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Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

Before the
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, March 30, 2023
3:00 p.m.

On the following measure:
S.B. 63, S.D.2, H.D.2, RELATING TO NURSES

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committees:

My name is Esther Brown, and I am the Complaints and Enforcement Officer of the Regulated Industries Complaints Office (RICO), which is an agency within the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (Department). RICO **offers comments** on provisions of the measure that impact RICO's enforcement authority, practices and/or daily operations.

The bill authorizes the Hawaii Board of Nursing (BON) to issue temporary permits for six-month periods to registered nurses and practical nurses who are already licensed in another jurisdiction or hold a valid multistate license. Under certain conditions the bill also exempts from licensure those out-of-state nurses who accompany nonresident patients into the State for less than two weeks.

RICO enforces the licensing laws of certain professional and trade industries in the State by investigating and prosecuting misbehaving licensees who fall within the purview of the Hawaii BON. RICO's effort results in disciplinary recommendations that are

presented to the BON for final action. The BON, therefore, sets industry policy and standards through laws and rules, which are applied to regulate nurses through the issuance, denial or discipline of licenses that grant them the privilege to practice in this State. RICO, as the BON's investigator and prosecutor, therefore, defers to and supports the Hawaii BON's position on the measure's policy, administration and implementation.

From an enforcement perspective, the measure is a good law for basic but important reasons.

1. Clarity. The language of the measure is clear so temporary permit holders and would-be temporary permit holders should have no problem understanding the expectations should the measure pass.

2. Incorporated into the current licensure scheme. The measure, unlike many of the proposed healthcare interstate compact bills that were introduced this Session, seeks only to amend the existing regulatory scheme that has been in place for nearly half-a-century. The measure does not attempt to disrupt regulation through an untested scheme.

3. Notice to the regulator. A regulatory body must know about, and be able to contact, persons in the State who are or intend to practice nursing here. The measure contains the all-important notification provision in that it requires non-resident licensees seeking temporary permits, to make application directly to the BON (SB 63, S.D.2, H.D.2 ("H.D. 2") page 1, lines 8 – 9; page 2, lines 9 – 10).

4. Fees. Sufficient resources are necessary to enforce a regulatory scheme and the measure allows for the imposition of fees, which will help ensure uninterrupted and consistent regulation in the field. (H.D. 2, page 1, lines 10 – 12; page 2, lines 11 – 13).

5. Definite period. A license or permit for a definite period of time is beneficial to consumers because, at renewal, license-holders represent to the BON, and if necessary prove, that they are competent and credible still. The measure accommodates this important consumer protection aspect by limiting the licensure period of each temporary permit to six-months only. (H.D. 2, page 3, lines 10 - 11).

6. Respect for practitioners under investigation and patient medical records. Unlike many of the proposed healthcare interstate compact bills that were introduced early on during this Session, this measure does not seek to compel industry regulators to ignore state law possibly on critical matters such as the privacy of licensees under investigation for fitness to practice or the confidentiality of patient treatment records.

For these reasons, the measure is a good bill from an enforcement perspective. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Thursday, March 30, 2023; 3:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0063, SENATE DRAFT 2, HOUSE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO NURSES.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, 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** Senate Bill No. 0063, Senate Draft 2, House Draft 2, RELATING TO NURSES.

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.

This bill, as received by your Committee, would allow the Board of Nursing to issue temporary permits for an out-of-state licensed practical nurse or registered practical nurses under certain circumstances. This bill would also appropriate unspecified amount of funds to allow the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs to hire one full-time civil service exempt permanent office assistant to facilitate the issuance of temporary permits.

This bill would take effect on June 30, 3000.

No event nor circumstance in recent memory has placed such enormous demands on Hawaii's health care infrastructure than the COVID-19 pandemic. Never before had our Nation (or the entire world for that matter) had to mobilize resources to vaccinate the entire population in such a short time while millions of our friends and family members were sick or in many cases, dying. Health workers have had to risk their personal wellbeing on a daily basis to meet the needs of the ill. Cases of infection would spike placing enormous pressure on Hawaii's limited capacity of hospital beds, emergency rooms, and primary care providers.

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 0063, Senate Draft 2, House Draft 2
Thursday, March 30, 2023; 3:00 p.m.
Page 2

Even before COVID-19 hit our islands, Hawaii experienced a severe shortage of qualified health care providers. This shortage became even more evident with COVID requiring staff to work consecutive double- and triple-shifts to meet the ever present demand. The situation became so pronounced that health care workers from other states had to be brought in to keep our health care facilities open.

To facilitate this influx of health workers, DCCA scrambled to permit these workers under Hawaii's professional licensure laws. In particular, the huge number of nurses brought in to Hawaii forced DCCA to shift employees from other Boards to assist the Board of Nursing to permit these nurses to work here. Yet despite these heroic efforts, it took much time and resources for these nurses to have their professional licenses verified through endorsement. So instead of treating patients, these nurses had to wait.

This bill would remedy the problem by allowing registered and licensed practical nurses from territories or foreign countries to be issued temporary permits while they seek license by endorsement. That way, should the need arise again for a large number of nurses to be brought to the State, these qualified professionals would be allowed to work immediately to address the situation that brought them here.

For this reason, the HPCA supports this bill.

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.



**Written Testimony Presented Before the House
Committee on Finance
Thursday, March 30, 2023 at 3:00 PM
Conference Room 308 and via Videoconference
by
Laura Reichhardt, APRN, AGPCNP-BC
Director, Hawai'i State Center for Nursing
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT on S.B. 63, S.D. 2, H.D. 2

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of **S.B. 63, S.D. 2, H.D. 2**.

This measure would 1) allow the Board of Nursing to issue temporary permits to registered nurses and practical nurses in another jurisdiction under certain circumstances, and 2) adds an exception from license requirements for nurses who are licensed in another state, territory, or country accompanying a patient from out-of-state for a period of less than two weeks and not employed or affiliated with a health care facility in the State. This measure also keeps the graduate nurse provision in statute, whereas other versions of this measure sought to strike that language from statute. This important measure finds a solution to resolve the current delays in processing nursing license applications by endorsement.

With the [Governor's Emergency Rules for Nurses to Practice in the State](#) soon to expire, it is imperative that the state secure solutions to ensure the timely recruitment of nurses to meet the state's nursing needs. The temporary permit process is instrumental for recruiting nurses from outside of Hawai'i as well as bringing in travel nurses to maintain 24/7 care in the state at a time in which Hawai'i is short of the number of nurses needed. Importantly, an expedited permit process, like that which is established in the H.D. 2 version, is in critical need. Today, according to communication with DCCA, it takes 45-60 working days (up to 90 calendar days) for an applicant to receive a license. At odds with this timeframe, however, is the need to recruit nurses is rapid and ever-changing. Healthcare cannot predict sudden workforce needs 90-days in the future. Rather, our state needs a nimble, yet safe mechanism to recruit nurses to fulfill healthcare duties. This measure improves the workflow within DCCA professional and vocational licensing so that an expedited temporary permit process will be feasible. The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing commends the PVL division for identifying solutions to address known challenges.

The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing is in strong support of this measure and urges the Committee to pass this measure with an updated effective date and funding for DCCA. Updating the temporary authorization to practice laws for nursing will enable a clear and improved pathway for nurses who hold licenses elsewhere in the United States to serve this state expeditiously. The funding for the staff will ensure the workforce in DCCA to fulfill the duties outlined by this measure. Thank you for your favorable consideration of this measure and the proposed amendments.

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.

Testimony of the Board of Nursing

**Before the
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, March 28, 2023
3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308 and Videoconference**

**On the following measure:
S.B. 63, S.D. 2, H.D. 2, RELATING TO NURSES**

Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

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

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) authorize the board of nursing to issue temporary permits for six-month periods to out-of-state licensed practical nurses and registered nurses or who hold a multistate license issued by another state, territory, or foreign country, under certain circumstances; and (2) provide an exception from licensing requirements to nurses who are licensed in another state, territory, or foreign country and accompanying a patient from out-of-state for a period of less than two weeks and who are not employed or affiliated with a health care entity in the State.

The Board appreciates the amendments reflected in the H.D. 2, which were agreed upon by the stakeholders of this bill. The Board recognizes that this measure will assist, but not solve, the severe nursing shortage for health care entities in this State by allowing the Board to issue a temporary permit to out-of-state registered nurses and licensed practical nurses to work temporarily in an approved health care entity without having to apply for a permanent nurse license. This would also provide nurse-applicants who choose to apply for a permanent license the ability to practice nursing while their applications are being processed. Additionally, this bill exempts from the license requirements, nurses who travel to the State with a patient or patients for a period of less than two weeks and who are not employed or affiliated with a health care entity such as nurses on school trips or accompanying Make-A-Wish patients.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

**Written Testimony Presented Before the House
Committee on Finance
Thursday, March 30, 2023, at 3:00 PM
Conference Room 308 and via Videoconference**

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT on S.B. 63, S.D. 2, H.D. 2

Regarding Nursing Temporary Licensure

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



Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony **in support of S.B. 63, S.D. 2, H.D. 2**

We are the Hawai‘i- American Nurses Association (Hawai‘i-ANA), speaking for over 17,000 Registered Nurses in Hawai‘i who care for patients every day in our state. The American Nurses Association (ANA) and the Hawai‘i -ANA’s mission is to lead the profession to shape the future of nursing and health care. Hawai‘i - ANA supports the nursing profession across state in standards of practice including the code of ethics, advocacy, certification, accreditation, advanced practice, and education, to evolve the practice of nursing and transform health and health care. Hawai‘i-ANA empowers nurses to advocate for the improvement of the healthcare system in the communities where we live and work.

This measure would: 1) allow the Board of Nursing to issue temporary permits to registered nurses and practical nurses in another jurisdiction under certain circumstances, and, 2) adds an exception from license requirements for nurses who are licensed in another state, territory, or country accompanying a patient from out-of-state for a period of less than two weeks and not employed or affiliated with a health care facility in the state. This measure also keeps the graduate nurse provision in statute, whereas other versions of this measure sought to strike that language from statute. This important measure finds a solution to resolve the current delays in processing nursing license applications by endorsement.

With the [Governor’s Emergency Rules for Nurses to Practice in the State](#) soon to expire, it is imperative that the state secure solutions to ensure the timely recruitment of nurses to meet the state’s nursing needs. The temporary permit process is instrumental for recruiting nurses from outside of Hawai‘i as well as bringing in travel nurses to maintain 24/7 care in the state at a time in which Hawai‘i is short of the number of nurses needed. Importantly, an expedited permit process, like that which is established in the H.D. 2 version, is in critical need. Today, according to communication with The Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA), it takes 45-60 working days (up to 90 calendar days) for an applicant to receive a license. At odds with this timeframe, however, the need to recruit nurses is rapid and ever-changing. Healthcare cannot predict sudden workforce needs 90-days in the future. Rather, our state needs a nimble, yet safe mechanism to recruit nurses to fulfill healthcare duties. This measure improves the workflow within DCCA professional and vocational licensing so that an expedited temporary permit process will be feasible. The Hawai‘i - ANA commends the Professional and Vocational Licensing Division (PVL) and the Hawaii State Center for Nursing (HSCN) for identifying solutions to address known challenges.

Hawai'i -ANA is in strong support of this measure and urges the Committee to pass this measure with an updated effective date and funding for DCCA. Updating the temporary authorization to practice laws for nursing will enable a clear and improved pathway for nurses who hold licenses elsewhere in the United States to serve this state expeditiously. The funding for the staff will ensure the workforce in DCCA fulfils the duties outlined by this measure.

Thank you for your favorable consideration of this measure and the proposed amendments. Contact information for Hawai'i – American Nurses Association:

President: Dr. Nancy Atmospera-Walch, DNP, CCHN, FAAN, president@hawaii-ana.org

Executive Director: Dr. Linda Beechinor, APRN, FNP-BC executivedirector@hawaii-ana.org phone (808)779-3001, 500 Lunalilo Home Road, #27-E, Honolulu HI 96825



March 30, 2023

3 p.m.

Conference Room 308 and Videoconference

To: House Committee on Finance

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: SB63 SD2 HD2 — RELATING TO NURSES

Comments Only

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii would like to offer its comments on [SB63 SD2 HD2](#), which would allow the Board of Nursing to issue temporary permits to nurses licensed in other states so long as the applicants comply with certain requirements.

If this bill is enacted, the Legislature will be formalizing the ad hoc approach to license recognition that began with Gov. David Ige's COVID-19 emergency proclamations. While this is a positive step to address the shortage of nurses in our state, it stops short of more effective and permanent reform measures.

It is well established that Hawaii is suffering from a shortage of vital healthcare workers, especially nurses. A 2021 [report](#) from the Hawaii State Center for Nursing estimated that the state has 300 to 400 fewer nurses than needed to meet demand.¹ Since 2021, we have seen [research](#) indicating that nearly one-fourth of Hawaii's nurses have been considering leaving the workforce, largely due to the stresses caused by the pandemic.²

¹ Carrie M. Oliveira, "[2021 Hawai'i Nursing Workforce Supply: Statewide Report](#)," Hawai'i State Center for Nursing, 2021.

² Holly B. Fontenot, et al., "[Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Hawai'i Nursing Workforce: A Cross-sectional Survey](#)," Hawaii Journal of Health and Social Welfare, May 2022.

The problem — which existed before the COVID-19 crisis — has not eased since the emergency was lifted. Across the state, and especially in rural areas, Hawaii is facing shortages of experienced healthcare professionals, from primary care providers to nurses, specialists and staff.

Fixing the shortage in healthcare workers requires a multipronged strategy that will address everything from Hawaii's high cost of living to the state's regulatory scheme for healthcare facilities. Perhaps most important is the need to reform licensing regulations for healthcare professionals.

One-fourth of all licensed workers in the U.S. work in healthcare.³ Their licenses can be difficult to obtain, are expensive and carry geographic or "scope of practice" limitations.

As discussed in the Grassroot Institute of Hawaii's new policy brief on medical licensing, "[How changing Hawaii's licensing laws could improve healthcare access.](#)" the state's shortage of healthcare professionals makes its restrictions on healthcare workers who already hold licenses in other U.S. states seem redundant and self-defeating.⁴

As the Federal Trade Commission noted in a report on occupational licensing portability:

There is little justification for the burdensome, costly, and redundant licensing processes that many states impose on qualified, licensed, out-of-state applicants. Such requirements likely inhibit multistate practice and delay or even prevent licensees from working in their occupations upon relocation to a new state. Indeed, for occupations that have not implemented any form of license portability, the harm to competition from suppressed mobility may far outweigh any plausible consumer protection benefit from the failure to provide for license portability.⁵

In other words, though medical licensing is intended to protect the public, there is a point at which the level of regulation reduces the number of people in practice without an appreciable public benefit.

³ Ryann Nunn, "[Improving Health Care Through Occupational Licensing Reform.](#)" RealClear Markets, Aug. 28, 2018

⁴ Malia Hill, "[How changing Hawaii's licensing laws could improve healthcare access.](#)" Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, February 2023, pp. 5-7.

⁵ Karen Goldman, "[Options to Enhance Occupational License Portability.](#)" U.S. Federal Trade Commission, September 2018, p. 25.

One study of licensing among medical professionals found that “licensing is associated with restricted labor supply, an increased wage of the licensed occupation, rents, increased output prices, and no measurable effect on output quality.”⁶

This is where we can benefit from the lessons learned during the coronavirus situation. The governor’s emergency modification to state licensing laws demonstrated a need to embrace license portability, making it a simple matter for a nurse licensed in another state to practice in Hawaii.

The temporary permit system outlined in this bill is a partial answer to the need to attract more nurses to Hawaii. However, as discussed in the Grassroot Institute policy brief, temporary permits would be “a Band-Aid approach” to the nursing shortage.

The brief continues: “A full [licensure] recognition scheme that encourages healthcare workers to relocate to Hawaii would be a more effective approach to addressing the state’s shortages in licensed healthcare professionals.”

Because it would create a pathway to local licensure for out-of-state nurses, albeit a temporary one, this bill would be an improvement on our current system. However, the fact that the permits are temporary undermines their value as a way to bring more healthcare workers to our state.

The committee should consider a more sustainable and long-term approach to attracting nurses to our state in order to help end the nursing shortage and improve healthcare access for all.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments.

Sincerely,

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns,
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

⁶ Sean Nicholson and Carol Propper, “[Chapter Fourteen — Medical Workforce.](#)” in “Handbook of Health Economics, Vol. 2,” Elsevier, B.V., 2012, p. 885, cited also in the previously mentioned [FTC study](#), footnote #9, p3.



March 30, 2023

To: Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the House Committee on Finance

From: Hawaii Association of Health Plans Public Policy Committee

Date/Location: March 30, 2023; 3:00 p.m., Conference Room 308/Videoconference

Re: Testimony in support of SB 63 SD2 HD2 – Relating to Nurses

The Hawaii Association of Health Plans (HAHP) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of SB 63 SD2 HD2. HAHP is a statewide partnership that unifies Hawaii's health plans to improve the health of Hawaii's communities together. A majority of Hawaii residents receive their health coverage through a plan associated with one of our organizations.

HAHP believes in providing our members with access to quality care and this bill would allow for temporary permits for already licensed nurses from other jurisdictions and allow for nurses to accompany out-of-state patients while in Hawaii for a limited time frame. As we know, providers are in short supply, particularly in rural areas, and access to care is critically important. This bill would help to expand and strengthen our critical health care workforce, support the health care ecosystem, and, most importantly, improve access to care for the residents of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 63 SD2 HD2.

Sincerely,

HAHP Public Policy Committee
cc: HAHP Board Members

AlohaCare | HMAA | HMSA | Humana | HWMG | Kaiser Permanente | MDX Hawaii | Ohana Health Plan | UHA Health Insurance | UnitedHealthcare

hahp.org | 818 Keeaumoku Street, Honolulu, HI 96814 | info@hahp.org



March 30, 2023 at 3:00 pm
Conference Room 308

House Committee on Finance

To: Chair Kyle T. Yamashita
Vice Chair Lisa Kitagawa

From: Hilton Raethel
President and CEO
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Support**
SB 63 SD 2 HD 2, 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 healthcare 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 30,000 people statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to **support** this measure as amended in the HD2, which would create a new temporary permit pathway for registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) seeking to work at a healthcare entity in the state, but who do not have a Hawaii license. This proposal generally reflects the process currently in place through emergency rules, which have been critical to ensuring that our hospitals and other medical providers have enough staff to take care of the record-setting number of patients seeking care.

For reasons largely out of their control—including a record number of applications and interruptions in work due to the pandemic—the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) has faced a backlog in nursing applications. This led to a decision to cease issuing temporary licenses, which was not an issue until the emergency proclamation allowing out-of-state clinicians to practice in the state without a license lapsed. Since then, we have been grateful to the DCCA and the previous and current administration for allowing critical out-of-state clinicians to work in Hawaii under emergency rules. Without this flexibility, our hospitals, nursing homes, and other medical organizations would be facing crisis levels of staffing shortages.

We appreciate this measure, which will codify much of the current emergency rules and allow an easier path for out-of-state RNs and LPNs to practice in the state. We are also supportive of the amendments made by the prior committee that included a time period of 10 days to issue

permits for completed applications, and believe this will help address the critical and immediate need for RNs and LPNs in the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this important measure.

Thursday, March 30, 2023 at 3:00 PM
Via Video Conference; Conference Room 308

House Committee on Finance

To: Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

From: Amy Thomas
System Chief Nurse Executive

Re: **SB 63, SD2, HD2 – Testimony in Support
Relating To Nurses**

My name is Amy Thomas and I am the System Chief Nurse Executive for 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.

HPH writes in SUPPORT of SB 63, SD2, HD2. This bill allows the Board of Nursing (Board) to issue temporary permits that are valid for six (6) months to registered nurses and practical nurses who are licensed in another jurisdiction and requires the Board to issue a temporary permit within ten (10) business days of receipt of a complete application.

Hawai'i is faced with a shortage of health care professionals in every field, including nurses. There are about 1,000 open nursing positions statewide. Nearly every hospital has been impacted by the shortage of nurses. At HPH, 200 new out-of-state nurses are hired on an annual basis. We have an additional 200 traveling nurses from out of state. These 400 nurses must apply for a temporary permit and fulfill credentialing requirements to practice before they are eligible to work in Hawai'i. There is considerable lag time between the submission of an application for a temporary permit and its issuance. In the meantime, the nurse is unable to work, and unable to help alleviate the nurse staffing shortage. The requirement that the Board issue a temporary permit within a specified period of time would expedite the process.

As out of state nurses hold a valid unencumbered license in another state or jurisdiction, their credentials have already been vetted by another licensing board. Thus, the streamlined application process outlined in this measure would allow much needed nurses to enter the health care workforce at a faster rate.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEM

To: The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
Members, House Committee on Finance

From: Jace Mikulanec, Director, Government Relations, The Queen's Health System

Date: March 30, 2023

Re: Support for SB63 SD2, HD2: Relating to Nurses

The Queen's Health System (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 10,000 affiliated physicians, caregivers, and dedicated medical staff 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 in strong **support** of SB63 SD2, HD2, which seeks to enable the Hawaii State Board of Nursing to issue temporary permits to out-of-state license nurses and enables the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) to adopt interim rules and collect fees for the administration of this program. We appreciate and support the amendments made to SB63 in the previous committees and urge the Committee to consider including an appropriation. COVID19 underscored how interconnected our healthcare system is -those interconnections helped us adapt, pivot, and improve many conventional processes in order to address immediate emergency medical events in our state. Under the federal and state COVID19 emergency proclamations, our state was able to expedite certain licensing protocols in order to expeditiously and safely deploy critical skilled nursing staff throughout our state healthcare system. This bill would help build upon and make permanent some of those provisions by expediting nurse licensing in our state when certain conditions are met.

Queen's relies on out-of-state nurses as a critical part of addressing the ongoing nursing shortage; according to HAH's 2022 Workforce Initiative Report that overall nursing shortage is approaching 1000. This is a trend we see nationally and we must make concerted efforts to continue investing in our local workforce through training, residency programs, and educational opportunities while also being nimble and looking at new ways to recruit and retain nurses; we believe his bill is one attempt to help accomplish that. We also urge the Committee to work with the Department and stakeholders to look for additional efficiency and innovations within the state licensing process to ensure the temporary permitting program is effective.

We appreciate the collaboration between DCCA, Board of Nursing, HAH, and the HSCN to reach consensus on this measure. Thank you for allowing Queen's to provide testimony in support of SB63 SD2, HD2.

The mission of The Queen's Health System 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 of
Rayne Soriano, PhD, RN, NE-BC
Regional Director, Operations and Nursing Professional Practice

Before:
House Committee on Finance
The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

March 30, 2023
3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference

Re: SB 63, SD2, HD2, Relating to Nurses.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 63, SD2, HD2, which authorizes the Hawaii State Board of Nursing to issue temporary permits for six-month periods to out-of-state nurses and provides funding and positions in the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs to carry out this provision of licensure for nurses.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i SUPPORTS SB 63, SD2, HD2.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i is one of the nation's largest not-for-profit health plans, serving 12.6 million members nationwide, and more than 269,000 members in Hawai'i. In Hawai'i, more than 4,200 dedicated employees and more than 650 Hawai'i Permanente Medical Group physicians and advance practice providers work in our integrated health system to provide our members coordinated care and coverage. Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i has more than 20+ medical facilities, including our award-winning Moanalua Medical Center. We continue to provide high-quality coordinated care for our members and deliver on our commitment to improve the health of our members and the 1.4 million people living in the communities we serve.

COVID-19 underscored the interconnectedness of our healthcare system, highlighting how stakeholders adapted, pivoted, and improved many conventional processes to address immediate emergency medical needs in our state. Under the federal and state COVID-19 emergency proclamations, our state was able to streamline certain licensing protocols to expeditiously and safely deploy critical skilled nursing staff throughout our state healthcare system. This bill would help build upon and make permanent some of those provisions by expediting nurse licensing in our state when certain conditions are met.

Like other hospitals in the state, Kaiser Permanente has relied on out-of-state nurses to help address the ongoing nursing shortage. We believe SB 63, SD2, HD2 is a critical piece to help build our

healthcare workforce. Hawai'i is faced with a shortage of health care professionals in every field, including nurses. There are about 1,000 open nursing positions statewide. Nearly every hospital has been impacted by the shortage of nurses. At Kaiser Permanente, 50 new out-of-state nurses are hired on an annual basis. We have an additional 50 traveling nurses from out of state. These 100 nurses must apply for a temporary permit and fulfill credentialing requirements to practice before they are eligible to work in Hawai'i. There is considerable lag time between the submission of an application for a temporary permit and its issuance. In the meantime, that nurse is unable to work, and unable to help alleviate staffing shortages.

Therefore, we urge the committee to PASS SB 63, SD2, HD2. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

SB-63-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 1:35:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/30/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Boland	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure that will increase the capacity of Hawaii to address a component of the nursing shortage by facilitating practice of qualified nurses.

SB-63-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 4:31:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/30/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alison Kaneshiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators!

I support this bill. It makes sense to allow a temporary permit for those traveling to Hawaii accompanying a person under their care. Many people have a trip to Hawaii as part of their “bucket list” or as a make-a-wish but these people require a nurse to accompany them and care for them while visiting our islands. In addition, we have a nursing shortage here in Hawaii and allowing a temporary permit so that nurses who want to come to Hawaii and already have jobs lined up can begin their new jobs upon arrival on island. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, many states changed the rules for out of state practitioners for temporary licensure as well as moving those in training through the process of licensure quickly and to reactivate licenses of retirees to increase the needed workforce (The Council of State Governments, 2022).

With the current shortage of healthcare workers throughout the nation, we need to support safe, quality care with efficiency in gaining licensure in the state. It appears from the bill, that the process maintains its rigor for ensuring safety for our population.

Mahalo for your time.

Reference

The Council of State Governments. (2022). Occupational licensure policy. Temporary licensure. <https://licensing.csg.org/covid-policy-responses/temporary-licensure/>