and advocate for improved access to oral healthcare, **strongly supports SB1294 SD1 to restore dental benefits for adults who are Medicaid beneficiaries.**

The oral health community and Hawaii's legislature have made significant progress this session to address the gap in oral healthcare for Hawaii's adult Medicaid beneficiaries. For nearly 13 years, these adults have not had diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental services simply because of their socioeconomic status and have been limited to reduced coverage for emergency only (extraction and pain management) – those most impacted are Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Neighbor Island residents.

Oral health is essential to overall health. Extending dental coverage to underserved adult Medicaid beneficiaries with chronic health conditions like diabetes and heart disease would change the future course of their health. However, we would like to encourage the restoration of this benefit to be approached in a thoughtful, compassionate manner with the goal of creating sustained change.

We know there are different benefit levels and funding scenarios this committee is considering. We strongly believe that for this benefit to have a meaningful impact, there must be a corresponding level of coverage to meet the needs of adult Medicaid beneficiaries. For more than a decade, they have had to forgo preventive and restorative care. There will be a need for services beyond diagnostic, preventive, and restorative services, including prosthodontic services.

We also recommend this committee adopt a long-term view and address the need for ongoing, annual funding for this adult Medicaid dental program. This will prevent having to start from ground zero each legislative session.

HDS joins with others in the Hawaii Oral Health Coalition to advocate for those who may not be able to advocate for themselves. With your support, we believe this can be the year of change and an opportunity to show our state's commitment to addressing health disparities and our ability to come together and coalesce around the issues that impact the most vulnerable in our community.

Mahalo for allowing HDS to share our concerns and for your support.

Sincerely,



Dr. Diane S.L. Paloma  
President & CEO





## THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

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

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

Date: March 3, 2022

Re: Support for SB 1294 SD1 – Relating to Medicaid Benefits

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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 SB 1294 SD1, which would allow for the appropriation of funds to reinstate the basic package of diagnostic, preventative, and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees. Restoration of these funds to provide comprehensive oral health coverage to adults in Medicaid helps avert unnecessary health care costs associated with emergency visits, reduces our State's overall dental spending, and has been shown to help the overall employment and economic security of enrollees.

Annually our Punchbowl facility cares for over 5000 patients who need dental procedures; of those served, roughly half are Medicaid enrollees or uninsured. Our services include preventative oral care, treatment of dental diseases, and higher acuity dentistry (dental procedures that can only be done in a hospital based clinic setting).

Thank you for allowing The Queen's Health Systems to testify in support of SB 1294 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.*



AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

OFFICERS	DIRECTORS	MAILING ADDRESS		
John Bickel, President	Melodie Aduja	Jan Lubin	Bill South	P.O. Box 23404
Alan Burdick, Vice President	Keola Akana	John Miller	Zahava Zaidoff	Honolulu
Dave Nagajji, Treasurer	Juliet Begley	Jenny Nomura		Hawaii 96823
Doug Pyle, Secretary	Stephanie Fitzpatrick	Stephen O'Harrow		

March 2, 2022

TO: Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the WAM Committee

RE: SB 1294 SD1 Relating to Medicaid Benefits

Support for a Hearing on March 3

Americans for Democratic Action is an organization founded in the 1950s by leading supporters of the New Deal and led by Patsy Mink in the 1970s. We are devoted to the promotion of progressive public policies.

Americans for Democratic Action Hawaii supports this bill as it would restore Medicaid dental benefits. We believe this will save money in the long run and eliminate unnecessary pain and suffering. From the Hawaii Public Health Institute we find the following information:

Drastic cuts in 2009 eliminated essential dental services for Medicaid enrollees and reduced coverage to emergency only (extraction and pain management). Hawai'i has continued to suffer the consequences:

- Recent data show that between 2016 and 2020 there was a total of 29,536 ER visits with a dental related diagnosis among adults aged 21 years and older.
  - 67% (19,691) of these visits had a principal dental diagnosis as the reason they visited the ER.
- In that same time period, Medicaid claims constituted 45% of the cumulative total charges for the ER visits with a principal dental-related diagnosis, about \$12.3 million.
- This does not include the total charges for secondary dental-related diagnoses.
- Higher rates of ER visits with a dental-related diagnosis were found for Hawai'i County and Kaua'i County.
- A large portion of Medicaid claims for ER visits with a principal diagnosis between 2016 and 2020 were submitted for Native Hawaiians/Part Native Hawaiian (about 31%, or 2,991) patients.
- An average of 10% of patients who visited ER for principal dental-related conditions revisited the ER at least twice in the same year.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Bickel, President



To: Senator Dela Crua, Chair  
Senator Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: **SB 1294 SD1- Relating to Medicaid benefits**  
10:00 AM, March 3, 2022

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and committee members,

On behalf of HCAN Speaks!, thank you for the opportunity to **testify in strong support of Senate Bill 1294 SD1**, relating to Medicaid benefits. We believe that basic coverage is too minimal and will not be sufficient to adequately address the significant needs of adult Medicaid patients, due to 12 years of no preventive and restorative coverage. We request that the measure be amended to increase the coverage provided.

Since 2009, we have treated oral health like a luxury instead of a need. It is costly to both individuals and the state. Extending dental coverage to patients with chronic health conditions like diabetes and heart disease can lead to cost savings in related areas of health care spending. It's estimated additional medical care cost savings range from \$1.9 million to \$5.3 million.

This is a multi-generation issue. Hawai'i's children have some of the worst oral health outcomes in the country. Our third graders have the highest prevalence of tooth decay and 7 out of 10 third graders are impacted by tooth decay. Oral health habits are a family issue and if parents have access to dental prevention services, the whole family will benefit. Our most vulnerable families had this benefit previously and we believe it should be restored.

Oral health is health and reinstating these benefits is a cost-effective, person-centered approach to making our communities healthier. **For these reasons, HCAN Speaks! respectfully requests the Committee to support this measure.**

Thank you,

Kathleen Algire  
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy





**Papa Ola Lokahi**  
Nana I Ka Pono Na Ma

**Papa Ola Lōkahi**  
894 Queen Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: 808.597.6550 ~ Facsimile: 808.597.6551

**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran., Vice-Chair

**Thursday, March 3, 2022, 10:10 AM, Videoconference**

**RE: SB 1294 SD 1 – Relating to Medicaid Benefits**  
**Position: STRONG SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee on Ways & Means,

Papa Ola Lōkahi **supports** SB 1294 SD 1, which restores diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees to increase access to oral health care and reduce oral health disparities across Hawai‘i.

With the elimination of diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental services for those on Medicaid in 2009, we have seen increased Emergency Room utilization and increased costs to address oral health concerns, for which Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are disproportionately represented. In Hawai‘i, Native Hawaiians experience shorter life expectancies and higher mortality rates due to diseases such as endocarditis, cardiovascular disease, pregnancy and birth complications, and diabetes, which also increases the risk of gum disease, making it more difficult to control blood sugar levels, for which provision of oral healthcare services is a critical component. It is the responsibility of the State to provide protective and preventive measures through person-centered policies that guard and sustain the health of our communities.

Native Hawaiians hold a holistic view of health, in which the health of the people, land and spiritual realms are interconnected. Similarly, the health of the human body cannot be separated into individual systems, as no part can operate independently of another; they are all connected. The same is true for our health care system - if we are to address the health of the whole person, we must ensure that health policies are person-centered and that the full range of health services are available and accessible to all people.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this critical legislation.

#### **Papa Ola Lokahi**

is the Native Hawaiian Health Board established in 1988 to improve the health and well-being of Native Hawaiians.

#### **Board of Directors**

##### *Member Organizations*

*Ho‘ola Lahui Hawaii*

*Hui No Ke Ola Pono*

*Hui Malama Ola Na ‘Oiwī*

*ALU LIKE*

*Ke Ola Mamo*

*E Ola Mau*

*University of Hawai‘i*

*Hawai‘i State Department of Health*

*Na Pu‘uwai*

*Office of Hawaiian Affairs*

#### **Executive Director**

*Sheri-Ann Daniels, EdD*

*Papa Ola Lōkahi, the Native Hawaiian Health Board, authorized by the federal Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act, is charged with raising the health status of Native Hawaiians to the highest possible level, which we achieve through strategic partnerships, programs, and public policy.*



**WAIANAЕ COAST  
COMPREHENSIVE  
HEALTH CENTER**  
www.wcchc.com

**LATE**

March 2, 2022

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

**Testimony on Senate Bill No. 1294 S.D. 1**

**RELATING TO MEDICAID BENEFITS**

Submitted by: Richard Bettini, President & CEO

The Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center strongly supports that funding be provided through SB 1294 S.D. 1 to restore basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees in the State of Hawaii.

Restoring support is sorely overdue to address the 42% of the adult population on the Waianae Coast that has not had a dental visit.

The Hawaii Primary Care Association, on behalf of community health centers, has consistently urged the reinstatement of this essential benefit that was eliminated when the state fiscal status was in jeopardy. As the economy rebounded, many programs were reinstated, but not adult dental benefits.

It is critical to restore adult dental benefits to address dental health needs and its relationship to other health conditions which impact upon one's social determinants of health.

Please note that the basic coverage (Option 1) is too minimal and will not be sufficient to adequately address the significant needs of adult Medicaid patients, due to 12 years of no preventive and restorative coverage. The preference is to have adequate funding allocated to the state budget to encourage continuity of funding for coverage.

Please consider the importance of this bill to the health and well-being of our adult Medicaid enrollees. Mahalo.

Testimony of Waikiki Health to:  
 The Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
 The Honorable Donovan M Dela Cruz, Chair  
 The Honorable Gilbert S. C. Keith-Agaran



In Support of SB 1294 SD1 Relating to Medicaid Benefits  
 Decision making Thursday, March 3, 2022 10:10 am Room 211 Video conference

Chair, Vice Chair, and committee members, I am Phyllis Dendle, CEO of Waikiki Health, a federally qualified community health center. We have been serving the people of Honolulu for over 50 years. Well over half our patients have Medicaid benefits and we provide dental service to many of these people.

I request that you amend SB 1294 SD1 to amend the amount appropriated to \$36,200,000. This is the amount proposed, for full benefits, by the American Dental Association in their study of potential Medicaid adult dental benefits in Hawaii published in February 2020. At this level Medicaid patients will have access to preventative and restorative dentistry such as fillings and crowns that allow them to keep their teeth. Additionally, at this level patients will be able to be fitted for dentures. Dentures are a desperate need for patients because so many have had their teeth removed when they became painful. That’s what Medicaid covers today, extractions for painful teeth.

In 2006 the legislature appropriated funds to provide comprehensive dental coverage for adults covered by Medicaid. It covered annual exams, X-rays, and cleaning. It also covered fillings, crowns, extractions, and dentures. These benefits continued until August 10, 2009. At that time the benefits for adults went back to being emergency extractions. The legislators who came before you believed in the need for comprehensive dental benefits and I’m sure you can understand why.

Having adequate dental care is essential to the health of every person. At minimum it allows them to eat healthy food. It also helps limit the infections caused by decaying teeth and poor mouth care that is a risk to their life. It is critical if someone wants to be employed and employment is the first step to lifting people out of poverty. Job seekers with missing teeth are unattractive and are not hired in favor of people who have teeth that allow them to smile.

Friends, I am asking you, as respectfully and sincerely as I can, to fund full dental benefits to adults covered by Medicaid. Please place this funding in the budget if you do not wish to pass this legislation. The need is desperate. Making this appropriation will change the lives of citizens who count on you to assist them. Thank you for your consideration.



**LATE**

To: Chair Donovan Dela Cruz  
Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran  
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

From: David W. Heywood, Health Plan CEO  
UnitedHealthcare Community Plan Hawaii

Re: SB 1294 SD1, Relating to Medicaid Benefits; **In Support**  
March 3, 2022; Conference Room 211

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UnitedHealthcare (UHC) serves approximately 59,000 QUEST Integration (Medicaid) and 37,500 Medicare Advantage members in Hawaii. We also provide Medicare Part D, Medicare Supplemental, and other health programs/services in the islands. Our team is comprised of over 400 employees across the islands with offices in Honolulu, Kahului, and Hilo.

UHC **supports** SB 1294 SD1, which appropriates funds to restore diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees. Poor oral health is one of the more important issues facing our state, particularly with the adult Medicaid population. There is a clear relationship between preventative dental care and the deterrence of serious medical conditions. This investment in adult dental benefits not only improves the overall wellness for an underserved population of Hawaii's most vulnerable residents, but it will also lead to cost savings to the entire healthcare system.

We strongly urge the passage of SB 1294 SD1. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.



Hawaii Dental Association

**LATE**

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Time/Date: 10:10 am, March 3, 2022  
Location: State Capitol via Video Conference  
Re: SB 1294, SD1, Relating to Medicaid Benefits

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Dental Association (HDA) is in **support** of SB 1294, SD1, relating to Medicaid benefits. This bill appropriates funds to restore diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees.

Oral health is essential for overall health and wellness. Oral health is linked with systemic health conditions and diseases as well as employment opportunities, economic stability, and social connectedness. One cannot be healthy without a healthy mouth. Yet thousands of low income adults in Hawai'i cannot afford the oral health care they need to stay healthy, work, socialize, and live pain free. Part of this disparity is driven by gaps in dental coverage in federal and state policy, particularly dental coverage for adults enrolled in Medicaid. For adults who rely on Medicaid, being able to afford oral health care could be the key to recovering their health or getting a new job. Notably, the people most likely to get sick and lose jobs during the pandemic are also the people who face the biggest barriers to oral health and are among those who would most benefit from improved oral health coverage in Medicaid.<sup>1</sup> For these reasons, we strongly support this measure.

HDA is a statewide membership organization representing dentists practicing in Hawaii and licensed by the State of Hawaii's Board of Dentistry. HDA members are committed to protecting the oral health and well-being of the people of Hawaii, from keiki to kupuna and everyone in between.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 1294, SD1.

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<sup>1</sup> Vujcic M, Fosse C, Reusch C, Burroughs M. Making the case for adults in all state Medicaid programs. Health Policy Institute White Paper. American Dental Association in partnership with Community Catalyst and Families USA. July 2021





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

Re: **SB 1294 SD 1– RELATING TO MEDICAID BENEFITS**

Hearing: Thursday, March 3, 2022, 10:10 a.m., Conference Room 211 and  
Videoconference

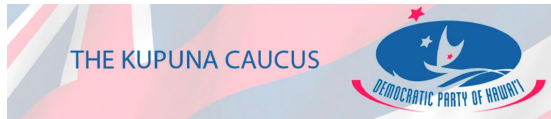
Position: Strong support

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

The Kupuna Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i strongly supports HB 1294 SD 1. This measure would appropriate funds to reinstate the basic package of diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits to adult medicaid enrollees. Effective 12/31/2050. (SDI)

Adult dental care is a critical service for our vulnerable populations of 400,000 residents who rely on Medicaid for their health insurance, especially Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders who are disproportionately represented in emergency room visits for dental-related diagnoses. In 2009, during the massive budget cuts to state programs, routine adult dental care was dropped from Medicaid and never restored; coverage was instead reduced to emergency-only care, limited to pain relief, injuries, trauma, and tooth extraction. The lack of preventive and restorative dentistry services for adult Medicaid beneficiaries increases potential health care complications for persons with co-existing chronic disease, like diabetes and heart disease; thus poor oral health, and co-existing conditions have been shown to lead to increased disability and death.

Per a 2021 study by the Hawaii Oral Health Coalition with the University of Hawaii's John A. Burns School of Medicine, between 2016 and 2020, 29,536 adults visited the ER with a dental-related diagnosis at a cost of \$54.37 million, of which \$21.7 million was paid by Medicaid; this was a high cost and burden on emergency rooms, and an even greater societal cost causing much human suffering. A disproportionate number of Medicaid enrollees ages 21 to 44



March 3, 2022

Page 2

years use the ER for emergency dental services; however adult Medicaid beneficiaries represent only 25% of Hawaii's population but represent 47% of all dental services provided by emergency rooms. In February 2020, the American Dental Association's Health Policy Institute and Hawaii DHS's MedQuest division found a medical care cost savings of \$1.9 million to \$5.3 million per year attributable to a reduction in ER visits for dental conditions and reduced medical care costs among beneficiaries with diabetes, coronary artery disease, and pregnancy.

Medicaid coverage for dental benefits should be reinstated to cover diagnostic, preventive, restorative services with expanded prosthodontic services.

Please pass this measure.

Mahalo nui loa,

*/s/ Martha E. Randolph*

Martha E. Randolph  
Treasurer, Kupuna Caucus  
Democratic Party of Hawai'i



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

Re: **SB 1294 SD 1– RELATING TO MEDICAID BENEFITS**

Hearing: Thursday, March 3, 2022, 10:10 a.m., Conference Room 211 and  
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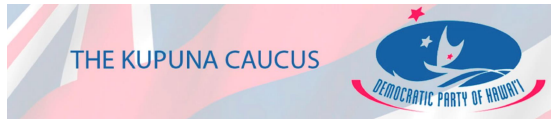
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March 3, 2022

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Medicaid coverage for dental benefits should be reinstated to cover diagnostic, preventive, restorative services with expanded prosthodontic services.

Please pass this measure.

Mahalo nui loa,

*/s/ Larry Smith*

Larry Smith

Chair, Kupuna Caucus

Democratic Party of Hawai'i

## TESTIMONY FOR S.B. 1294, SD1

**Date of Hearing/Time:**

March 3, 2022, 10:10 am

**Committee:**

Committee on Ways and Means

**March 1, 2022**

Dear Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support on SB1294, SD1 relating to adult dental Medicaid benefits.

My name is Dr. Andrew Tseu and currently employed as a community center dentist. I am submitting testimony as a Hawaii resident. Hawaii's oral health services has not been given adequate attention and resources necessary to support good oral health care in our state since Medicaid adult dental benefits were drastically cut in 2009.

Oral Health is essential to overall health. Oral health is a crucial part of a person's physical, psychological, social and economic health and well-being. Extending dental coverage to patients with chronic health conditions like diabetes and heart disease can lead to cost savings in related areas of health care spending. Missing or broken teeth also create social barriers for adults to find and maintain gainful employment in our community.

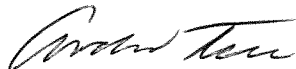
We are currently one of only 13 states that provide emergency care only. As a result of our past decade of minimal coverage for dental care, Hawaii's emergency rooms have been overutilized for otherwise preventable dental conditions to the tune of thousands of visits per year, costing millions of dollars annually.

As a part of our commitment to improve oral health in Hawaii, we believe that basic coverage of dental services for adults is a critical factor in ensuring access to appropriate and timely oral health care.

I strongly advocate for Option 2, which would enable Medicaid recipients to get a wider range of diagnostic, preventive, and restorative services. as well as basic prosthodontic and periodontal services, as needed.

Please feel free to contact me at (808) 781-3613 to discuss my testimony further.

Best regards,



Andrew Tseu, D.D.S., J.D.

**Bill:** SB1294, SD 1, Relating to Medicaid Benefits

**Hearing Date & Time:** Thursday, March 3, 2022, 10:10am

**Committees:** Senate Ways and Means Committee

**Testifier:** Nancy Partika, RN, MPH

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate WAM Committee:

My name is Nancy Partika, and I am the Hawaii grassroots representative for OPEN (the Oral Health Progress and Equity Network). I have worked to help identify and address oral health disparities in Hawaii at the community level for the past 5 years.

Hawaii has visibly struggled for decades with oral health disparities and problems accessing care for its most needy. The 2009 abolishment of adult dental benefits under Medicaid and the problems that resulted from adults receiving emergency-only care since then has spiraled, while the State continues to pay out millions per year in acute oral health emergency room care and for other health-related services statewide that does not provide adequate oral health care or support to our at-risk populations such as those on Medicaid.

According to a newly-completed 2021 JABSOM/HOHC study of ER use statewide for acute oral health conditions, adult Medicaid beneficiaries represent about 25% of Hawaii's population, but they are 47% of all dental services provided by ERs statewide.

Between 2016 and 2020, Medicaid recipients averaged 2,700 emergency room visits per year for acute oral health conditions, totaling \$21,700,000 in charges for outpatient emergency room services alone. Neighbor island ERs on Hawaii island and Kauai have higher rates of ER use for acute dental conditions.

Fiscally, it seems logical that these millions of dollars that could be potentially saved via fewer ER visits and instead wisely utilize a portion of those dollars to pay upfront for preventative and restorative dental care benefits for Medicaid recipients.

Poor oral health is already proven to be linked to an array of acute and chronic health conditions, including: heart disease, diabetes, stroke, depression, low birth weight and premature birth. Researchers have mapped linkages from chronic dental pain to end-stage renal disease, liver transplants, opioid-related emergency department visits, and opioid-related crime. These co-conditions are made worse by having poor oral health, and the care of the oral health of chronically ill or pregnant can be another significant potential area for return on investment. We now recognize that not intervening in oral health conditions early and preventively will cost much more later on in unintended direct and indirect costs.

Currently most states now offer adult Medicaid recipients preventive and restorative adult oral health benefits. By adding a comprehensive or limited dental services benefit, Hawaii's adults on Medicaid should be able to experience fewer oral health-related ER visits, with improvements to their chronic disease risks and overall health status. Broader Medicaid dental benefits for adults would not only support individual health and well-being among Hawaii's most vulnerable adults, but could also improve the employment status and socio-economic strength of our communities.

The Hawaii MQD-DHS and the State Legislature received the Hawaii-specific fiscal analysis from the Health Policy Institute of the American Dental Association in February 2020 that projected both costs and cost-benefits to restore Hawaii adult dental benefits. Three options for reinstating dental benefits were provided at that time.

**It has been 12 years since adult dental benefits (other than emergency) have been accessible, and so we should anticipate that many adults on Medicaid will be needing more than basic/skeletal preventive**

dental care. It is therefore recommended that the Senate advocate for Option 2, which would enable Medicaid recipients to get a wider range of diagnostic, preventive and restorative services, as well as basic prosthodontic and periodontal services, as needed.

The difference in State funding would be \$8,823,781 in state funds for option 2, versus \$3,466,328 in State funds for option 1. Federal funding from would provide the remainder of the costs of the benefits under the Federal Medicaid Assistance Percentage (FMAP).

Placing this item in the MQD/DHS budget would help to ensure that adult dental care remains as an ongoing benefit, rather than dependent on year to year requests for it.

Limited coverage under option 1 would be capped per recipient and may only cover an annual exam, fluoride treatment, bi-annual cleanings, one set of bite wing X-rays per year and one non-emergency tooth extraction or filling per year. As you can imagine, dental care for someone who has been without any for a long while is likely to exceed this limited benefit. It seems that reinstating coverage to the second option makes more sense, given the high costs paid for poor oral health exacerbated co-conditions and visits to the ER for acute dental care.

What is important to note that this fiscal analysis also projects that over time, additional medical care cost savings estimates range from \$1.9 million per year to \$5.3 million, due to health status improvements in co-occurring health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, pregnancy, and fewer ER visits for services

Your strong support for SB1294, SD 1 is respectfully requested—Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

**Summary of Findings for Statewide ER Visits with a  
Dental-Related Diagnosis: Hawai'i 2016-2020 (JABSOM-HOHC Study-2021)**

1. There was a total of 29,536 ER visits with a dental related diagnosis by adults aged 21 years and older
2. 67% (19,691) of the adult visits had a principal dental diagnosis that they visited the ER
3. A significant proportion of the ER visits with a principal dental-related diagnosis were treated:
  - in Honolulu County (56%, 11,118)
  - for those aged 21-44 years old (62%, 12,138)
  - for Medicaid recipients (49%, 9,680)
  - Native Hawaiian/Part Native Hawaiian (24%, 5,018) patients
4. A large portion of Medicaid claims for ER visits with a principal diagnosis were submitted for Native Hawaiians/Part Native Hawaiian (31%, 2,991) patients
5. Medicaid claims constituted 45% of the cumulative total charges for the ER visits with a principal dental-related diagnosis (\$12.3M/27.5M)
6. An average of 10% of patients who visited ER for dental-related conditions revisited the ER at least twice in the same year
7. Higher rates of ER visits with a dental-related diagnosis were found for Hawai'i County, Kaua'i County, and in 21-44 year old patients.

**SB-1294-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2022 12:56:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/3/2022 10:10:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Brian Burdt	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill (SB1294 SD1) to allow adults with Medicaid coverage to access the necessary preventive dental care. This bill is a step in the right direction to create more equitable healthcare supports for all residents of Hawai'i.

Thank you,

Brian Burdt

Maui



March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Kylene Shimamoto and I am in support of SB 1294, SD1. I have Medicaid. I have waited for a long time for help with my teeth and dentist.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Herman Ki'ili and I am in support of SB 1294, SD1. I receive only one time a year for my dentist visit. I want to have good teeth because one day I want to get married. I have a fiancé now and I need more help from my dentist so I can eat my food good. Please pass SB 1294, SD1. Medicaid is very important so I can get teeth services to help me live in the community. Thank you.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Audrey Ayer and I am in support of SB 1294, SD1. People like me need more dentist Medicaid help so me and my friends can live in our homes. Please pass SB 1294, SD1. Thank you.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Bathey Fong and I am in support of SB 1294, SD1. I really need a good dentist and want to make sure my gums don't hurt and my teeth don't hurt and I can eat without pain. I have Medicaid and I am a person with a disability and in a wheelchair because I cannot walk goo. Please pass SB 1294, SD1. Thank you.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Nicole Kelly and I am in support of SB 1294, SD1. I want to be able to choose a dentist to help me have good teeth and clean teeth. Please pass SB 1294, SD1. Thank you.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Ho'opi'o Balaz and I am in support of SB 1294, SD1. I need a good dentist, like my aunty who is a good doctor. Please pass SB 1294, SD1. Thank you.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Kaili Swan and I am in support of SB 1294, SD1. I definitely want to have better dental care. I sometimes don't like to go to my dentist because I scared of the drill. I need help choosing a good dentist that can help me feel better when I go. Thank you.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is David Beatovich and I support of SB 1294, SD1. I want to visit the dentist more and more.  
Thank you.



March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Timothy Renken and I am in support of SB 1294, SD1. I have not gone to the dentist because I need more help with my teeth to be fixed. I lost almost all of my front teeth and cannot eat many foods because it hurts too much. I cannot use a toothbrush and toothpaste because it hurts to use it. I only use a mouthwash to rinse my teeth because it hurts too much. I don't have good Medicaid dentist insurance, so I only go dentist one time a year. I have kidney stones because I can only eat some kinds of food. I am getting worse. Please please please pass SB 1294, SD1. Thank you.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Vaipapa Soliai and I am in support of SB 1294, SD1. I don't have any teeth and need more dentist appointments to help me get teeth. I am a person with disabilities that need support with my electric wheelchair. Please pass SB 1294, SD1. Thank you.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Amber Arakawa and I would like to tell you that I support SB 1294, SD1. I need more dentist Medicaid and do not want to lose my insurance.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Cheryl Derby and I support SB 1294, SD1. I am a person with a disability and want to have more appointments at my dentist.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Sol Ray Duncan and I want to see SB 1294, SD1 become law. I know I need to have more checkups at my dentist. I want to have clean teeth and strong teeth, and teeth that is not sore.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Celeste Kagimoto and I want SB 1294, SD1 to pass because I have a disability and I go to Lanakila Day program and need more dental help.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Paul Landingin and I want you to pass SB 1294, SD1. I think I need more checkups at the dentist. Sometimes my teeth are sore but I cannot go dentist because I am told I don't have any more insurance coverage. I don't know why. I tell my caregiver I have Medicaid, but I don't understand how come I cannot fix my teeth. Can you help me and my caregiver have more dentist fixing appointment?

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Michael Lee and have a disability and I want to have more checkups on my teeth please. I want to have teeth that work good. I support SB 1294, SD1.



March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Ada McFeely and I need your help to pass SB 1294, SD1. I support SB 1294, SD1. Someone always call me a duck because my teeth and mouth cannot be fix. I want to change my teeth and mouth so no more duck calling in my life.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Ryan Nishikawa and I am person who has Down's Syndrome and support SB 1294, SD1. I am at Lanakila day program and I like my dentist, but only one time I can go in one year.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Johnelle Santos and I have a disability and I support SB 1294, SD1. I want to have pretty teeth too.

March 3, 2022, 10:10am, Conference Room 211

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

Dear Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

My name is Michelle Muralt, I support SB 1294, SD1. I have Down's syndrome and help other friends who have disabilities to have a better life. I want to see us have more dentist visit to fix our teeth and have someplace where a dentist can fix our teeth and help us to have braces or to have retainers if we need them, or clean our teeth and make it straight again.

**SB-1294-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2022 6:20:42 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/3/2022 10:10:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Michael Press	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Michael Press. I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate in Ewa Beach on Oahu. I support this bill and I urge you to do the same. Thank you.

**SB-1294-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/2/2022 1:42:08 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/3/2022 10:10:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Thomas Brandt	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Strong support!

**SB-1294-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/2/2022 9:44:52 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/3/2022 10:10:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Marion Poirier	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

3/3/22

SENATE CHAIR AND MEMBERS:

SUPPORT

My name is Marion Poirier. I am a registered nurse who has had a career as executive director of various non-profit health and human service organizations. I speak from experience when I strongly support this measure.

Simply stated, if there isn't any oral health opportunity then there are other health concerns..Oral health is an indicator of general well-being, and it prevents other illnesses. Also, people cannot get employment when teeth are missing or look unhealthy to an employer.

I know this proposal costs money up front, but much more money will be saved by a decrease in emergency department visits as well as onsets of other illnesses. Please pass this important measure. The poor should not be discriminated against for such a basic need.



*Restore the Commons*

**LATE**

Thursday, March 3, 2022, 10:10 am

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

SENATE BILL – RELATING TO MEDICAID BENEFITS

Position: Strong Support

Me ke Aloha, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Agaran, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

Those who have medical and dental coverage take a lot for granted, including their own basic health – our most prized position – and the vigor of possibility it produces in the human psyche. A life free of pain, one of assumed mobility, one of greater worries such as inequality and climate change.

For those who need it and cannot get it, it is a constant distraction, a debilitating reminder of incapacity, a downer of possibility. Our community is poorer for its loss of active, productive, beloved, respected and listened-to family members. Our community is stronger and more capable when we are all in good health and feel cared for. It is a low threshold, a minimum standard, one we can easily afford (if we could get insurance company interference out of the way – easily done with a proper will!).

Neglect of basics such as health and dental care lead to greater disability and greater expense. It is essential that proper funding be provided, as it is cheaper in the long run. The insurance industry assertion that its oversight is necessary for efficiency is simply wrong, easily and repeatedly disproven, but big money greases their skids. Providing proper care is a cost-saving measure, and a half-measure in areas will be positively disappointing.

Mahalo for the opportunity to address this issue,

Charley Ice, Hoa'āina; and member of the Health Committee of the Hawaii Democratic Party



**Building the new normal with People and Land: Food Security Health Care Public Banking  
Regenerating Soils Cutting Waste Eliminating GHG emissions**

**LATE**

Dear Senator Kouchi,

**Re: SB1294**

**A dentist's testimony working in Hawaiian Community Health for 7 years:**

Dr. Don Sand, 54-135 Honomu place, Hauula, HI 96717, cell 808-428-1572

In 27 years of being a dentist I've learned that every person living in Hawaii deserves a healthy smile, enough teeth for chewing nutritious food, and to have their mouth free of pain, infection, and disease.

My name is Dr. Don Sand DDS. I have been working in the community health system of Hawaii for the last 7 years. I enjoyed practicing in California for 20 years since most all my patients could afford dental care. But until moving to the islands I have never seen so many deserving people suffer from the lack of dental care.

Since transitioning help the smiles of the underserved in Hawaii I have never been more passionate about the gift we can give our patients but every day I am in pain over finding so many adults, especially Kupuna who do not have dental insurance. While working clinically in the Community Health care model I have also been able to visit and consult with about 8 of the dental directors of the 14 community health centers.

Oral health is the only disease in our modern times that is both preventable and curable. When dental care is not available to the majority of our population then they will have untreated oral health disease that result in many collateral problems affecting a person's health, suffering/pain, mental health, low self-esteem, social isolation and a loss of personal financial health.

Dental infections not only result in unnecessary ER visits, but patients with chronic tooth and gums diseases are not able to chew food properly. This lack of nutrition results in exacerbating many whole-body diseases like cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and may result in decreasing the bodies' immune system. Untreated tooth infections can lead to facial infections which may result in death.

Without dental treatment our Island people cannot be competitive to get a job when they have no teeth to smile with in an interview. Having shame of their bad teeth results in loss of needed socializing needed to maintain emotional and mental health. Without adult Medicaid many deserving people and Kupuna continue to have teeth that could be saved become lost without insurance to help the costs to repair their teeth.

With an adequately funded adult Medicaid plan an early diagnosis and early dental treatment can resolve many problems that are small they often be fixed with very little cost. If easy treatment is unavailable then often there are huge costs from deferring dental treatment. One good example, is when one small cavity is diagnosed. If it is fixed early it could have a low-cost treatment such as a simple filling. But if untreated this simple problem will continue to damage the tooth and could result in a root canal, a crown, a gum surgery that could cost \$3,000 or more when scaled to private practice fees. If the finances are still not be available at that point then the

tooth is most often removed. Without adult Medicaid there are minimal provisions helping adults even replace the missing teeth. This sad scenario can be repeated as 32 nightmares for the patient as each tooth that can be saved is lost.

In the ADA, American Dental Association briefing on reinstatement options: by selecting option 3 many adults in Hawaii will have their health smiles back. Option 2 will make a difference but not for everyone. Due to the huge amount of oral health problems from the 12 years of deferred preventive dental access it would seem that Option 1 is not a practical enough of an investment and may result in taking one step forward, fixing a few teeth but then a return to sliding 3 steps backwards.

With the lack of oral health care for our people of Hawaii they lose self-esteem, they lose their ability to get nutrition, they lose job opportunities, lose social opportunities, they lose the joy of being pain free and they lose elements of quality life.

Having a healthy smile is worth millions for each deserving adult and should be considered as a human right. If there is one big thing that we can do within our influence and leave a humanitarian legacy we can by committing to a wise and practical plan to restoring the priceless oral health and well-being of our Island people.

Malama Pono,  
Dr. Don Sand DDS

Sen. Kouchi, if you want a bills intern to work for you for free on this bill I'm willing to put on hold all other public oral health projects to do any research, summary briefings or assignments that you request. Feel free to text or call me 24/7. 808-428-1572

**LATE**

**SB-1294-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/2/2022 11:18:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/3/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Daria Fand	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Testimony for SB1294 SD1**

**Testifier:** Daria A. Fand, Honolulu, Hawaii

Public Decision Making on Thursday, March 3, 2022, 10:10 a.m.

Senate Committee on Ways and Means, Sen. Dela Cruz, Chair; Sen. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of this Committee:

I am in very strong support of this measure, which seeks to restore a most basic health protection and benefit -- dental wellness -- to the most vulnerable of Hawaii's residents. This protection was absurdly, egregiously, and fiscally irresponsibly withdrawn from Medicaid recipients in 2009, and ever since, the overall health and wellbeing of the lowest income residents of Hawaii has been severely compromised. As this measure points out, an established correlation exists between dental health and such killer diagnoses as diabetes and heart disease. Research also indicates that there is an associated increased incidence of coronary artery disease in subjects with poor hygiene, dental debris and dental calculus\*, all of which are entirely preventable conditions, provided access to basic, routine dental hygiene services and education. It is unacceptable and unconscionable that our state no longer provides these services, which are every bit as crucial to medical and health justice as any other medical specialization. It is as though the healthcare bureaucrats in this state decided 12 years ago that an essential part of one's health maintenance requiring professional care was optional, in the callous and ill-conceived hope that folks would simply suffer (needlessly) lost teeth and gum disease with no repercussions to their lives and bodies. Such calculations have resulted in dramatic losses to the state in dollars, as this bill points out, but also to the workforce, since people who have suffered tooth loss are less employable, and less productive, if there are concomitant medical complications.

I ask that this Committee **approve this measure with appropriations for universal Medicaid-covered dental health at least at the level of Option 2**, presented in the measure. Basic coverage (Option 1) is too minimal to address the significant needs of many adult Medicaid enrollees, especially given that they have been suffering with additive health burdens and degradation of

oral health, thanks to the retraction of covered dental services under Medicaid over a decade ago. Now that many cases of oral disease have progressed, the prosthodontic services referred to in Options 2 and 3 might be necessary, and therefore appropriations ought to factor in these expenses, which amount to an investment in the State.

On a final, personal note, I am a Medicaid recipient, and find myself incredulous every time I go for a long-overdue, simple routine teeth cleaning, that something so basic to my medical care has been relegated to a luxury; thus, forcing me into dire financial straits which my federal disability income benefits are too paltry to suffer. Although I am fortunate enough not to have extensive dental needs, a couple of years ago when I did have need for more involved work, the burdens I incurred without dental coverage became downright inhumane.

It's high time to restore what every person deserves and is entitled to for their health and dignity, by passing this measure with a minimum of Option 2 allocated.

Mahalo for your consideration of this very important issue, which would be a win for both Medicaid recipients and this state.

\*source: (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1677081/#:~:text=CONCLUSION--Dental%20disease%20is%20associated%20with%20an%20increased%20risk,of%20personal%20Ohygiene%20and%20possibly%20health%20care%20practices.>)