



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 2737 S.D. 1
RELATING TO A BEHAVIORAL HEALTH LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY

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

Hearing Date: 3/2/2022

Hearing Time: 10:15 a.m.

1 **Department Position:** The Department of Health (“Department”) STRONGLY SUPPORTS this
2 measure and offers comments.

3 **Department Testimony:** The Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD) offers the following
4 testimony on behalf of the Department.

5 The Department is committed to protecting and improving the health and environment
6 for all people in Hawaii including assuring that basic mental health care is available,
7 appropriate, assured quality, and accessible. The AMHD is responsible for leading, fostering
8 and coordinating a comprehensive mental health system that promotes mental wellbeing
9 through the delivery of dignified, holistic, and culturally relevant mental health care and
10 services.

11 The Department strongly supports this measure which appropriates funds for the
12 renovation of the Guensberg building on the grounds of the Hawaii State Hospital (HSH) for the
13 development of a secure licensed facility that would address the needs of long-term care
14 patients with behavioral needs and patients with co-occurring substance use and mental illness.
15 The Guensberg Building was built in the 1950’s. It is the oldest building in operation at the HSH.
16 The need to replace the existing Guensberg Building due to deteriorating conditions has been
17 included in the HSH Master Plan for many years.

1 Regarding the long-term care needs, there are approximately 40-60 patients at the HSH
2 who could benefit from long-term care services. As noted in this measure, these patients no
3 longer meet inpatient psychiatric hospital level of care, but cannot be discharged to another
4 location due to their behavioral needs, current or historical, as well as current long-term care
5 needs. This includes individuals with developmental disabilities, intellectual disabilities, and
6 cognitive disorders that make it difficult to be admitted to another facility.

7 Repurposing the Guensberg Building could also provide a secure location for individuals
8 to receive comprehensive, clinically appropriate, and rehabilitative therapy focused both on
9 serious mental illness (SMI) and substance use disorder (SUD) treatment. Having a co-occurring
10 treatment program on the HSH campus will increase opportunities for continuity of care when
11 individuals transition out of acute psychiatric inpatient care and are stepping down to a lower
12 level of care. This may reduce recidivism for those with a history of relapse, arrests, emergency
13 department visits, and inpatient hospitalizations that occur in this targeted population.

14 The goal is to complete renovations with a total of 90 beds with 40 dedicated to long-
15 term care, and 50 for secure residential co-occurring mental health and substance abuse
16 treatment. Funding for this capital improvement project will allow the Department to take
17 significant steps to begin the renovation process and address a critical clinical need at the
18 Hawaii State Hospital (HSH) including areas of patient care that enhance the quality of
19 programs offered and increase safety and security for patients, staff and the community.

20 **Offered Amendments:** None

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

22 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department requests that this measure be considered as a vehicle to
23 provide needed funding so long as it does not supplant the priorities and requests outlined in
24 the Governor's executive budget request.



SB2737 SD1 LTC at Guensberg Bldg at HSH

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

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

Wednesday, Mar 2 2022: 10:15 : Videoconference

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition supports SB2737 SD1

ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the current chair of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide organization for substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health disorder treatment and prevention agencies.

There is so much potential for care at Guensberg to complete the continuum of care of services as well as improve cost-effectiveness.

Patients not needing intensive inpatient care yet are too much for usual long-term care facilities, can receive services that include behavioral health, co-occurring (substance uses disorder coupled with mental health disorders) as well as cognitive and disability support.

Moreover, beds could also be used for intermediate care that requires hospital type care yet more than the typical 5-7 days. This could help with the various behavioral health crisis that happens on the street.

The Guensberg building can offer versatility for a varied type of different uses to help our community deal with ending fragmented care.

The trend today is to implement multiple levels of least restrictive levels of care. Historically, we provided two extremes on the spectrum: extensive or mild treatment. Having multiple levels of care is more effective for quality and offers more cost-effective approaches.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and are available for questions.



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2737 SD1

TO: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, & Members – Senate Committee on Ways and Means
FROM: Trisha Kajimura
Deputy Director - Community
DATE: March 2, 2022 at 10:15 AM

Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) **supports** SB 2737 SD1 which authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds to develop a long-term care facility at the Guensberg building on the Hawaii State Hospital grounds.

HHRC's mission is to reduce harm, promote health, create wellness, and fight stigma in Hawai'i and the Pacific. We work with many individuals who are impacted by poverty, housing instability, and other social determinants of health. Many of our program participants live with mental health issues and co-occurring disorders such as substance use. In addition to specialized healthcare services, we provide homeless outreach and housing support services to individuals who suffer from inadequate mental health care. We have also been providing stabilization services through a contract with the Adult Mental Health Division of the Department of Health since December 2021.

Through these programs, we witness the struggle of people living with mental illness and other medical conditions. There are very few programs and facilities that can provide the level of care people need when they need it. The rehabilitation and repurposing of the Guensberg Building to provide treatment to people needing co-occurring treatment will help to fill some of this gap.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

TESTIMONY ON BEHALF OF HAWAI'I PSYCHIATRIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

To: Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gil Keith-Agaran
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Dr. Denis Mee-Lee, Legislative Committee Co-Chair
Hawai'i Psychiatric Medical Association

Time: 10:15 a.m., March 2, 2022

Re: SB 2737, SD1 Relating to a Behavioral Health Long-Term Care Facility

Position: **SUPPORT**

Dear Chair, Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Psychiatric Medical Association (HPMA) appreciates this opportunity to testify in support of SB 2737 SD1, which authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds funds for the Department of Health to develop a long-term care facility at the Guensberg building.

HPMA agrees there is a need for a long-term care facility to provide comprehensive treatment for individuals with behavioral health needs as well as those with developmental disabilities, intellectual disabilities, and cognitive needs whose behaviors make it difficult for acceptance at most long-term care facilities.

HPMA concurs that to increase the number of beds available to non-forensic civil commitment patients in our community -- additional facilities are needed, and the Guensberg building at Hawai'i state hospital might be renovated for such a repurposing.

The urgent need in Hawai'i for quality behavioral health care is significant; SB 2737, SD1 is an important step toward addressing that demand.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SD 2737, SD1.

PARTNERS IN CARE

Oahu's Continuum of Care

Our mission is to eliminate homelessness through open and inclusive participation and the coordination of integrated responses.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2737 RELATING TO A BEHAVIORAL HEALTH LONG TERM CARE FACILITY

TO: Senate Committee on Ways and Means,
FROM: Partners In Care (PIC)
Hearing: Wednesday, March 2nd, 2022, 10:15 am via videoconference
Position: **SUPPORT WITH COMMENTS**

Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

Partner In Care, Oahu's Continuum of Care, stands in support of **SB 2737 with comments**.

I am writing to testify on SB2737 on behalf of Partners in Care, a coalition of agencies providing homeless services on Oahu. This bill will free up critically needed space in HSH for those not involved in the criminal justice system but who have severe behavioral disorders and need hospital treatment.

We hear, anecdotally, from parents who, desperate for hospital care for their adult children who have serious mental illness, tell them to "steal something from 7-11 so you can get arrested and then get into the hospital."). Currently HSH is 100% forensic. This is a factor contributing to the high number of individuals with untreated mental illness who end up living on our streets until they are arrested and then are hospitalized.

The HSH has been trying for at least 10 years to develop a long term care facility to accomplish the above goals. It's beyond time to do this. Let's not let this opportunity with the Guensberg building go to waste.

Comments: We would ask the AMHD to ensure that intensive psycho-social training will be provided to those in the long-term care beds so that the goal will be to return the patients to the community, rather than to stay in the facility indefinitely.

It is another plus the the Guensberg Building could provide treatment at an intermediate level of care for those with co-occurring disorders of both mental illness and substance use disorder. This would be another component in the array of services offered by AMHD and it has a good chance of reducing recidivism among this population.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.



Hawai'i Psychological Association

For a Healthy Hawai'i

LATE

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COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

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

Wednesday, March 2, 2022 - 10:15am - via videoconference

Testimony in Support of SB2737 SD1 RELATING TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY

The Hawai'i Psychological Association (HPA) supports SB2737 SD1, issuing general obligation bonds to fund the Guensberg facility administered by the Department of Health, thus enabling the state to better meet the long-term needs of court committed patients who are no longer in clinical need of psychiatric hospitalization as well as patients in the community who require stabilization and long-term community care. The development of the new facility will provide the State with more options for the care of patients with unique needs, who are not charged with crimes – for example, those with substance use disorders or mental illnesses who require stabilization but not hospitalization. Building the new facility will also help free up space at the State Hospital for new court committed admissions.

The COVID-9 pandemic has had devastating effects not only to our public health system and economies, but to our collective mental health. The disruptions COVID created in our personal lives have brought many in our community to the brink of emotional collapse – driving them to substance abuse and maladaptive behaviors. The need for mental health services could not be more apparent or pressing. Focusing efforts and funding on long-term care facilities represents a targeted approach for conditions directly created and/or exacerbated by the pandemic.

Together with SB2735 SD1 RELATING TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS STABILIZATION BEDS, these bills go a long way to helping the State meet the varied mental health needs of residents with emotional distress and/or mental illness.

Moreover, the State Council on Revenues recently forecast a 15% increase in the state's general fund for the fiscal year. HPA thus greatly appreciates this measure to improve access to quality mental health care that everyone in Hawaii deserves.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important bill.

Sincerely,

Alex Lichten, Ph.D.

Chair, HPA Legislative Action Committee