



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

Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 2737
RELATING TO A BEHAVIORAL HEALTH LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY

SENATOR JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

SENATOR JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: 2/10/2022

Hearing Time: 1:00 p.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.

1 The need to replace the existing Guensberg Building due to deteriorating conditions has been
2 included in the HSH Master Plan for many years.

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

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

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

22 **Offered Amendments:** None

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

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

SB-2737

Submitted on: 2/4/2022 7:32:30 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/10/2022 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

We are in support.



SB2737 LTC at Guensberg Bldg at HSH

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr. Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair
Thursday, Feb 10 2022: 3:00 pm : Videoconference

COMMITTEE ON H
Senator Jarrett Ke
Senator Rosalyn H

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition supports SB2737

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.

SB-2737

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 1:02:55 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/10/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Marya Grambs	Testifying for Partners in Care	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing to testify on SB2737 on behalf of Partners in Care, a coalition of agencies providing homeless services on Oahu, in support of SB2737. This bill will do several things:

- It 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.
- There are also numerous individuals currently at HSH who do not need hospital-level of care but cannot be released into the community.
- Many homeless agencies work with individuals who suffer from severe mental illness and need long term care. They are often extremely difficult to place in community-based long term care facilities because their needs are greater than can be accommodated. Providing long term care services at HSH is a needed link in the continuum of services available to people with severe mental illness, particularly to those experiencing homelessness.
- Also, some individuals with behavioral disorders need intermediate level care but of longer duration than a hospital typically provides.
- Finally, the HSH has been working for at least 7+ 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....

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Hawai'i Psychological Association

For a Healthy Hawai'i

P.O. Box 833
Honolulu, HI 96808

www.hawaiipsychology.org

Phone: (808) 521-8995

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair

Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 10, 2022 - 3:00pm - via videoconference

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

The Hawai'i Psychological Association (HPA) supports SB2737, 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 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