



February 10, 2022 at 3:00 pm
Via Videoconference

Senate Committee on Human Services

To: Chair Joy A. San Buenaventura
Vice Chair Les Ihara, Jr.

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: Submitting Comments
SB 2880, Relating to Home Health Care

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **comments** on this measure. The home health agencies that are members of HAH have all received certification by Medicare and hold contracts with insurance companies at the federal and state level that set reimbursement rates that cannot be changed based on the vaccination status of an individual healthcare worker. Further, these home health agencies must follow strict state and federal rules to promote patient safety, access, and protection. As a result of these contracts, rules, and regulations, the home health agencies that are members of our Association do not engage in any practices that would require patients to pay additional fees or costs to receive care from a vaccinated individual.

Of note, there is a federal requirement from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that virtually all healthcare workers at organizations that are contracted with Medicare or Medicaid must be vaccinated, with some exceptions made if an individual has a legitimate medical or religious reason. The first phase of this requirement went into effect on January 27; the remaining portion of the requirement will go into effect on February 28 of this year. We expect that all of our member facilities will comply with this federal requirement.

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