

## **Testimony of the Board of Nursing**

**Before the  
Senate Committee on Health  
Friday, February 4, 2022  
1:00 p.m.  
Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:  
S.B. 2460, RELATING TO NURSES**

Chair Keohokalole and Members of the Committee:

My name is Chelsea Fukunaga, and I am the Executive Officer of the Board of Nursing (Board). The Board appreciates the intent of and offers comments on this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to allow for temporary permits to be issued to registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country that are seeking a State license by endorsement.

The Board appreciates the bill's intent to expand the eligibility for a temporary permit to certain registered nurses and qualified licensed practical nurses from other territories and foreign jurisdictions to allow more qualified healthcare professionals to quickly find employment and enter the State's healthcare industry.

For the committee's information, all applicants for temporary permits by endorsement are required to meet all licensing requirements, which includes, but is not limited to: (1) satisfactory evidence of passing a professional licensing examination recognized by the Board; (2) proof of authorization to work in the United States; (3) fingerprinting for criminal history checks; and (4) proof of graduation from a nursing program at an educational institution in the United States or any territory or possession under the jurisdiction of the United States or proof of graduation from a nursing program at an educational institution in a foreign jurisdiction and have had their transcripts evaluated by professional evaluators designated by the Board and are considered qualified as determined by the Board.

As such, the amendments proposed in this bill will expand the pool of qualified applicants without undermining the strength of the Board's current screening process.

Lastly, for purposes of consistency, the Board recommends the following amendments be made to page 5, line 4, to read “United States, territory, or a foreign jurisdiction”.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



February 2, 2022

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Health

Re: SB 2460 – Relating to Nurses

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify on SB 2460, which allows for temporary permit to be issued to registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country that are seeking a state license by endorsement.

HMSA believes in expanding access to quality health care for the people of Hawaii. Nurses provide an important key role in patient care. We support the legislature's intent to address the shortage of these invaluable health care workers in the state of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2460.

Sincerely,

Matthew W. Sasaki  
Assistant Vice President  
Government & External Relations



**Written Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Health  
Friday, February 04, 2022 at 1:00 PM.  
via Videoconference**

**by  
Laura Reichhardt, APRN, AGPCNP-BC  
Director, Hawai'i State Center for Nursing  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

**Comments on SB 2460**

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and members of the Senate Committee on Health, thank you for the opportunity to provide **comments on SB 2460**.

Hawai'i is currently facing a nursing workforce shortage. Improving access to care by nurses is critical to ensuring the people of Hawai'i receive quality healthcare when they are in need that is provided by high-quality healthcare professionals. In 2021, the Center for Nursing reported that the current workforce shortage has several contributors including the pandemic's impact on the workforce, pre-existing challenges including our nursing faculty shortages, and efforts in new-graduate nurse recruitment as well as other factors such as difficulty in recruiting travel nurses, high cost of living and limited housing availability in Hawai'i, and other issues. The problem is complex so there is a need to address nursing workforce supply using a multifaceted approach. The Center recognizes a long history of recruitment of internationally trained nurses. In addition, the Center acknowledges the important role of the Legislature in supporting local and foreign graduates of nursing to pass the entry to practice licensing exams as well as enabling nurses who are licensed and in good standing under the laws of another state, territory, or foreign country to become licensed by endorsement in Hawai'i.

The Center defers to the Board of Nursing and the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs as it relates to processing and reviewing eligibility of applications by endorsement for temporary permitting.

We commend the State Legislature for identifying solutions to address access to healthcare in Hawai'i. Thank you for providing opportunities to comment on this measure.

*The mission of the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing is that through collaborative partnerships, the Center provides accurate nursing workforce data for planning, disseminates nursing knowledge to support excellence in practice and leadership development; promotes a diverse workforce; and advocates for sound health policy to serve the changing health care needs of the people of Hawai'i.*



## THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

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To: The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
The Honorable Rosalyn Baker, Vice Chair  
Members, Senate Committee on Health

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

Date: February 4, 2022

Re: Comments on SB 2460: Relating to Nurses

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The Queen's Health Systems (Queen's) is a nonprofit corporation that provides expanded health care capabilities to the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin. Since the founding of the first Queen's hospital in 1859 by Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV, it has been our mission to provide quality health care services in perpetuity for Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i. Over the years, the organization has grown to four hospitals, and more than 1,500 affiliated physicians and providers statewide. As the preeminent health care system in Hawai'i, Queen's strives to provide superior patient care that is constantly advancing through education and research.

Queen's appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on SB 2460, which would allow for temporary permits to be issued to registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country that are seeking a state license by endorsement. Queen's appreciates the intent of this measure which seeks to address the ongoing shortage of licensed nurses in Hawai'i. We are also optimistic that proactive efforts of the legislature to address workforce shortages in the healthcare industry will have a combined beneficial impact this Session.

Should this measure advance we would urge the Committee to ensure that adequate minimum education and training requirements are met or exceeded for any nurse or licensed practical nurse that would qualify under amended subsection (b).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this SB 2460.

*The mission of The Queen's Health Systems is to fulfill the intent of Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV to provide in perpetuity quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i.*



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 2460**  
Relating to Nurses

**COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**  
**Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair**  
**Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice-Chair**

**Video Conference Hearing Date: February 4, 2022**

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice-Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights submits testimony in support of House Bill 1758 which seeks to allow temporary permits to be issued to registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country that are seeking a state license by endorsement.

Hawaii's capacity to meet the state's demand for nursing care may already be at a critical tipping point as the pandemic extends into its third year and exhausted health care providers retire or leave the profession. According to the Hawaii Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, almost 5,000 nurses left the field between 2019 and mid-year 2021, shrinking the total active workforce from 33,410 to 28,548 in mid-2021. Hawai'i employers have turned to traveling nurses, throughout the pandemic, to fill the gaps left by the nursing shortage and our increased pandemic-related health care needs.

An aging U.S. population will further increase the demand for nursing care across the nation and in Hawai'i. In its December 2021 report, *The Elderly Population in Hawaii: Current Living Circumstances and Housing Options*, the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism reports Hawaii's percentage of elderly persons (ages 65 and over) in at 19% in 2020 or approximately 1 in 5 persons. Accounting for aging baby-boomers and increased life expectancy rates, Hawaii's percentage of elderly residents is projected to increase to 22.6% in 2030 and 23.7 % by 2040.

To obtain a work visa to enter the United States, foreign nurses must have at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited academic nursing institution and a minimum of two years relevant work experience. They also must pass rigorous background checks by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. The largest groups of immigrant nurses are from the Philippines, India, and Canada.

Immigrants comprise 23.4% of Hawai'i's registered nurse workforce according to a May 2021 report published by the New American Economy. Their prior work experience brings added value to hospitals and other health care providers. And multi-lingual registered nurses may also be relied upon to reliably communicate vital medical information to limited English proficient patients.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 1758,

Pat McManaman, Co-Chair

Barbara Yamashita, Co-Chair

**Written Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness**

**Hearing: February 4, 2022 @ 1:00PM  
State Capitol, via Videoconference**

By Hawai‘i – American Nurses Association (Hawai‘i-ANA)



**SB2460 RELATING TO NURSES**

Chair Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair Rosalyn H. Baker and members of the Senate Committee on Health, for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB2460 Relating to Nurses.

We are Hawai‘i - American Nurses Association (Hawai‘i-ANA) and we speak for over 15,000 Registered Nurses in Hawai‘i. Our interest in this bill lies in our responsibility as the state professional nurses association to defend and uphold the quality of nursing education and standards of practice, as the basis for practicing nursing in Hawai‘i. We seek to ensure the standards are maintained by which nurses qualify for professional licensure, authorizing them to provide nursing care in the State of Hawai‘i. We are assured that the measures proposed by this bill will allow registered nurses and licensed practical nurses, regardless of their country of origin or place of nursing education, to seek a temporary permit to practice nursing in Hawai‘i while meeting the same standards and requirements such as success with NCLEX examination, verification of equivalency of nursing education, etc. that are in place in HAR 457-7.

The critical shortage of nurses has been felt acutely throughout our islands over the last 2 years of the COVID-19 pandemic. We all need to work together to address this workforce crisis, to ensure a continuing supply of highly educated professional nurses who are the bedrock of our healthcare system.

At Hawai‘i-ANA we have three directors on our Board of ten, who are in fact originally educated and licensed as a registered nurse in a foreign country. One of those three is our executive director, Dr. Beechinor, who has many years of experience in recruiting foreign-educated nurses to work in Hawai‘i facilities over the past 3 decades, resulting in the permanent hire of hundreds of nurses who have settled into the fabric of our community. Dr. Beechinor is an expert in the nuances of the process to license and immigrate foreign-educated nurses, and she stands ready to assist in the interest of serving the needs of our community.

We respectfully request that HB1758 be passed out of this committee. Thank you for your continuing careful consideration of measures that address the nursing shortage and the healthcare needs of our community.

Contact information for Hawai‘i – American Nurses Association

President: Katie Kemp, BAN, RN-BC  
Executive Director: Dr. Linda Beechinor, APRN-Rx, FNP-BC  
phone (808) 779-3001  
500 Lunalilo Home Road, #27-E  
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[www.hicir.org](http://www.hicir.org) | Instagram @hicir  
hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com

## **Testimony in SUPPORT of SB2460 RELATING TO NURSES**

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair

Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

### **COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

Hearing Date: 2/4/2022

Place: Via Videoconference

Chair Yamane and Vice-Chair Tam,

The Hawai`i Coalition for Immigrant Rights (HCIR) SUPPORTS SB 2460, Relating to Nurses, and supports the amendment to companion bill HB 1758 adopted at the Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness hearing on February 2, 2022, as per the Board of Nursing. SB 2460 allows for temporary permits to be issued to registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country that are seeking a state license by endorsement.

First, this bill fixes the inequitable treatment between registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country and those from non-Hawai`i U.S. states. All nurses without a Hawai`i-based license must obtain one to practice nursing in Hawai`i. Currently, for nurses who are licensed in other U.S. states, certain qualified applicants for licensure by endorsement are eligible for a temporary permit. This allows these nurses to begin practicing immediately as their application undergoes the verification and review process. For nurses licensed in a U.S. territory or foreign country, however, the otherwise similarly-situated qualified applicants for licensure by endorsement do not currently have this option for a temporary permit. There is no reason for the discrepancy in treatment of these experienced, qualified nurses.

Second, this bill is an important step in lowering the barriers for immigrant professionals to contribute to our economy and our community. Many immigrants end up leaving behind their professional careers when they come to the United States in search of a better life for their families. One HCIR member shares that her mother was a health care professional in their country of origin. When they moved to the United States, her mother gave up that career because of the practical and economic barriers in obtaining a new license. Immigrants should not be made to choose between their profession and their communities in the United States. Hawai`i is worse off if experienced, highly qualified nurses are unable to use their skills due to bureaucratic barriers. The passage of this bill will allow nurses to quickly find employment with the temporary permit while they wait for their permanent licenses to process, thus lowering the economic barriers to entering the nursing profession here in Hawai`i.



[www.hicir.org](http://www.hicir.org) | Instagram @hicir  
[hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com](mailto:hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com)

Finally, this bill is a critical piece in addressing Hawai`i's well-documented nursing shortage. It will allow qualified nurses to tackle Hawai`i's critical health care needs immediately. Even before COVID-19, the nursing shortage in Hawai`i was a prominent problem, and COVID-19 exacerbated that problem, straining Hawai`i's health care system to unprecedented levels.<sup>1</sup> The shortage leaves Hawai`i particularly vulnerable due to the remote location. This month, the effects of the shortages were acutely felt, as significant numbers were unable to work due to COVID-19 infections or exposures, with one day seeing 1,500 frontline caregivers out of work (10% of the workforce).<sup>2</sup>

As many have noted, we are heading into the next chapter of the fight to end COVID-19 and recover economically. This bill will allow registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country to more quickly and easily join that fight. That would be to the benefit of the whole Hawai`i community. We support SB 2460 and the amendment proposed by the Board of Nursing.

Thank you for your support and consideration,

Catherine Chen, Co-chair, Hawai`i Coalition for Immigrant Rights  
Liza Ryan Gill, Co-chair, Hawai`i Coalition for Immigrant Rights

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<sup>1</sup> Kirstin Downey, *Pandemic Hardships Have Made Hawaii's Nursing Shortage Even Worse*, HONOLULU CIVIL BEAT (Oct. 6, 2021), <https://www.civilbeat.org/2021/10/pandemic-hardships-have-made-hawaiis-nursing-shortage-even-worse/>.

<sup>2</sup> Allyson Blair, *Head of nurses union: Severe staffing shortage at hospitals is impacting patient care*, Hawaii News Now (Jan. 12, 2022), <https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2022/01/13/head-nurses-union-severe-staffing-shortage-is-impacting-patient-care/>.

Friday, February 4, 2022 at 1:00 PM  
Via Video Conference

**Senate Committee on Health**

To: Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
Senator Rosalyn Baker, Vice Chair

From: Michael Robinson  
Vice President, Government Relations & Community Affairs

Re: **SB 2460 – Testimony In Support  
Relating to Nurses**

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My name is Michael Robinson, and I am the Vice President of Government Relations & Community Affairs at Hawai'i Pacific Health. Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system comprised of its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox and over 70 locations statewide with a mission of creating a healthier Hawai'i.

I am writing in SUPPORT of SB 2460 which would allow temporary permits to be issued to registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country who are seeking a state license by endorsement.

Under the licensing statutes, licensure by endorsement is available to licensed practical nurses who are licensed and in good standing in other states, territories, or foreign countries. Certain qualified applicants for licensure by endorsement who are licensed in another state are eligible for a temporary permit to practice in the State while their applications are verified and reviewed. Making it possible for qualified nurses from another territory or foreign country to be eligible for a temporary permit would create a pathway for more nurses to enter the workforce quickly. This process may encourage nurses from another state, a territory or foreign country to relocate to Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**SB-2460**

Submitted on: 2/2/2022 12:09:12 PM

Testimony for HTH on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
amy agbayani	Testifying for Filipina Advocacy Network FAN	Support	No

Comments:

Amy Agbayani, co-chair Filipina Advocacy Network (FAN).

Thank you Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker and members of the committee. for hearing sb 2460 relating to foreign born nuses. We also thank the Filipino caucus for including this bill in their package. We support the bill and feel confident that it will help with the nurses shortage in our state and will benefit the community. It should be noted that 46% of all immigrants in Hawai`i are from the Philippines and a majority are naturalized citizens; 23% of the state's nurses and 47% of the nursing assistance are foreign born. It is likely that many of these foreign-trained nurses who may be currently working as nursing assistants or as other type of healthcare workers are potentially eligible for the permit as proposed by the bill. Training and support for foreign trained nurses is a continuing need.

Thank you for your consideration and I respectfully request you vote for sb2460.



**February 4, 2022 at 1:00 pm**  
**Via Videoconference**

**Senate Committee on Health**

To: Chair Jarrett Keohokalole  
Vice Chair Rosalyn H. Baker

From: Paige Heckathorn Choy  
Associate Vice President, Government Affairs  
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Testimony in Support**  
**SB 2460, Relating to Nurses**

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

We write today in **support** of this measure, which seeks to allow temporary permits for licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and registered nurses (RNs) that are seeking a state licensure in Hawaii by endorsement. Staffing shortages have become a major issue for our healthcare providers due to the pandemic. Many staff are retiring or leaving the healthcare profession due to burnout, and the increasing contagiousness of variants of COVID-19 have caused massive staff absences during community outbreaks. This affects all types of healthcare organizations, from the state's largest hospitals, to long-term care facilities caring for vulnerable residents, to small hospice agencies providing compassionate care at the end of life.

We appreciate any efforts to expand the pool of potential qualified workers to help rebuilt and reinforce the pipeline of essential healthcare workers in the state. Creative solutions, systemic investments, and continued focus on promoting the healthcare sector's workforce pipeline will be needed to ensure that Hawaii residents continue to have access to high-quality, affordable care. We look forward to continuing our collaborations with many different community partners on a long-term solution for this staffing crisis, and appreciate the opportunity to support this measure.



February 3, 2022

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice-Chair  
Hearing Date: February 4, 2022, 1:00 pm  
Via Videoconference

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**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2460  
Relating to Nurses**

Chair Keohokalole, Vice-Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee:

The Legal Clinic (“TLC”) submits this testimony in support of SB 2460, which would allow for temporary permits to be issued to registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country that are seeking a state license by endorsement.

TLC provides legal and related services to Hawai'i's low- and moderate-income immigrant community. In the course of our work, we have learned first-hand of what is well publicized throughout our community—that there is a severe shortage of nurses, exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic—and its tragic impact particularly on our marginalized communities. SB 2460 would help alleviate this shortage by allowing immigrant nurses and nurses from the territories to obtain temporary permits while they are in the process of seeking licenses by endorsement, which right is currently granted to nurses from other U.S. states.

In his recent state of the state address, Governor Ige highlighted the “critical shortages of doctors and nurses” and the need to expand the University of Hawai'i's program for educating nurses. SB 2460 will help address this shortage in the near term by expanding the pool of qualified nursing applicants without affecting the state's screening process.

We urge you to pass SB 2460 out of committee to help address the severe shortage in nurses in our community.

Thank you.

Corey Park  
President, Board of Directors  
The Legal Clinic

**SB-2460**

Submitted on: 2/2/2022 8:11:50 PM

Testimony for HTH on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and HTH Committee Members,

As a public health professional and son of refugee parents, I strongly recommend support for **SB2460**, which allows for temporary permits to be issued to nurses licensed in a territory or foreign country that are seeking a state license by endorsement.

These temporary permits are already issued to those licensed in non-Hawai'i states, so this bill makes it fair for immigrant nurses and allows them to start working immediately while waiting for permanent licenses to process. My mother first started work in the US as a nurse, so I can attest to the importance of accessible work options for trained, hard-working, and and eager immigrant communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)



Chair Yamane and Members of the Committee:

My name is Denise Cohen, and I am a retired professor of nursing and former chair of the education committee for the board of Nursing. I appreciate the current nursing shortage and the intent this bill. The purpose of this bill is to allow for temporary permits to be issued to registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country that are seeking a State license by endorsement.

I appreciate the bill's intent to expand the eligibility for a temporary permit to certain registered nurses and qualified licensed practical nurses from other territories and foreign jurisdictions to allow more qualified healthcare professionals to quickly find employment and enter the State's healthcare industry. However, boards of nursing were set up over hundred years ago to protect the public from fraudulent and unethical nursing practices. One way to do that is to guarantee that all schools of nursing in the United States are accredited by an agency endorsed by the United States Department of Education. After that a nursing candidate must pass a rigorous test. All to protect the patient who is in the care of an RN or LPN for 8-12 hours a day.

Currently, all applicants for temporary permits by endorsement are required to meet all licensing requirements, which includes, but is not limited to: (1) satisfactory evidence of passing a professional licensing examination recognized by the Board; (2) proof of authorization to work in the United States; (3) fingerprinting for criminal history checks; and (4) proof of graduation from a nursing program at an educational institution in the United States or any territory or possession under the jurisdiction of the United States or proof of graduation from a nursing program at an educational institution in a foreign jurisdiction **and have had their transcripts evaluated by professional evaluators designated by the Board and are considered qualified as determined by the Board.**

Frankly this board should be considering expanding nursing programs within the state of Hawaii. There is a wait list of over a hundred qualified candidates waiting to get into one of Hawaii's accredited nursing schools. This would increase qualified candidates who understand the unique culture Hawaii has. For example, one of the limitations is that UH has a hiring freeze on all faculty including nursing faculty limiting the ability to increase enrollment. All schools of nursing in Hawaii meet the strict licensing requirements the Board of Nursing has in place to protect the public from harm.

I do support this bill as long as protections for the public remain in place. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

**SB-2460**

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 7:48:20 AM

Testimony for HTH on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Matt Bishop	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose this bill as submitted. Hawaii already has a way for foreign trained individuals seeking a license to work in healthcare, it is called CGFNS, and is an organization that confirms that the foreign education meets the standards of those in the United States. There is no need to offer a temporary permit that could potentially put the public at risk if it is determined that their education does not meet our standards of practice. The current system in place works well and that process should be continued!

**SB-2460**

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 3:00:25 PM

Testimony for HTH on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

**LATE**

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Liza Ryan Gill	Testifying for HI Coalition for Immigrant Rights	Support	No

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Keohokalole and Vice Chair Baker,**

**The Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights (HCIR) SUPPORTS SB 2460, Relating to Nurses, which allows for temporary permits to be issued to registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country that are seeking a state license by endorsement.**

**First, this bill fixes the inequitable treatment between registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country and those from non-Hawai'i U.S. states. All nurses without a Hawai'i-based license must obtain one to practice nursing in Hawai'i. Currently, for nurses who are licensed in other U.S. states, certain qualified applicants for licensure by endorsement are eligible for a temporary permit. This allows these nurses to begin practicing immediately as their application undergoes the verification and review process. For nurses licensed in a U.S. territory or foreign country, however, the otherwise similarly-situated qualified applicants for licensure by endorsement do not currently have this option for a temporary permit. There is no reason for the discrepancy in treatment of these experienced, qualified nurses.**

**Second, this bill is an important step in lowering the barriers for immigrant professionals to contribute to our economy and our community. Many immigrants end up leaving behind their professional careers when they come to the United States in search of a better life for their families. One HCIR member shares that her mother was a health care professional in their country of origin. When they moved to the United States, her mother gave up that career because of the practical and economic barriers in obtaining a new license. Immigrants should not be made to choose between their profession and their communities in the United States. Hawai'i is worse off if experienced, highly qualified nurses are unable to use their skills due to bureaucratic barriers. The passage of this bill will allow nurses to quickly find employment with the temporary permit while they wait for their permanent licenses to process, thus lowering the economic barriers to entering the nursing profession here in Hawai'i.**

**Finally, this bill is a critical piece in addressing Hawai'i's well-documented nursing shortage. It will allow qualified nurses to tackle Hawai'i's critical health care needs immediately. Even before COVID-19, the nursing shortage in Hawai'i was a prominent**

**problem, and COVID-19 exacerbated that problem, straining Hawai`i's health care system to unprecedented levels. The shortage leaves Hawai`i particularly vulnerable due to the remote location. This month, the effects of the shortages were acutely felt, as significant numbers were unable to work due to COVID-19 infections or exposures, with one day seeing 1,500 frontline caregivers out of work (10% of the workforce).**

**As many have noted, we are heading into the next chapter of the fight to end COVID-19 and recover economically. This bill will allow registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country to more quickly and easily join that fight. That would be to the benefit of the whole Hawai`i community.**

**Thank you for your support and consideration,**

**Catherine Chen, Co-chair, Hawai`i Coalition for Immigrant Rights**

**Liza Ryan Gill, Co-chair, Hawai`i Coalition for Immigrant Rights**

**SB-2460**

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 1:25:09 PM

Testimony for HTH on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Elena Cabatu	Testifying for East Hawaii Region of Hawaii Health Systems Corporation	Support	No

Comments:

The East Hawaii Region of Hawaii Health Systems Corporation, consisting of Hilo Medical Center and nursing homes of Hilo Medical Center's Extended Care Facility, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home, Hale Ho`ola Hamakua in Honoka`a, and Ka`u Hospital, and our East Hawaii Health Clinics, is in **strong support of SB 2460**. During this pandemic, our facilities have been straddled with extreme labor shortages and our employees have been pushed to their maximum to cover shifts. This bill, allowing for temporary permits to be issued to registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from a territory or foreign country that are seeking a state license by endorsement, would be of great relief to our strained and stressed labor force. Please support SB 2460 so we may provide the best possible care for our community.

**SB-2460**

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 1:59:06 PM

Testimony for HTH on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Laurie Field	Testifying for Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates	Support	No

Comments:

Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates supports SB 2460.