

JOSH GREEN, MD  
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**  
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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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**William Oku Jr.**  
Deputy Director  
Law Enforcement

No. \_\_\_\_\_

**LATE**

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 378, HOUSE DRAFT 2  
RELATING TO CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

By

Tommy Johnson, Director  
Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce  
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

Monday, March 13, 2023; 1:00 p.m.

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) **supports** House Bill (HB) 378, House Draft 2, which: 1) includes as a factor for determining whether a controlled substances registration is in the public interest the prevention of activities within an applicant's areas that are potentially injurious to the health, safety, and welfare of the public and neighborhood, 2) establishes a substance use disorder services clinic working group to collaborate and consult on issues relating to addiction recovery and public safety, and 3) requires a report to the legislature. PSD supports this draft for two reasons.

First, PSD supports this draft because PSD believes that it should have the authority to consider the prevention of activities within an applicant's areas that are potentially injurious to the health, safety, and welfare of the public and neighborhood when a new controlled substances registration is being evaluated for issuance. This draft would allow PSD to consider this when evaluating new applications for a controlled substances registration.

Second, PSD also supports this draft because it proposes to create a working group to formalize communication between the drug treatment community and schools. Based on the testimony submitted to the House of Representatives, communication between a Downtown Honolulu Clinic and a neighboring school seems unclear and inconsistent. Consequently, healthier lines of communication between the school and the clinic may help to resolve future problems without the need for State intervention.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 03/13/2023

**Time:** 01:00 PM

**Location:** CR 225 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Health and Human  
Services

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 0378, HD2 RELATING TO CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES.

**Purpose of Bill:** Includes as a factor for determining whether a controlled substances registration is in the public interest the prevention of activities within an applicant's areas that are potentially injurious to the health, safety, and welfare of the public and neighborhood. Establishes a substance use disorder services clinic working group to collaborate and consult on issues relating to addiction recovery and public safety. Requires a report to the legislature. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD2)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports HB 378, HD2, and respectfully offers comments.

The Department also defers to the Departments of Health and Public Safety for comments.

The Department supports the convening of a working group as defined in HB 378, HD2. However, the Department maintains its position and recommends that methadone clinics be located at least a half-mile (2,640 feet) from schools.

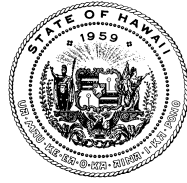
Principals have shared their concerns about the safety of their students. While these clinics offer important services, they should be located further from schools. The traffic these types of clinics bring does not align with school safety and wellness support. For example, Ke'elikolani Middle School students have witnessed conflicts with loiterers, the homeless, and substance abusers. Since the methadone clinic was located across the street, which is at least 750 feet away, clinic clients lined up against the school fence line and created negative conditions for

parents and students. The school has needed to call the police on multiple occasions due to disturbances that disrupted education at the school. Vulnerability assessments have found that schools' safety and security are compromised.

As part of the working group, the Department will benefit from collaborating, consulting, and developing legislative recommendations regarding balancing individuals needing treatment versus public and school safety. As always, the goal for the Department is to keep our students and staff safe and to provide an optimal learning environment.

Should there be no requirement for methadone clinics to be located at least a half-mile from schools, the Department requests that funding be provided for security to mitigate incidents generated from methadone clinics.

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



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB378 HD2  
RELATING TO CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

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

Hearing Date: March 13, 2023

Room Number: 225

1 **Fiscal Implications:** Undetermined

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health supports this measure and defers to the  
3 Department of Law Enforcement on its implementation.

4 The measure amends the Hawaii Uniformed Controlled Substances Act to consider as part of the  
5 public interest the prevention of activities within the applicant's areas that are potentially  
6 injurious to the health, safety, and welfare of the public and neighborhood, to better achieve the  
7 balance between the need for treatment services for substance use disorders with public safety.

8 The Department will actively participate in the WG, and wants to ensure that those who need  
9 help have access to needed services while being good neighbors in the community.

10 Please note that SUD clinics cannot prescribe nor dispense methadone (a Schedule II drug). Only  
11 an Opioid Treatment Program physician can prescribe and dispense methadone. Outpatient SUD  
12 clinics typically include suboxone (a Schedule III drug because it contains buprenorphine and the  
13 life-saving drug naloxone) as part of a client's treatment plan. Prescriptions for suboxone are not  
14 dispensed at the SUD clinic, the clients pick them up at a pharmacy.

15 The Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division is working with the Med-QUEST Division to expand  
16 Medication Assisted Treatment options for those with opioid use disorders (OUD), which  
17 includes the use of buprenorphine, suboxone, and methadone. According to the National Survey

1 on Drug Use and Health, over 23,000 Hawaii adults statewide need but are not receiving  
2 treatment for illicit drug use disorders that includes use of marijuana, cocaine and heroin. There  
3 are [over 170 Hawaii practitioners with an approved federal waiver to provide buprenorphine](#) to  
4 treat OUD. And to increase the number of available practitioners, the federal Substance Abuse  
5 and Mental Health Services Administration or [SAMHSA in January 2023 removed the federal](#)  
6 [requirement for practitioners to submit a waiver to prescribe medications, like buprenorphine, for](#)  
7 [the treatment of OUD.](#)

8 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

9 **Offered Amendments: None**



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Monday, March 13, 2023; 1:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 225  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 0378, HOUSE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES.**

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, 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 offers **COMMENTS** on House Bill No. 0378, House Draft 2, RELATING TO CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES.

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 require the Department of Public Safety to consider when registering an applicant to manufacture, dispense, prescribe, distribute, or conduct reverse distribution with controlled substances "the prevention of activities within the applicant's areas that are potentially injurious to the health, safety, and welfare of the public and neighborhood. In addition, this bill would establish a Substance Use Disorder Services Clinic Working Group to develop recommendations to balance the needs of persons receiving treatment for substance use disorders with the needs of public safety. This bill would also take effect on June 30, 3000.

The HPCA notes that earlier versions of this bill sought to restrict the controlled substance registration for a methadone clinic or substance use disorder services clinic if the clinic is situated within 750 feet of a school. On February 28, 2023, the HPCA commented that because the Uniform Controlled Substances Act does not distinguish methadone or substance use disorder clinics from other "clinics" that provide basic health care services, such a restriction would prohibit essential primary care services that are currently being provided at or near schools. These services include the occasional prescription and dispensation of controlled substances.

**Testimony on House Bill No. 0378, House Draft 2**  
**Monday, March 13, 2023; 1:00 p.m.**  
**Page 2**

For example, Koolauloa Community Health Center at one time, established a dental theater on the campus of Kahuku High School, where anesthetics were given for various dental procedures. These anesthetics are controlled substances that would violate the restrictions proposed in earlier versions of this bill.

It should also be noted that this Legislature is considering numerous measures that would expand the provision of mental health services provided at our public schools.. Many of these proposals build on the efforts initiated through FQHC involvement in the provision of COVID-19 vaccines at schools. In the future, there may be instances where FQHC personnel from either mobile vans or at locations on campus prescribe or dispense controlled substances to students for attention deficit disorder or other behavioral maladies, which this bill, as presently drafted, would preclude.

While we recognize that the bill was amended by eliminating these provisions, the HPCA cautions this Committee not to reinstate these restrictions as they would greatly hamper the provision of school-based health care and the general operations of FQHCs.

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](mailto:eabe@hawaiiipca.net).





**HB378 HD2 (S) Working Group to Not Restrict Outpatient and Methadone clinics by location which violates ADA laws.**

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

Monday, Mar 13, 2023: 1:00 : Room 225 Videoconference

**Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Comments HB378 HD2.**

*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 and recovery services.*

**Comment:**

**We appreciate the opportunity that the state will lead a work group for Champs Methadone clinic to meet with the school that have existed together for 28 years, to resolve problems about individuals who may be causing difficulties.**

**HSAC Supports the Work Group since there has not been active dialogue.**

1. We have empathy for schools who are frustrated for any poor performance issues in the community; however, some states have proposed regulations to legislate substance abuse clinics and methadone clinics, only to see them struck down in Federal court.
2. Instead, the school must pursue legal avenues for individual accountability same as they would for any other clinic or people with disabilities who are doing something illegal.
3. **HSAC supports the formation of a work group to identify and communicate the concerns of the school to the methadone clinic.**
  - a. Let's start with dialogue to work towards problem resolution and enforce individual accountability.

Substance abuse clinics and methadone clinics fall under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Protection, which means that a class of people can't be discriminated for the actions of a few. This includes zoning laws.

- 1. People in recovery are a class of people with a disability.** ADA laws protect recovering individuals with disabilities who are currently drug free and also people who are involved in continuing professional rehabilitation and mentoring programs.<sup>1</sup>
- 2. It is unlawful to label all people in that category with respect to restrictions of their rights for treatment and recovery.**
- 3. The laws for recovering people are the same as if a person had any other disabilities** such as an individual with a physical or mental impairment as well as for the treatment of that disability.

**Substance Abuse Clinics are different than methadone clinics in that they work with Primary Care to prescribe suboxone, not methadone.**

**Substance Use Disorder (SUD) clinics should not be part of this bill because they don't dispense methadone; a family doctor needs a license to prescribe suboxone, and patients go to pharmacies to fill the prescription:**

- a. Suboxone, a schedule III drug, is needed to help people with opioid misuse and has low to moderate risk to the community because it includes both naloxone as well as buprenorphine.
- b. Other Schedule III drugs are codeine, hydrocodone with aspirin or hydrocodone with Tylenol and certain barbiturates.
- c. There are no lines of people waiting to get their dosage because pharmacists dispense suboxone directly to the patient based on a prescription.
- d. The Federal government, in tangent with the Department of Health, has set goals to have every primary care physician office in the state prescribing suboxone or any other new medications that come along.
- e. This could potentially impact with unintended consequences now and in the future because community health clinics, pain management clinics, and all family doctor offices can now prescribe suboxone. Moreover, the government's vision for opioid disorders is that every clinic, or hospital has some SUD outpatient and that every SUD outpatient has a primary care physician or access to it.

## **Why we Need Methadone Clinics**

- 1. Methadone clinics are an essential part of the U.S. and Hawaii's plan to prevent opioid pandemic and overdose deaths.**
- 2. There are only two Opioid Treatment Programs (OTP) in the state because they need a special license to dispense methadone, a schedule II drug.**

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<sup>1</sup> National Network Information, Guidance and Training on the American with Disabilities Act: The ADA. Addiction and Recovery: <https://adata.org/factsheet/ada-addiction-and-recovery>

3. **Methadone clinics are medical treatments, targeting interventions aimed at high-risk individuals.**<sup>2</sup> They can be a critical referral source to access higher levels of formalized treatment to help with patient's addiction.<sup>3</sup>
4. **The Narcotic Enforcement Division licenses and monitors them.**
5. **CDC's Stop Overdose campaign wants to reduce stigma around recovery and treatment, a form of discrimination, that labels groups of people.** Methadone clinics educate people who use drugs about the dangers of fentanyl, the risks and consequences of mixing drugs, and the lifesaving power of naloxone without judgement, stigma, or discrimination.<sup>4</sup>
6. **Methadone clinics, such as Champs, are most effective when located in the community where they are needed the most.**<sup>5</sup> Champs is strategically located in a high-risk area. They are for people who need more support than formalized treatment to sustain their long-term recovery.

## CAUTIONARY ALERT

**Without Methadone clinics, people with drug addiction don't leave, they continue in the area without intervention or supervision,** leading to increased crime, spreading addiction, and leading to a culture of increased behavioral problems. People will resort back to heroin, fentanyl, and misuse of opioid pain medications. Without Methadone clinics, our schools and children will have much higher risk for exposure while relapsing people would be at risk of dying.

**As a community it's imperative that we change our attitudes about drug treatment and recognize addiction as a medical disease<sup>6</sup> so that we can support people in recovery. However, any individual misbehaving should be held accountable for their individual actions.**

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and can answer any questions.

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Health and Human Services: Overdose Prevention Strategy: <https://www.hhs.gov/overdose-prevention/primary-prevention>

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Health and Human Services: Evidence-Based Practices: <https://www.hhs.gov/overdose-prevention/treatment>

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Health and Human Services: Harm Reduction: <https://www.hhs.gov/overdose-prevention/harm-reduction>

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Health and Human Services: Recovery Support: <https://www.hhs.gov/overdose-prevention/recovery-support>

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of the Surgeon General, Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General's Spotlight on Opioids. Washington, DC: HHS, September 2018  
[https://addiction.surgeongeneral.gov/sites/default/files/Spotlight-on-Opioids\\_09192018.pdf](https://addiction.surgeongeneral.gov/sites/default/files/Spotlight-on-Opioids_09192018.pdf)

**HB-378-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2023 9:52:07 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/13/2023 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of HD2. Thank you.

To: HHS Committee Chair  
Submitted By: A. Leanne Simon, CHAMP Clinic  
Position: OPPOSE

I am writing, once again, to submit testimony in **opposition** to HB 378 on behalf of myself, CHAMP Clinic as a business, and the nearly 300 clients we serve.

The language of this bill has changed, though the goal of it remains the same, which is to specifically and unfairly target CHAMP Clinic in order to force us out of the address from which the clinic has operated for nearly **three decades without incident** by imagining a threat and leveraging people's fear response to it. The only thing that has changed during this time is the influx of predatory real estate developers that salivated over the low property values in this area and potential financial gain they stand to win if they succeed in these despicable attempts to gentrify the neighborhood by scrubbing it of the residents they consider undesirable or unsightly by labeling them a "danger" to the community.

As everyone knows, the easiest way to catalyze action and enable the passage of openly discriminatory laws is to manipulate people's natural instincts to protect our children. In the beginning, this bill was all about "the school" and "the children"- in attempt to mobilize the pearl-clutching uninformed to agree that forcing the clinic out of the area is in everyone's best interest. Though it carried them this far, this approach has spluttered out under rational review and led to new and revised passages included in the current version requiring the formation of a working group to investigate the "*prevention of activities within the applicant's areas that are potentially injurious to the health, safety, and welfare of the public and neighborhood*" (HB 378 H.D. 2).

So all that bluster about the school and the children was, as we suspected from the beginning, a red herring. This is actually a matter of the "Not in My Backyard" (NIMBY) upscale condo owners and residents wanting a forum to validate and promote their foot stamping complaints that the community that they chose to move into has not changed to meet their vision of "luxury living". It must be difficult to live with such entitlement that one assumes the world around them, and everyone in it, will immediately and unquestioningly adhere to their expectations. The fact of the matter is that these moneyed NIMBY few are trying to create a pseudo-gated-community by attempting to dominate and dictate who is and is not welcome in the area. They have decided, for whatever reason, that CHAMP Clinic is somehow drawing people in to the area and, if they could just get rid of us, so too would go the people they consider "undesirable." When they couldn't bully nor buy Mr. El-Dakhakhni out, they resorted to using the legislature to try to eliminate the clinic- still hiding behind the fallacy that CHAMP is "dangerous" and a "potentially injurious to health, safety, and welfare". Their ignorance has blinded them to the fact that CHAMP is not a danger, but an asset, as we offer a free (or affordable), openly accessible, low-barrier service to aid people living with OUD to stop using illicit street drugs, live a more pro-social life, and build a better future for themselves.

Forcing the clinic out of our current address with this hogwash 750ft rule, that was originally intended for illicit drug dealers NOT medical professionals has been well-established as illegal under federal law and the clinic and our clients are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In light of that, and building upon an otherwise sound suggestion to open a dialogue if there are concerns, the bill takes it a step too far in requiring **under law** the formation of a working group. This is a far cry from suggesting that any issues about the clinic, our practices, or any individuals seeking treatment here, be brought directly to us by concerned citizens or organizations. In my many years of working in human services, I have yet to see a single organization so targeted for disparate treatment as CHAMP has been. I am curious to know if there are any other agencies that have laws written so specifically to

harass them.

This working group would do little to nothing to add to the body of research that provides evidence as to the efficacy of methadone maintenance in promoting positive outcomes such as lowering risk-taking activities among OUD clients, deterring crime, enhancing civic participation, and identifying other health and social services needed by a community, among others. Instead, it will by requiring participation under the law, unduly burden both the clinic as well as the neighboring school both financially and logistically as they devote labor-hours to this venture. The other departments requiring participation are, upon last reading, all funded by the government and, therefore their participation is covered by taxpayer dollars as is, though un-budgeted for I'm sure, the school. The clinic, however, is the only entity independently funding a representative's mandatory attendance in this NIMBY placating dog and pony show. How is the legislature planning to address this inequity?

Finally, I would like to note that we have been acting in interest of adherence to HIPAA guidelines, as well as maintaining patient privacy and protections by attaching with my documents the in-house administered survey results and brief handwritten testimonies provided by clients, **there are upwards of 250 individuals that should be counted among those who oppose this measure in all its iterations.** The reasoning behind maintaining anonymity for these individuals lies in the social stigma, discrimination, and invisibility/erasure of personhood that they face every day. This bill not only overlooks but perpetuates these issues in the bill's language and intent, and which we have all actively participated in these discussions when referring to “the problem” or “CHAMP clients” as though they were either a single entity, homogenous cluster or- worst of all- a *concept* rather than a diverse group of individuals with their own backgrounds and experiences, thoughts and emotions, hopes and dreams. The issues of illicit drug use, homelessness, sex work, petty crime, and all the other social problems were here long before the clinic- they are **Why** the clinic chose this location. And these issues will not be affected, nor disappear, if the clinic were to go. CHAMP with people who are doing something different.

CHAMP clients are often more different than they are alike, with the shared intersections of 1. living with the shared burden of misconceptions and prejudices about people with Opiate Used Disorder (OUD) and 2. being active in recovery from OUD as they try to make a better life for themselves and be/come positive engaged members of the community and 3. witnessing this political process which unfairly targets labels their recovery journey as something shameful, an unsightly mar on the image of the community where most of them have lived for quite a long time. I would like for committee members to consider, for a moment, how dehumanizing and discouraging this must feel. Some of you may already know through personal experience or having someone close to you live with the disease of addiction- there are very few among us, in this era of such rampant and multi-layered drug epidemics who have not been touched by it. Please stop for a moment thinking of ways to placate the NIMBY squeaky wheels and consider the viewpoint of those who are silenced by shame and stigma. Whatever trauma, illness, or other factors that brought them to this point is still alive within them as they meet each day knowing that their mere existence is considered a blight on society. Some of these people are trying to overcome their circumstances, to do something better for themselves and society, to get themselves off drugs and to build or re-build a life for themselves. These are the people who are the most vulnerable and least protected among us. They have nothing to gain from these proceedings, but very much to lose if anything should happen to interfere with CHAMP's service provision. Please remember that, when we talk about this, when you make decisions- it is **People**, not **problems** – that are being impacted. .

To Whom it may concern,

My Name is Lane Lee. I am a counselor at Champ Clinic. I have worked for champ for almost 2 yrs. I'm writing this letter in regards to a specific bill that is trying to get passed which would force champ clinic to move and relocate, somewhere probably far and out of the way from its current location.

Basically the bill points to champ clinic being to close to the middle school across the street . It is obvious that certain individuals and organizations believe champ clinic may pose some type of threat or danger. This idea is incorrect. One, the school itself doesn't consider us a danger, and when asked, verbally confirmed, even to the point of not knowing we existed across the street.

Secondly, we have a caring and capable security guard, who literally sits across the street up against the fence separating the school grounds and the city and county sidewalk. For years he has specifically been posted there making sure our clients stay on Champ's side of the street. He's posted there from the time we open to well after we close, periodically patrolling the school side of the sidewalk, making sure our clients are not loitering across the street, and also cleans any rubbish throughout his shift.

Third, my son used to be a student at that middle school between the years of 2017-2018. My schedule permitted me to personally be able to pick up my son from school almost everyday. I say this because for the two years my son attended that specific middle school and daily I would pick him up afterschool, that I myself and including my son, had no idea there was a methadone clinic across the street. There was absolutely no indication that a methadone clinic existed across the street, nor did I ever hear talk of such a one among my fellow parents. Also, I never heard my son and his friends ever mention or show any signs of having any knowledge of such a place across the street. I can honestly say that at no point did my son and I ever feel or experience any type of danger or threat due to the Clinics close proximity.

Lastly, the ones who will suffer the most from this move would be our clients. A large percentage our clients are homeless, living in the surrounding area. They would greatly be affected by no longer being in close proximity to the clinic, having no consistent access to proper transportation, and so would the ability to properly access our much needed services. Also, I personally know that a lot of my clients doctors, Therapists, Psychs, and other important appointments are all located near the clinic, which makes our location valuable and reachable to them. Moving this clinic would cause a shockwave that this community, in my opinion, would feel in a very negative way. Without Champ here, there would be hundreds of opiate addicts left with a very unaccessible way to receive their medication, and so eventually drifting back to the familiar once again, which for them is Heroin and other illicit narcotics. Those said narcotics are obviously not covered by their insurances , unlike the methadone which is, and so turning to crime to fund such purchaces of illegal substances. That would set off a chain of events which will undoubtedly cause the crime rate to spike, and that will then pose a real and immediate danger to that specific middle school.

To Senate Committee,

Champ Clinic benefits the clients and surrounding area by being a close by solution to the opiate epidemic in downtown Honolulu. People are able to go to the clinic from downtown that may not be able to come if it is moved to a further away location. The maintenance program is able to place a measure between the people and the substances they once went in to. It allows for stability and progress toward where they would like to go. At Champ they can find counseling and support in their recovery. Champ Clinic was also my place of support for nearly 5 years before I transitioned to full sobriety. Had it not been for that period, I may not have made the lasting transition. It has been a little over two years since then, and I am going to UH for social work and working as a counselor here at Champ. The location being in the heart of downtown was helpful to me and other clients who come from town before going to work for the day. I hope you will find rest in knowing that Champ is helping people to come back from where they have gone, and guiding them to where they would like to go.

Sincerely,

Chris Thule



To Whom It May Concern:

This testimony is in regards to the amended bill HB 378.

1. We welcome the proposed committee to discuss any issues the school specifically might have. However, this amended version uses the following language which requires clarification. In SECTION 1. Section 329-33, part (7) Any other factor relevant to and consistent with the public health and safety[?], including but not limited to the prevention of activities within the applicant's areas that are potentially injurious to the health, safety, and welfare of the public and neighborhood."
2. We need clarification as to the "applicant's area." We need clarification on what is considered our perimeter.
3. We need to address the term "neighborhood." Are we now responsible for the entire neighborhood? Or the whole downtown area? We take responsibility for our clients and we have taken many measures to ensure the security.
4. Also, what is considered "injurious?" This is a very vague term. Does it mean if a person sees somebody walking around that they don't like the look of, does the sight of them become injurious to their health, safety, or welfare?
5. In addition, in the last two hearings, the department of education failed to specify any complaints when they were asked to provide evidence in regard to the school and our clinic. This causes us to wonder if this concern about our establishment is really about the school? Or as the language implies, "the neighborhood," meaning the school was used to get people's attention but in fact the issue with our establishment points back to the luxury developments cropping up around us. It seems the "neighborhood" is really the luxury condo owners and their concerns about property value. It seems this is a case of, "not in our backyard", and they used the school to hide behind because it elicits an emotional response.
6. We would also like to bring to the attention of the committee that the original proposal is against federal law as Methadone Clinics are protected from discriminatory zoning under the ADA. I would like to remind the committee that every time this has gone to court in other states (New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, Texas, Maryland etc.) the federal court sided with the methadone clinic against discriminatory zoning and prohibition of federally protected citizens from receiving treatment. People with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) have a disability and they are protected from discrimination by the American Disability Act ADA. They must be allowed to take their medication in a federally approved facility which is accessible to them. Passing this law would be in violation of the American Disability Act. We are protected and our clients are protected by the Federal Government.
7. Originally. This bill specifically targeted our clinic with threats to remove our 30 year establishment due to its proximity from a school. We have had no

- documented cases regarding our clients and schools. We maintain that our establishment and our clients are under the protection of the American Disability Act (ADA). We are protected from discriminatory zoning laws as well.
8. Our Methadone clinic has been in operation for the past 30 years, and at this location for the past 28 years. Our facility has helped over 3000 clients on their way to recovery. We are licensed and certified by the State of Hawaii and CARF and we are heavily regulated by the DEA. We are in good standing and have been so for the past 30 years.
  9. For the past 28 years there have been no documented cases of clients interacting with schools or students in the vicinity or on school grounds.
  10. The clinic is in operation from 6:30AM to 12:30AM and clients are monitored by a security guard. We are only open 12 hours concurrently with school hours.
  11. We have installed 24 Hr surveillance cameras which are independently monitored. The sidewalk in front of and on the side of the clinic as well as the school side walk are monitored with cameras that record and maintain footage for 90 days at a time. They have been in position for the last 15 years.
  12. We have a security guard that monitors the sidewalk in front of the building as well as across the street including the school sidewalk. He is sitting on the school sidewalk. No client is allowed to loiter around the building, across the street, or near the school. The security guard sitting on the school sidewalk does not allow any of our clients to loiter or stand on the sidewalk. This policy has been maintained for the last 15 years.
  13. Patients dose at the clinic under the supervision of a doctor and a nurse. None of our patients are allowed take home doses unless they demonstrate clean U/A's for at least six months. This is strictly regulated by the DEA.
  14. The take home doses are in clear liquid form in small sealed bottles. Liquid doses make it much harder to sell to a second party unlike some physician offices that might prescribe a 30 day dose in pill form which are much more easily sold on the black market.
  15. Our location is of utmost importance as we are conveniently located amid all major bus lines. We are within 2 blocks of major hospitals and government assistance facilities. It is extremely important for us to maintain this location for the convenience and ease of access for our clients.
  16. Many of our clients are disabled and require easy access from bus service lines.
  17. It is our belief that removal of our clinic from this location would make it difficult for our clients to receive recovery services. This would force them back onto the streets rather than remaining in treatment.
  18. Forcing the clinic to move its location would cause a huge financial hardship for our business which could prohibit our business from existing. We believe that we should be granted a grandfathered position.

19. In addition, if the clinic were to be moved, it would cause great hardship to the business. I would like to bring to the attention of the committee that we own our clinic which we bought five years ago at 3%. If we were to purchase another building we would be exposed to the high price of current interest rates which is approximately 8% for commercial properties. If we were to rent, it would be nearly impossible to find a lease or a landlord who will not be pressured to move us. In the first four years on Oahu, we had to move four times due to pressure from landlords. And in Maui in the first three years we had to move three times, due to pressure from the landlords. This put tremendous pressure on us and our clients, but to keep peace we were forced to move.
20. It is our opinion that major development occurring in the surrounding area may be influencing policy to specifically target and remove our clinic because they feel it might lower property values. It seems to be a case of "not in my neighborhood" when it comes to substance abuse rehabilitation. In the past, the outskirts of downtown Honolulu remained underdeveloped. We built our business in this area to serve the underprivileged who were neglected for so many years. We have operated successfully for the past 26 years serving the people of this community. In recent years, big business seeking to install luxury condominiums, have specifically targeted our business because it does not fit in with their vision of luxury living. If big business gets its way, our clients, the silent underprivileged, would suffer and they would be the one to pay the price. We are their voice and we will fight to have their needs met. We are not in business to satisfy the concerns of luxury condo owners. We seek to help the underprivileged citizens who need a helping hand on their path to recovery.

We would like to humbly submit this testimony to the House in regards to our opposition of bill HB378 as we feel this bill specifically targets our business and clients receiving substance abuse rehabilitation services.

Thank you

Mohamed El-Dakhakhni

President Champ Inc.

## **Aisha Esker MA**

Manager CHAMP Inc.

173 S Kukui St.

Honolulu, HI, 96813

February, 8, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

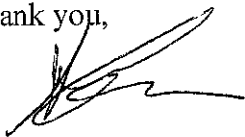
My name is Aisha Esker, I was hired as office manager at CHAMP Inc. approximately two years ago. A few days ago, Mr. Eldakhakhni requested that I do a survey of the surrounding community. **We regularly survey the surrounding community in terms of suggestions and improvements we can make. I called Central Middle School to leave a message for the Vice Principal Jon Hamilton, to ask if he had any suggestions for us. Although, I have not received a direct reply from him (as of this moment, two days later I have received no response), the administrative assistant Joel, was very helpful. He was not familiar with our business and did not know we existed, but he said as far as he knows the school has no suggestions for us to improve services. I told him that he probably wasn't aware of us because we open before school hours begin (three days out of the work week) and are closed before school lets out in the afternoon, therefore he probably never noticed us because we have so few coinciding hours. I mentioned this to Mr. Eldakhakhni, and he informed me that this business has been at this location for 28 years and in that time, there have been no formal complaints to him or the previous office manager; no complaints from the school, its attendants or any surrounding business or resident.**

Over the past two years, I have overseen many activities at CHAMP Clinic. I have gotten to know the staff and clientele quite well. My work day starts early in the morning on some days and I am often here past closing time. We have an excellent security guard who monitors the perimeter, and I have never had an issue with any clients who attend the clinic. In the entire time that I have worked here, I have never gotten a formal complaint from any business, resident or school attendant in regard to any client who participates in the program. Nor have I gotten any formal complaint about our business being in this location. Quite the contrary, I have gotten many comments and compliments about the good work we do in the community and how our being at this location has saved people's lives.

In addition to this Here at CHAMP we take great pride in the work that we do and service we provide to the community. Not only do we provide services to a population of people protected by the American Disability Act who are suffering from Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) but we are centrally located which enables access for the entire Island. As I am sure people are becoming

more and more aware, the opioid epidemic is widespread in the United States and it has hit Hawaii with tragic results. People suffering from OUD need help and services. They must have access to those services at a central location. We are located in the heart of a community ravaged by drug abuse, but the job of this clinic is to provide a way out of that viscous cycle. If help is not provided in an easily accessible location then these people have no options to seek treatment. We provide that helping hand, and I am proud to be of service and work at an establishment that takes its responsibility to the community and its residents so seriously.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aisha Esker', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Aisha Esker

Manager CHAMP Inc.

**Mary Myers, Ph.D.**  
**Licensed Clinical Psychologist**

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1188 Bishop Street, Suite 3512  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Phone (808) 550-0991  
FAX (808) 550-0992

February 9, 2023

Champ Clinic  
173 South Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

To Whom It May Concern: COM

The CHAMP Clinic is to be commended for the vital services they provide to our community. During the past 24 years, I have worked with a numerous CHAMP clients, whom I saw for individual psychotherapy. While on methadone maintenance, the majority of these individuals became stabilized and were able to successfully eliminate heroin use and other criminal behavior associated with illicit drug use since they no longer needed to finance a costly heroin addiction. Methadone treatment also allowed many to stabilize their lifestyles and obtain legitimate employment. Methadone treatment has also served as an important point of contact with other health care providers and has afforded opportunities to educate clients about harm reduction techniques, such as how to prevent HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and other health problems that typically endanger heroin users.

The CHAMP clinic provides an invaluable service to the community which is essential to helping its clients with stabilizing their lives and becoming productive members of society. I personally have been consistently impressed with the caliber of services provided by the CHAMP counselors. The staff at CHAMP often serve as the link to other case management needs, such as AA/NA groups and Oxford House referrals and other community services. I've seen numerous clients over the years who have commented on how pleased they were with the counseling and the overall services they received. In summary, the staff at CHAMP are to be applauded for their outstanding care provided to clients and the vital service they are to the community.

If I can provide further assistance regarding the above information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (808) 550-091.

Sincerely,  
*Mary Myers, Ph.D.*

Mary Myers, Ph.D.  
Licensed Clinical Psychologist

To Whom It May Concern

This Testimony is in opposition to HB378. The Bill as it pertained to Drug Dealers and 750Ft from schools was a great thing. It now seems that our clinic is being targeted with the amended bill to add rehabilitation centers. As a mother myself I can understand concern with the unknown. I am going to reiterate a few key factors that my colleague touched on

1. Our Clinic has been at its same location for 27 years, opened and helping this community for 31,
2. We are directly under the watch full eye and in good standing with the FDA and CARF
3. We have 24-hour surveillance cameras on all sides of building including walkway of the school side.
4. In all these years we have had not one formal complaint or report made against us by school and or their faculty.
5. We have security present for clinic hours which are from 5:30am to 11:30am.
6. Clients undergo extensive counseling and must meet requirements to even be considered for additional take home medication. Most clients come to clinic daily for their medication.
7. Our clients have to have 3 months of clean urinalysis testing to get just 1 additional take home. It takes years of maintaining a sober lifestyle to be able to gain a 6-day prescription.
8. Urinalysis testing is observed by a Lab Tech and extensive testing is done by one of the most reputable labs in the state of Hawaii. Our location here at champ is a vital for the recovery of our patients. A fair number of them have some form of disability and need to be close to bus stops, Government and state offices as well as the major hospitals

Aside from these very important factors I would like to give a little insight to the opioid crisis we face today which is getting worse and why our clinic and its location is key for this fight. Today's data represents a steady slowing of the rate of increase in overdose deaths for the tenth month in a row, and a decrease in 12-month rolling totals for the fifth month in a row. There has been a 2.57% decrease from the 110,315 fatal drug overdoses provisionally estimated for the 12-month period ending March 2022. It is so important that we here in Hawaii come up with solutions and reach as many people as we can to help combat this very sad situation before we become like the other 49 states .There is another way!!, we are showing families a way other than Jails institutions and Death. We also take part in the education and support of thousands of family members including those who come from the mainland seeking guidance on how to love support and get through this together as a family. Grandmothers with their grandsons and Fathers for their Daughters. Please reconsider this bill and our involvement in it. We are a much-needed service. We have been helping thousands of addicts beat this crisis, and we would love the support to continue this fight

Respectfully,

Jaime Kuhaulua

Rita Vande Berghe

To whom it may concern,

Champ Clinic is located in the middle downtown Honolulu, especially for drug addicts and homeless population. Since we have numerous parks surrounding us, it is very easy for anyone to walk to. Buses are accessible for anyone who is in need since they can be let off a block away from the clinic no matter where on the island they are coming from.

Also, housing assistance, welfare, Social Security, job training programs, Disability Rights Center, Legal Aid, Queens intensive outpatient services for dual diagnosed individuals, Adult Probation and Parole, Harm Reduction, the major behavioral health services and more that our clients depend on have their offices downtown which makes it easier on our clients to make it to their appointments. Many of our clients live in the area which makes life easier all around because of the clinics central location.

We want our people to live in a community where they feel secure, while at the same time assist them to reduce the harms in their lives which in turn reduces the harms in the community.

Sincerely'

Rita Vande Bergh



-substance abuse counselor, 8 years at Champ Clinics



February 8, 2023

Good Day, Citizens of the State of Hawaii,

My name is Eric James Olmos. I am the security/safety employee at CHAMP Clinic and have worked here for over two and a half years. My task is to ensure that the clients and others remain safe during their visit to the clinic- especially to ensure that clients have no contact with the school or the school's property.

I am literally stationed across the street from the clinic, next to the school, along their fence. My bright orange safety vest is a gently reminder that -per their agreement- they do not loiter in the area or have any contact with the school.

I am familiar with some of the staff at the school and, aside from a pleasant greeting, have had no contact – and definitely no negative contact from them in regard to client behavior, and I have been here for almost three years.

The people of the downtown community need to face the hard truth: There is a major drug problem where they live.

The most effective way to deal with the problem , in my opinion, is to provide services within the community itself.

The problem is not CHAMP Clinic. The problem is that not enough of the at-risk people who live in the community are taking advantage of the services offered by CHAMP Clinic.

Thank you for your time.

Eric James Olmos

A. Leanne Simon

REGARDING: SB983 and HB378 impact on CHAMP Clinic.

9 February 2023

My name is Leanne Simon, and I am one of the counselors at CHAMP Clinic, located at 173 S. Kukui St., District 13, Honolulu, HI 96813. I have lived and worked in harm reduction and addictions services in District 13 since 2020, and in organizations providing services to underrepresented residents nationally and internationally since 2009. This testimony is written on behalf of the clients<sup>1</sup>, staff (including myself), and owner of CHAMP Clinic.

CHAMP Clinic has been in business for over 30 years, with 28 of those years in its current location. We have recently been re-certified with CARF, and remain in good standing with the FDA and DEA, and are fully licensed as a Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Clinic/Methadone Clinic with the State of Hawaii. Our facility has helped over 3500 people on Oahu, and even more in our Maui location. This bill, like others before it, seeks to single out specifically and unfairly target our clinic as it is the only one of its kind in the state that is within 750 feet of a school.

To challenge this discriminatory bill and request its immediate dismissal, I present the following:

1. CHAMP Clients are required to submit to multiple, random urine-analysis drug screenings per month. These tests must prove the presence of methadone at levels appropriate to their prescribed doses and the *absence of all other drugs* for no fewer than 6 months, as well as approval from their counselor, before take-home doses are allowed. This privilege is immediately revoked should a test come back unsatisfactory.
2. Each dose is strictly regulated by the DEA, and each has a unique "signature" that can be traced back to the point of production and sale. This means that doses are easily traced by lot number. We have never had a complaint from the DEA - demonstrating that any methadone diverted into the community has not come from a patient at our clinic.
3. CHAMP employs a security guard that monitors the area all along the block between the clinic and the school. He ensures that clients remain on the clinic side of the street, and enforces our zero tolerance presence on school side rule that has been in place for nearly 20 years. CHAMP also has 24-hour, independently monitored, surveillance cameras installed that record all activity on the front and sides of the clinic building, as well as capturing activity on the school sidewalk. Footage is held securely, off-site, for a minimum of 90 days.
4. In the 28 years that CHAMP has been at this location, we haven't had any official complaint from the school about any of our practices, procedures, nor people. In fact, most at the school do *not even know we are here* (see their testimony regarding this).

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1 Clients also provided handwritten submissions. Please see addendum at the end of this testimony.

5. CHAMP's current location is of the utmost importance to deliver services as:

- a) We are at the epicenter of public transportation; 95% of the public bus routes for the entire island have stops within one city block of our front door. Most of our clients are living on limited incomes and rely heavily on public transportation. Additionally, many have some form of physical or cognitive disability and proximity to bus stops is crucial to protecting their right to mobility under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- b) Three of the major hospitals on Oahu are within walking distance of the clinic. This means that if, for whatever reason, we are unable to provide dosing services to them, or they are experiencing another urgent medical issue, they can quickly and independently get help without reliance on calling 911, which uses public money to access emergency services.
- c) The clinic is located within a few blocks of the courthouse, probation offices, and other legal aid outlets. This nearness means that there is less recidivism, or return to incarceration, due to unnecessarily missed appointments, thereby saving city and state money. Additionally, the clinic is able to maintain communication with parole officers, et al, regarding progress and potential hurdles they may be facing now or in the future.
- d) We are nearby all the major social service departments. Our clients rely heavily on welfare options such as SNAP/EBT, social security, disability, child care subsidy, and employment services to cover their necessities and train them up on skills necessary to engage positively in our society.
- e) The clinic is nearby other venues that host other addiction services, such as 12-step and other support groups, and intensive outpatient addiction services. Continuity of care is critical, especially in the first few years of recovery to find new ways to get their needs met and prevent bad habits from returning.
- f) As we saw in the 1992 move, and is reflected by other clinics that have been forced to relocate in other areas of the nation, the clinic stands to lose about 50% of our clients in any move- even if just down the block. I saw evidence of this first hand when I was running the syringe exchange for HHHRC. When we moved the outreach van, usually parked at the corner of River and Kukui St., just a few parking spaces down the block, our clients would often miss us, not having seen us just up the road. This is due to the repetitive and habitual nature that is characteristic in addiction.
- g) Fifty percent is a substantial number of people returning to active addiction. Imagine several hundred people relapsing simultaneously, each returning to behaviors that they used in the past- usually illegal, potentially violent, to get the drugs that they need to prevent the onset of withdrawal symptoms. Removal of

the clinic's safe, free alternatives to crime is just a drop in the bucket of social ills possible if this bill passes.

6. Moving the clinic would be too great a financial burden on the clinic owner. When he bought this building nearly 5 years ago, it was at 3% interest rate. The going rate for this area is now at 8%. That is more than double, and creates a substantial financial loss. Renting another space is not an option, as any landlord would be subject to the same social, financial, and now legislative bullying as is being suffered currently by CHAMP. The clinic would be at the mercy of someone unaffiliated to maintain their space. This is highly unlikely, given the amount of pressure put upon CHAMP as it is.
7. If this bill passes, the reality is that the clinic will close, along with its sister clinic in Maui. That means that an untold number of people would be returning to active addiction and all that comes with it. And, as stated earlier, the clinic did not bring the problems here- it came to meet the people where they are at. Removing the clinic will not remove the problem, just one of the solutions. I hardly think that a revival of active addiction, and its attendant crimes against property and person, is what one might call "luxury living".
8. Let's face it- this bill is not about the safety of school children. Nowhere in the bill does it mention anything about safety- only distance. And that is precise to singling out a CHAMP. They think that the clinic is an eyesore and that, by forcing us out, in keeping with their NIMBY ("Not In My Back Yard") stance, they will be able to milk even more money from the bourgeoisie new residents that are willing to pay for downtown "cool" at uptown price points.
9. I have not, in my 15 years in the industry across six countries, seen any wealthy business owner with the same passion and fervor for helping the downtrodden as I have seen in Ayman. Though CHAMP is a for-profit clinic, all services are free for the clients, including pricey urine analysis drug screenings. He does this, not because he is trying to get their vote, or campaign donations, and his wealth is certainly not from these clinics lining his pockets. He does this because it is the right thing to do. Not just for the clients that show up at our door, ravaged by the effects of drugs and life on the streets, trying to find a better way to live- but also for those new residents, the ones that turn their noses up at us - and for the school. Why? Because none among us is too wealthy, too smart, nor too "good" to be affected hell that drug addiction brings.

The wealthy in this area have the option to go to the high-priced doctors operating nearby that offer a month's worth of take-home methadone at a time, with zero oversight, through prescription easily fillable at the pharmacy. But no one is lobbying legislation at them. And why not? Isn't the point of this to protect the community from the possibility of access to controlled substances due to drug diversion? Hardly.

Please consider my testimony carefully, and weigh the actual repercussions of closing CHAMP Clinic should this bill pass. There are serious consequences facing this entire zone should services be cut or displaced for this vulnerable population. Do you want to be one of the ones

responsible for those grim nightly news stories? Or do you want to go to sleep at night knowing that you are on the right side of history?

Thank you for your time.

Yours in Service,

A. Leanne Simon  
Counselor, CHAMP Clinic  
MA – Human Development  
MpaCS – Peace & Conflict Studies

#### ADDENDUM:

In addition to my own testimony, most of the CHAMP clients were eager to add their voices to this discussion. It is, after all, a decision that most impacts them and the direction that their lives might take should this invaluable resource be snatched away. In accordance with HIPAA law, names and identifying information has been redacted, except in the cases we have signed permission to disclose. There are over 100 individual cards by as many clients, completed in handwriting which are being submitted in person by Aisha Esker. I have randomly selected a representative sample of these testimonials, categorized by general topic (as labeled at top of each page).

February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023

I am writing now on behalf of the patient/clients of CHAMP Clinic, of which nearly **200** have expressed **STRONG OPPOSITION** to this bill, with just as many offering to appear in person to testify to this end. While this would provide a powerful face to the issue for congress, in lieu of presenting our case in that way, and out of respect for the time constraints of the committee members and not to overwhelm the legislative process itself, I am presenting an overview of some items brought forward by our people.

Shortly after the hearing on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February, 2023, CHAMP staff took it upon ourselves to conduct a survey of clients presenting to dose. As we interviewed, our guiding question was: How many current clients would be directly negatively impacted by a clinic relocation, should this bill come to pass? We surveyed 82 patient/clients and received feedback that 34 of those surveyed live in the immediate vicinity of the clinic and walk or use wheelchairs to access services. Thirty-seven of those surveyed work nearby and walk from the clinic to their workplace after dosing, and twenty-eight of respondents utilize other services (Medical, Legal, Judicial, and/or Social Services) in the immediate vicinity of the clinic. That is roughly 42%, 45% and 34% respectively.

Extrapolating these numbers to represent our entire active client base of around 270 individuals, you are looking at disrupting service provision of a *medically necessary treatment* for the **deadly and socially dangerous disease of addiction** for over 108 people living and working within a few square blocks of the clinic. Is this the so-called safety you are seeking for the schools? The schools which, I should not have to remind you, had no quarrel with the clinic until specifically reached out to by representatives of congress to support this discriminatory bill.

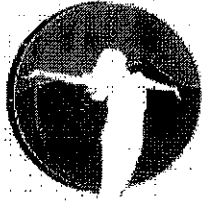
Is this the legacy you are willing to leave? Will you be proud to tell your friends and family that you, personally, stood in the way of people who are doing their best to live clean and sober lives? Will you boast that, by casting out the clinic they rely on to maintain that momentum, you had a hand in forcing them back into active addiction? Will you look in the faces of the nearly 300 clients that offered to come here in person and tell them that their lives mean nothing to you? Out of respect for the decorum expected in these proceedings, we declined to bring all these clients down to protest this measure. However we, and they, are not ready to acquiesce to the obscene suggestion that the clinic move anywhere. We are right where we need to be.

Attached, you will find hard copies of the hand-written response forms to the aforementioned survey. The other testimonials submitted earlier in the month are included as an addendum to the other testimony I presented both for the hearing on the 10<sup>th</sup>, and for now.

It is time to look at the facts- that this bill is not only in violation of federal law and the protections offered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, but it is also in violation of sound, rational, and ethical treatment of the citizens which you claim to represent.

Thank you for your time,

A. Leanne Simon  
CHAMP Counselor



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that work nearby:

1418

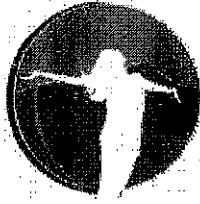
It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

CHAMP has been important in  
this location as it is close to  
my work downtown. I have  
worked downtown for 12 years and  
have been coming to CHAMP for  
12 years as well Bradley Chung

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It is very important  
for me to get to work on  
time This place is perfect  
location We need to keep  
it open please

B. H. P. #640



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that work nearby:

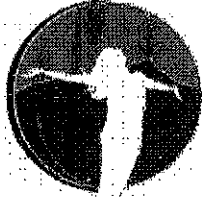
It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I work and  
this program  
helped me get a  
normal life  
I like this location  
2457 PYS

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Because it keeps me clean  
and I have a SOD now nearby  
Jesse  
2329





# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

#1000

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

True location really matters  
to me because I cannot ride  
the bus & I want to walk  
here close to living. Please

*[Signature]*

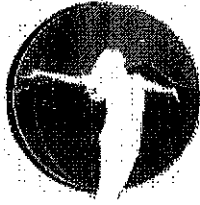
#2383

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

KK

It is easy for me to get to  
Dpt bus along with other  
services in the area.  
Please don't take it away.

Thank you



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

Leticia Luna 971 2090855

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

We really need to stay  
open at this location  
I ride the bus here  
everyday, I work here  
for so please don't  
move our location.

#2288

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

ITS A VERY CONVENIENT LOCATION  
FOR ME. I TAKE ONE BUS ROUTE  
TO GET HERE WHICH ALLOWS ME  
TO SAVE ~~ON~~ WHATEVER I CAN ON  
OTHER NECESSITIES. AFTER WORK  
I FINISH IN THE MORNING I COME  
STRAIGHT TO THIS LOCATION WHICH  
MAKES THINGS A LOT EASIER FOR MY  
SCHEDULE THROUGHOUT THE WEEK.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It's convenient for  
me. I'm 75 yrs. young &  
take the bus from  
Kaneohe #101

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

to meet all my  
other needs  
Thank you,  
Doris



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

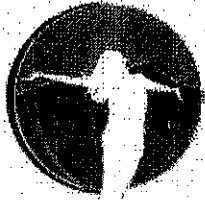
Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

this location is important because  
it is so centrally located. I live  
in Kalihi and don't drive so my  
ride comes from Kalaheala  
This is the ideal location. The bus  
comes right here if I don't get a ride

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It is close to rapid transit and  
convenient for going to other Dr.'s  
appointments. We have come  
here for 20+ yrs. Mt 872



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use nearby medical services:

Client # 2232

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I have appointments at queens  
Right After I go to Champs  
almost daily. please don't  
move the clinic it will make  
it very hard for me to get to  
clinic.

*[Signature]*

#31 KC

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Champ location is convenient  
for me because of its location  
I come from Kailua and  
I am disable and Champ  
is centrally located to my  
doctors as well



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use nearby medical services:

Paul Chang

Paul Chang  
808-490-3000

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because:

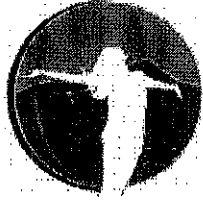
I have regular medical visits near here and I ride the bus to Champ here

PLEASE understand my situation Thank You

1041 EH

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because:

It is close to the Hospital and other services for us (patients)



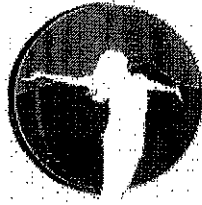
# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use nearby medical services:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

it saved my life - its close to  
my doctor and I'm a terminal  
cancer patient.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that work nearby:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Because it keeps me clean  
and I have a job w/p nearby  
Jesse  
2329

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It is very important  
for me to get to work on  
time This place is perfect  
location we need to keep  
it open please

BHP #640





# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

702 JL

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live near here and  
would be difficult for  
me to move

116

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live here.  
A CHAMP has always been here for me  
and the location is key. All the people  
that work at CHAMP are my friends.  
Anywhere else would be a big mistake,  
The community here accepts us. The  
security keeps things calm on the block.



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# CHAMP Clinic

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808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

2337

JTM

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Cant afford 2 travel far,  
I need my methadone so I  
can stay clean.

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live in this area, whether  
you like it or not. Peoples lives  
are at stake here. And its life  
and death.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live closer by and  
I have a hard time dealing  
with it. For me.  
Mary Lou

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

CHAMP's central location is vital  
for the many clients to easily  
access its location. Many  
of the clinic's clients have  
serious mobility issues ~~and~~ & would  
face serious difficulties if the  
clinic were moved.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

1750

**It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:**

*[Handwritten signature]*

*Close to where I  
live*

**It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:**

*it's close to my house and helps me get to  
my two jobs quicker. If relocated by the airport,  
it would take me almost twice as long to get to  
and from the new location (if moved)*



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

2:407 AM  
I CAN'T GET AROUND WITHOUT  
A WALKER AND IT IS CONVENIENT  
I HAVE NO TRANSPORTATION  
CHAMP NEEDS TO STAY HERE!

From: 1210 - W.C.

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Majority of us (1) live on  
Kool, (2) come from the other  
side of island (3) majority of  
us can't afford bus passes,  
(4) or we are traveling w/  
pain due to injuries in bones.  
cannot travel at all but to make  
it to this location stay here



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

To whom it may concern:

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because: it is very convenient for me as a disabled person. It is close to all the bus routes and makes it so easy for me to come to this clinic. The other clinic is too far and only 2 buses go that way. This place has saved my life. It would be very upsetting if it were relocated. Please let it stay where it's been for the 20yrs

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because:

cuz I'm Homeless & I stay  
 in downtown

Alana Shyppan



A. Leanne Simon

REGARDING: SB983 and HB378 impact on CHAMP Clinic.

9 February 2023

My name is Leanne Simon, and I am one of the counselors at CHAMP Clinic, located at 173 S. Kukui St., District 13, Honolulu, HI 96813. I have lived and worked in harm reduction and addictions services in District 13 since 2020, and in organizations providing services to underrepresented residents nationally and internationally since 2009. This testimony is written on behalf of the clients<sup>1</sup>, staff (including myself), and owner of CHAMP Clinic.

CHAMP Clinic has been in business for over 30 years, with 28 of those years in its current location. We have recently been re-certified with CARF, and remain in good standing with the FDA and DEA, and are fully licensed as a Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Clinic/Methadone Clinic with the State of Hawaii. Our facility has helped over 3500 people on Oahu, and even more in our Maui location. This bill, like others before it, seeks to single out specifically and unfairly target our clinic as it is the only one of its kind in the state that is within 750 feet of a school.

To challenge this discriminatory bill and request its immediate dismissal, I present the following:

1. CHAMP Clients are required to submit to multiple, random urine-analysis drug screenings per month. These tests must prove the presence of methadone at levels appropriate to their prescribed doses and the *absence of all other drugs* for no fewer than 6 months, as well as approval from their counselor, before take-home doses are allowed. This privilege is immediately revoked should a test come back unsatisfactory.
2. Each dose is strictly regulated by the DEA, and each has a unique "signature" that can be traced back to the point of production and sale. This means that doses are easily traced by lot number. We have never had a complaint from the DEA - demonstrating that any methadone diverted into the community has not come from a patient at our clinic.
3. CHAMP employs a security guard that monitors the area all along the block between the clinic and the school. He ensures that clients remain on the clinic side of the street, and enforces our zero tolerance presence on school side rule that has been in place for nearly 20 years. CHAMP also has 24-hour, independently monitored, surveillance cameras installed that record all activity on the front and sides of the clinic building, as well as capturing activity on the school sidewalk. Footage is held securely, off-site, for a minimum of 90 days.
4. In the 28 years that CHAMP has been at this location, we haven't had any official complaint from the school about any of our practices, procedures, nor people. In fact, most at the school do *not even know we are here* (see their testimony regarding this).

---

<sup>1</sup> Clients also provided handwritten submissions. Please see addendum at the end of this testimony.

5. CHAMP's current location is of the utmost importance to deliver services as:

- a) We are at the epicenter of public transportation; 95% of the public bus routes for the entire island have stops within one city block of our front door. Most of our clients are living on limited incomes and rely heavily on public transportation. Additionally, many have some form of physical or cognitive disability and proximity to bus stops is crucial to protecting their right to mobility under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- b) Three of the major hospitals on Oahu are within walking distance of the clinic. This means that if, for whatever reason, we are unable to provide dosing services to them, or they are experiencing another urgent medical issue, they can quickly and independently get help without reliance on calling 911, which uses public money to access emergency services.
- c) The clinic is located within a few blocks of the courthouse, probation offices, and other legal aid outlets. This nearness means that there is less recidivism, or return to incarceration, due to unnecessarily missed appointments, thereby saving city and state money. Additionally, the clinic is able to maintain communication with parole officers, et al, regarding progress and potential hurdles they may be facing now or in the future.
- d) We are nearby all the major social service departments. Our clients rely heavily on welfare options such as SNAP/EBT, social security, disability, child care subsidy, and employment services to cover their necessities and train them up on skills necessary to engage positively in our society.
- e) The clinic is nearby other venues that host other addiction services, such as 12-step and other support groups, and intensive outpatient addiction services. Continuity of care is critical, especially in the first few years of recovery to find new ways to get their needs met and prevent bad habits from returning.
- f) As we saw in the 1992 move, and is reflected by other clinics that have been forced to relocate in other areas of the nation, the clinic stands to lose about 50% of our clients in any move- even if just down the block. I saw evidence of this first hand when I was running the syringe exchange for HHHRC. When we moved the outreach van, usually parked at the corner of River and Kukui St., just a few parking spaces down the block, our clients would often miss us, not having seen us just up the road. This is due to the repetitive and habitual nature that is characteristic in addiction.
- g) Fifty percent is a substantial number of people returning to active addiction. Imagine several hundred people relapsing simultaneously, each returning to behaviors that they used in the past- usually illegal, potentially violent, to get the drugs that they need to prevent the onset of withdrawal symptoms. Removal of

the clinic's safe, free alternatives to crime is just a drop in the bucket of social ills possible if this bill passes.

6. Moving the clinic would be too great a financial burden on the clinic owner. When he bought this building nearly 5 years ago, it was at 3% interest rate. The going rate for this area is now at 8%. That is more than double, and creates a substantial financial loss. Renting another space is not an option, as any landlord would be subject to the same social, financial, and now legislative bullying as is being suffered currently by CHAMP. The clinic would be at the mercy of someone unaffiliated to maintain their space. This is highly unlikely, given the amount of pressure put upon CHAMP as it is.
7. If this bill passes, the reality is that the clinic will close, along with its sister clinic in Maui. That means that an untold number of people would be returning to active addiction and all that comes with it. And, as stated earlier, the clinic did not bring the problems here- it came to meet the people where they are at. Removing the clinic will not remove the problem, just one of the solutions. I hardly think that a revival of active addiction, and its attendant crimes against property and person, is what one might call "luxury living".
8. Let's face it- this bill is not about the safety of school children. Nowhere in the bill does it mention anything about safety- only distance. And that is precise to singling out a CHAMP. They think that the clinic is an eyesore and that, by forcing us out, in keeping with their NIMBY ("Not In My Back Yard") stance, they will be able to milk even more money from the bourgeoisie new residents that are willing to pay for downtown "cool" at uptown price points.
9. I have not, in my 15 years in the industry across six countries, seen any wealthy business owner with the same passion and fervor for helping the downtrodden as I have seen in Ayman. Though CHAMP is a for-profit clinic, all services are free for the clients, including pricey urine analysis drug screenings. He does this, not because he is trying to get their vote, or campaign donations, and his wealth is certainly not from these clinics lining his pockets. He does this because it is the right thing to do. Not just for the clients that show up at our door, ravaged by the effects of drugs and life on the streets, trying to find a better way to live- but also for those new residents, the ones that turn their noses up at us - and for the school. Why? Because none among us is too wealthy, too smart, nor too "good" to be affected hell that drug addiction brings.

The wealthy in this area have the option to go to the high-priced doctors operating nearby that offer a month's worth of take-home methadone at a time, with zero oversight, through prescription easily fillable at the pharmacy. But no one is lobbying legislation at them. And why not? Isn't the point of this to protect the community from the possibility of access to controlled substances due to drug diversion? Hardly.

Please consider my testimony carefully, and weigh the actual repercussions of closing CHAMP Clinic should this bill pass. There are serious consequences facing this entire zone should services be cut or displaced for this vulnerable population. Do you want to be one of the ones

responsible for those grim nightly news stories? Or do you want to go to sleep at night knowing that you are on the right side of history?

Thank you for your time.

Yours in Service,

A. Leanne Simon  
Counselor, CHAMP Clinic  
MA – Human Development  
MpaCS – Peace & Conflict Studies

#### ADDENDUM:

In addition to my own testimony, most of the CHAMP clients were eager to add their voices to this discussion. It is, after all, a decision that most impacts them and the direction that their lives might take should this invaluable resource be snatched away. In accordance with HIPAA law, names and identifying information has been redacted, except in the cases we have signed permission to disclose. There are over 100 individual cards by as many clients, completed in handwriting which are being submitted in person by Aisha Esker. I have randomly selected a representative sample of these testimonials, categorized by general topic (as labeled at top of each page).



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that work nearby:

1418

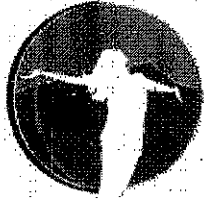
It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

CHAMP has been important in  
this location as it is close to  
my work downtown. I have  
worked downtown for 12 years and  
have been coming to CHAMP for  
12 years as well Bradley Chung

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It is very important  
for me to get to work on  
time This place is perfect  
location we need to keep  
it open please

B.H.P. #640



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that work nearby:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I work AND  
This program  
helped me get a  
normal life  
I like this location  
2457 JMS

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Because it keeps me clean  
and I have a job now nearby  
Jesse  
2329



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

#1000

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

This location really matters  
to me because I cannot ride  
the bus & I have to walk  
here close to living. Please

*[Signature]*

#2383

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

KK

It is easy for me to get to  
Dp bus along with other  
services in the area.  
Please don't take it away.

Thank You



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

Leticia Luna 971 2090855

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

We really need to stay  
open at this location  
I ride the bus here  
everyday, I walk here  
for so please don't  
move our location.

#2288

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

ITS A VERY CONVENIENT LOCATION  
FOR ME. I TAKE ONE BUS ROUTE  
TO GET HERE WHICH ALLOWS ME  
TO SAVE ~~WHATEVER~~ WHATEVER I CAN ON  
OTHER NECESSITIES. AFTER WORK  
I FINISH IN THE MORNING I COME  
STRAIGHT TO THIS LOCATION WHICH  
MAKES THINGS ALOT EASIER FOR MY  
SCHEDULE THROUGHOUT THE WEEK





# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It's convenient for  
me. I'm 75 yrs. young &  
take the bus from  
Kaneohe #ADM 101

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

to meet all my  
other needs  
Thank you.  
2411 J. H.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
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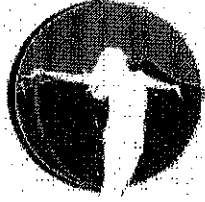
Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

this location is important because  
it is so centrally located. I live  
in Kalihi and don't drive so my  
ride comes from Kalaheala  
This is the ideal location the bus  
comes right here if I don't get a ride

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It is close to rapid transit and  
convenient for going to other Dr.'s  
appointments. We have come  
here for 20+ yrs. MH 872



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use nearby medical services:

Client # 2232

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

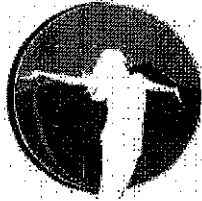
I have appointments at queens  
Right After I go to Champs  
(almost daily). please don't  
move the clinic it will make  
it very hard for me to get to  
clinic.

*[Signature]*

#31 KC

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Champ location is convenient  
for me because of its location  
I come from Kailua and  
I am disable and Champ  
is centrally located to my  
doctors as well



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use nearby medical services:

*Paula*  
*Paula*

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

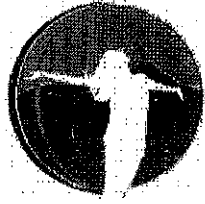
*I have regular medical  
visits near here and I ride  
the bus to Champ here*

*PLEASE understand my  
situation thank you*

*1041 EH*

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

*It is close to the  
Hospital and other  
services for us (patients)*



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808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use nearby medical services:

**It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:**

*it saved my life - its close to  
my doctor and I'm a terminal  
cancer patient.*



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that work nearby:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
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Because it keeps me clean  
and I have a SLD now nearby  
Jesse  
2329

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It is very important  
for me to get to work on  
time This place is perfect  
location we need to keep  
it open please

B.H.P. #640



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

702 JK

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live near here and  
would be difficult for  
me to move

216

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live here.  
A CHAMP has always been here for me  
and the location is key. All the people  
that work at CHAMP are my friends.  
Anywhere else would be a big mistake,  
the community here accepts us. The  
security keeps things calm on the block.



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173 Kukui St.  
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808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

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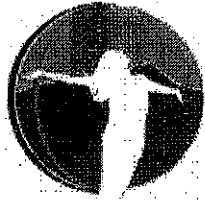
I live near here and  
would be difficult for  
me to move

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Cant afford 2 travel far,  
I need my methadone so I  
can stay clean.

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live in this area, whether  
you like it or not Peoples LIVES  
ARE AT STAKE HERE. AND ITS LIFE  
AND DEATH



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live close by and  
I have a hard time dealing  
with it far away  
Mary Lou

It is important to me that CHAMP  
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CHAMP's central location is vital  
for the many clients to easily  
access its location. Many  
of the clinic's clients have  
serious mobility issues ~~and~~ & would  
face serious difficulties if the  
clinic were moved.



# CHAMP Clinic

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Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

1750

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

*R M*

Close to where I  
live

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

it's close to my house and helps me get to  
my two jobs quicker. If relocated by the airport,  
it would take me almost twice as long to get to  
and from the new location (if moved)



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It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

2:407 am.

I CAN'T GET AROUND WITHOUT  
A WALKER AND IT IS CONVENIENT  
I HAVE NO TRANSPORTATION  
CHAMP NEEDS TO STAY HERE!

From: 1210 - W.C.

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Majority of us (1) live on  
Kool (2) come from the other  
side of island (3) majority of  
us can't afford bus passes,  
(4) or we are traveling w/  
pain due to injuries in bones.  
cannot drive at all but to make  
it to this location stay here



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

To whom it may concern:

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because: it is very convenient for me as a disabled person. It is close to all the bus routes and makes it so easy for me to come to this clinic. The other clinic is too far and only 2 buses go that way. This place has saved my life. It would be very upsetting if it were relocated. Please let it stay where it's been for the 20yrs

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because:

cuz I'm Homeless & I stay  
 in downtown

Anna Skypina

February 8, 2023

Good Day, Citizens of the State of Hawaii,

My name is Eric James Olmos. I am the security/safety employee at CHAMP Clinic and have worked here for over two and a half years. My task is to ensure that the clients and others remain safe during their visit to the clinic- especially to ensure that clients have no contact with the school or the school's property.

I am literally stationed across the street from the clinic, next to the school, along their fence. My bright orange safety vest is a gently reminder that -per their agreement- they do not loiter in the area or have any contact with the school.

I am familiar with some of the staff at the school and, aside from a pleasant greeting, have had no contact – and definitely no negative contact from them in regard to client behavior, and I have been here for almost three years.

The people of the downtown community need to face the hard truth: There is a major drug problem where they live.

The most effective way to deal with the problem , in my opinion, is to provide services within the community itself.

The problem is not CHAMP Clinic. The problem is that not enough of the at-risk people who live in the community are taking advantage of the services offered by CHAMP Clinic.

Thank you for your time.

Eric James Olmos

A. Leanne Simon

REGARDING: SB983 and HB378 impact on CHAMP Clinic.

5 February 2023

My name is Leanne Simon, and I am one of the counselors at CHAMP Clinic, located at 173 S. Kukui St., District 13, Honolulu, HI 96813. I have lived and worked in harm reduction and addictions services in District 13 since 2020, and in organizations providing services to underrepresented residents nationally and internationally since 2009. This testimony is written on behalf of the clientele, staff (including myself), and owner of CHAMP Clinic.

CHAMP Clinic has been in business for over 30 years, with 28 of those years in its current location. We have recently been re-certified with CARF, and remain in good standing with the FDA and DEA, and are fully licensed as a Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Clinic/Methadone Clinic with the State of Hawaii. Our facility has helped over 3500 people on Oahu, and even more in our Maui location. This bill, like others before it, seeks to single out and specifically and unfairly target our clinic as it is the only one of its kind in the state that is within 750 feet of a school.

To challenge this discriminatory bill and request its immediate dismissal, I present the following:

1. CHAMP Clients are required to submit to multiple, random urine-analysis drug screenings per month. These tests must prove the presence of methadone at levels appropriate to their prescribed doses and the *absence of all other drugs* for no fewer than 6 months, as well as approval from their counselor, before take-home doses are allowed. This privilege is immediately revoked should a test come back unsatisfactory.
2. Each dose is strictly regulated by the DEA, and each has a unique "signature" that can be traced back to the point of production and sale. This means that doses are easily traced by lot number. We have never had a complaint from the DEA - demonstrating that any methadone diverted from a patient into the community has not come from our clinic.
3. CHAMP employs a security guard that monitors the area all along the block between the clinic and the school. He ensures that clients remain on the clinic side of the street, and enforces our zero tolerance presence on school siderule that has been in place for nearly 20 years. CHAMP also has 24-hour, independently monitored, surveillance cameras installed that record all activity on the front and sides of the clinic building, as well as capturing activity on the school sidewalk. Footage is held securely, off-site, for 90 days.
4. In the 28 years that CHAMP has been at this location, we haven't had any official complaint from the school about any of our practices, procedures, nor people. In fact, most at the school do *not even know we are here* (see their testimony regarding this).
5. Our location is of the utmost importance to deliver services as



- a) We are at the epicenter of public transportation; 95% of the public bus routes for the entire island have stops within one city block of our front door. Most of our clients are living on limited incomes and rely heavily on public transportation. Additionally, many have some form of physical or cognitive disability and proximity to bus stops is crucial to protecting their right to mobility under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- b) Three of the major hospitals on Oahu are within walking distance of the clinic. This means that if, for whatever reason, we are unable to provide dosing services to them, or they are experiencing another urgent medical issue, they can quickly and independently get help without reliance on calling 911, which uses public money to access emergency services.
- c) The clinic is located within a few blocks of the courthouse, probation offices, and other legal aid outlets. This nearness means that there is less recidivism, or return to incarceration, due to unnecessarily missed appointments, thereby saving city and state money. Additionally, the clinic is able to maintain communication with parole officers, et al, regarding progress and potential hurdles they may be facing now or in the future.
- d) We are nearby all the major social service departments. Our clients rely heavily on welfare options such as SNAP/EBT, social security, disability, child care subsidy, and employment services to cover their necessities and train them up on skills necessary to engage positively in our society.
- e) The clinic is nearby other venues that host other addiction services, such as 12-step and other support groups, and intensive outpatient addiction services. Continuity of care is critical, especially in the first few years of recovery to find new ways to get their needs met and prevent bad habits from returning.
- f) As we saw in the 1992 move, and is reflected by other clinics that have been forced to relocate in other areas of the nation, the clinic stands to lose about 50% of our clients in any move- even if just down the block. I saw evidence of this first hand when I was running the syringe exchange for HHHRC. When we moved the outreach van, usually parked at the corner of River and Kukui St., just a few parking spaces down the block, our clients would often miss us, not having seen us just up the road. This is due to the repetitive and habitual nature that is characteristic in addiction.
- g) Fifty percent is a substantial number of people returning to active addiction. Imagine several hundred people relapsing simultaneously, each returning to behaviors that they used in the past- usually illegal, potentially violent, to get the drugs that they need to prevent the onset of withdrawal symptoms. Removal of the clinic's safe, free alternatives to crime is just a drop in the bucket of social ills possible if this bill passes.

6. Moving the clinic would be too great a financial burden on the clinic owner. When he bought this building nearly 5 years ago, it was at 3% interest rate ????. The going rate for this area is now at 8%. That is more than double, and creates a substantial loss. Renting another space is not an option, as any landlord would be subject to the same social, financial, and now legislative bullying as is being suffered currently by CHAMP. The clinic would be at the mercy of someone unaffiliated to maintain their space. This is highly unlikely, given the amount of pressure put upon CHAMP as it is.
7. If this bill passes, the reality is that the clinic will close, along with its sister clinic in Maui. That means that an untold number of people would be returning to active addiction and all that comes with it. And, as stated earlier, the clinic did not bring the problems here- it came to meet the people where they are at. Removing the clinic will not remove the problem, just one of the solutions. I hardly think that a revival of active addiction, and its attendant crimes against property and person, is what one might call "luxury living".
8. Let's face it- this bill is not about the safety of school children. Nowhere in the bill does it mention anything about safety- only distance. And that is precise to singling out a CHAMP. They think that the clinic is an eyesore and that, by forcing us out, in keeping with their NIMBY ("Not In My Back Yard") stance, they will be able to milk even more money from the bourgeoisie new residents that are willing to pay for downtown "cool" at uptown price points.
9. I have not, in my 15 years in the industry across six countries, seen any wealthy business owner with the same passion and fervor for helping the downtrodden as I have seen in Ayman. Though CHAMP is a for-profit clinic, all services are free for the clients, including pricey urine analysis drug screenings. He does this, not because he is trying to get their vote, or campaign donations, and his wealth is certainly not from these clinics lining his pockets. He does this because it is the right thing to do. Not just for the clients that show up at our door, ravaged by the effects of drugs and life on the streets, trying to find a better way to live- but also for those new residents, the ones that turn their noses up at us - and for the school. Why? Because none among us is too wealthy, too smart, nor too "good" to be affected hell that drug addiction brings.

The wealthy in this area have the option to go to the high-priced doctors operating nearby that offer a month's worth of take-home methadone at a time, with zero oversight, through prescription easily fillable at the pharmacy. But no one is lobbying legislation at them. And why not? Isn't the point of this to protect children from the possibility of access to controlled substances due to drug diversion? Hardly.

Please consider my testimony carefully, and weigh the actual repercussions of closing CHAMP Clinic should this bill pass. There are serious consequences facing this entire zone should services be cut or displaced for this vulnerable population. Do you want to be one of the ones responsible for those grim nightly news stories? Or do you want to go to sleep at night knowing that you are on the right side of history?

Thank you for your time.

Dr. Zube Khan MD

173 S Kukui Street, Honolulu, HI, 96813

2-7-2023

To Whom It May Concern:

Aloha! My name is Dr. Zube Khan and I have been living here in Oahu since 1999. I have 40 years of clinical experience of treating multiple patients in the field of Dermatology as well as Occupational Medicine in Canada and US. Since 2020 I have been working as an Addiction Medicine Physician at CHAMP CLINIC in Honolulu. Therefore, CHAMP clientele has daily access to any or all of the above specialty needs during working hours.

As we are all aware opioid related overdoses and deaths are a public health epidemic that has been curtailed by having access to Methadone treatment clinics. These clinics must be in a centrally placed, well known and established facility run by competent and empathetic staff, who are fully trained in the field of addiction medicine and who follow federally programmed SAMHSA based rules and regulations with a successful but realistic approach for helping those human beings that are stuck in a vicious cycle. Many times these individuals have been prescribed Opiates by licensed physicians. These narcotics can be addicting in nature causing Opioid Use Disorder (OUD ) and subsequent Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome ( OWS). These individuals, due to unusual circumstances may no longer have regular access to the aforementioned prescription opiates. These unfortunate individuals are now dependent on street drugs and their dealers who promote Heroin as well as Fentanyl laced opiates.

In the year 2020 around Covid time I joined the team here at CHAMP Clinic after a long discussion with Dr. Fred Royce, the Medical Director and Mr. El-Dakhakhni, the owner who were anxious to get me on board in order to provide complete and much needed comprehensive treatment for all individuals that were in need of skin care and other general timely medical care. I was motivated to help these individuals in need as well as other surrounding medical facilities that were dealing with the on-going Covid pandemic situation. The goal was to concentrate on HARM REDUCTION. This was mentioned in my initial interview with the owner Mr. Dakhakhni and is now a recurring positive thought.

CHAMP CLINIC is a well-established, strategically placed clinic for over 25 years with quick and easy access to all individuals in need, due to BUS route and Private access roads. The public school " Central Middle School " is facing away with its entrance more than a 1000 feet . There is no interaction of individuals from the school or the clients that come to this clinic. Clients are not allowed to loiter around the clinic. Clinic hours are 6:30AM to 12:30 PM. Security Guards and Surveillance Cameras are in place.

We therefore, humbly request that this Federally approved clinic and its program be allowed to fulfill its goal of HELPING the vulnerable population via HARM REDUCTION as well as timely access to HEALTHCARE by breaking the vicious cycle of HEROIN addiction and allowing a complete path to RECOVERY.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Z. Khan" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Zube Khan MD (Derm,Occ-Med,Addiction -Medicine)

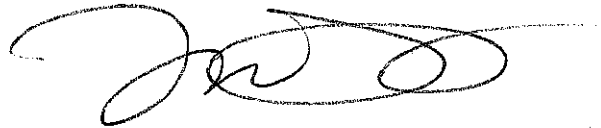
Marie Paishon  
Program Director  
173 S. Kukui St  
Honolulu, HI 96813

February 7, 2023

Being employed at CHAMP Clinic for 21 years; this location is very convenient for our clients. Everything is within walking distance for them such as post office, banks, stores, & the courthouse. Where we can help our clients when they have to appear in court, and need us to speak on their behalf. Or have appointments with their P.O. everything is nearby for us to help them.

Few of our clients used to live/hang out in the park behind the fire station on Pali/Beretania; because of resources that are close by they now have housing and no longer live at the park. And with respect to our neighbors we ensure that our Security person duties includes keeping our client away from the school area, and not loiter around businesses next to our clinic.

Being centrally located the bus stop is just around the corner which is very good especially for clients who travel from the West & Leeward side of the island. Also few of our clients who have to travel from the North Shores , and the windwaed side.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JP', written in a cursive style.

CHAMP CLINIC  
173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

2/8/2023

To Whom it may concern:

My name is Natasha Silva and I've been employed at CHAMP Clinic as an intake coordinator and counselor for one year. In this short time, I have seen hundreds of clients walk through our doors. The current location for CHAMP Clinic is important because it services Chinatown and its surrounding areas. This area is home to many of our housed and unhoused clients.

This location is not only a convenient location for them to receive methadone dosing, but the clinic is also located near major bus lines, three area hospitals, courthouses, probation offices, and other social service agencies our clientele must have access to. Moving locations is not an option, as it would displace our clients, and leave them at a disadvantage should they need to access these agencies. Our population also requires routine to keep up with their daily dosing. They do not need a reason to discontinue use or abandon their required dosing maintenance.

CHAMP Clinic continues to uphold measures to ensure the area around the clinic is safe. This includes security cameras around the perimeter of the clinic, as well as having a security guard stationed across the street at the middle school. I have a close friend who is employed at the middle school, who wasn't aware we were located across the street until I informed her. CHAMP Clinic didn't bring problems to the neighborhood, there were already issues present. Our current location is vital for the healing of our stigmatized community members.



CHAMP, INC.  
173 South Kukui Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
(808) 426-4515

To Whom it May Concern,

I have been employed by CHAMP Clinic for over 4 years now. This location is vital to the community as the majority of our clients are centrally located, and we make it easy for them to access services.

All the major bus routes stop within a couple blocks of the clinic. Also, most major medical facilities are within walking distance from CHAMP.

Our clients do not do well with change. If you change our location, after being here for nearly 30 years, it would be a major shock for most of them. Our clients will be lost in this community without us here to help guide them to their appointments, which are centrally located.

We are working hard to make this community a better place for all to share, work, live, and play in. Relocating our clinic would be disastrous for all parties here. Crime would increase.

Our clinic would best serve our community if it is to stay in its location, where it has been for nearly three decade. Change would do more harm than good to this community. We love this community and care for it to the best of our abilities. To change that would be harmful to the people we serve and we are here for the people who need help. So help us help them, by not making big changes to their lives.

Sincerely,

Brian Peroff

*Lab Tech / Receptionist*

*Brian Peroff*



**Bruce Kato**  
Certified Public Accountant  
173 South Kukui Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
(808) 292-1855

February 7, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to inform whatever interested parties out there that I have had my office situated at the above address for well over six years now doing my practice as a Tax Preparer and Financial Advisor. I deal with roughly two hundred individuals and businesses. The majority of my clients are elderly and somewhat affluent. In all of my years here I have never had a client raise an issue about the presence of Champ Inc. on the ground floor of the building. They have expressed that they are reassured of the safety for themselves and their automobiles parked on the street in front of the building due to the presence of the Security Person provided by the Clinic.

I have personally observed the fact that the Security Person hired by the Clinic is in place for all of the hours that the Clinic is servicing patients. His job is to insure that the patients don't loiter or congregate, they are there to dose, see their counselor and then leave the area. He also oversees the patients so that there is no interaction with any non-clinic personnel or any of the school students or staff. It is unfortunate, but true that the Clinic's patients are not the best our society has to offer but the Clinic does it best to insure that there is no negative impact upon our surrounding community by providing the Security Person as well as the Staff's in counseling the patients attempt to instruct them that they must avoid all adverse contact with our neighbors.

As I have stated there is no question in my mind that my clients are safe and secure when visiting my office. If there was ever a doubt in my mind or any incident where a client felt uncomfortable I would seriously consider it. After doing my clients returns for some 27 years now they are more than clients I feel like they are family and I would never want a family member to feel uncomfortable while visiting me.

Very Truly Yours,

Bruce Kato

PaijBritt Nakamura  
1423 Lusitana Street # C  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
808-979-4177

To whom it may concern,

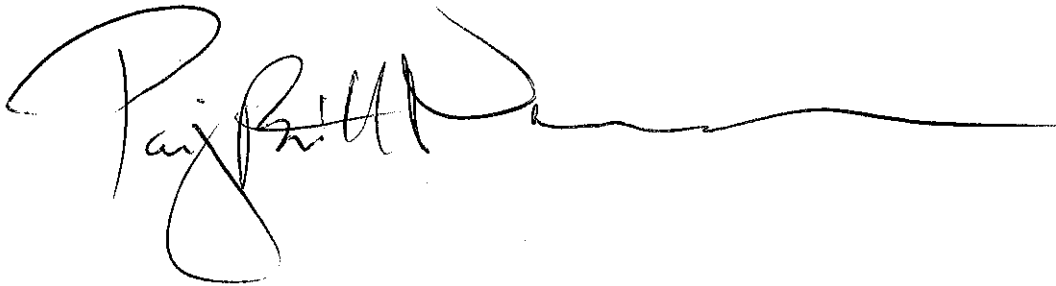
Back in the early 1990s, I was struggling with active addiction. My life had become completely overtaken by drugs; I was despondent and frequently felt suicidal. One day I heard an advertisement for medically assisted treatment on the radio and decided to look into it. That was the beginning of my journey to recovery with the help of Champ clinic. I had lost custody of my two young children at the time but when I got on the clinic and stabilized, Judge Uale returned them to me, My sons father refused to take me to dose in the morning, but I didn't know how to drive. I had no choice but to get in the car and drive myself. I learned how to drive so I could get to the methadone clinic in Kapahulu because there was no nearby bus route to get there easily from my home

Time went by and I experienced a lot of adversity; relapse, acrimonious divorce, incarceration, serious health issues, homelessness and the overwhelming specter of chronic addiction. I was living under the Kuikini bridge and trying to survive on the streets of Honolulu while strung out on heroin. One day while at I was receiving services at the syringe exchange van, I was offered a scholarship for methadone treatment at Champ clinic. I had no money no insurance nothing but they accepted back into treatment, no judgement. Being homeless and broke on the streets made it unduly hard if I had to go anywhere. So I was so grateful to be able to walk to treatment every morning.

Later on after becoming stable again on the program, I found an affordable apartment in the area that put me in proximity to the clinic, so I would have no reason not to make it there every day by 11 am to take my dose. Consistency is the key to successful methadone maintenance treatment and having a geographically easy to access place to get that treatment from is imperative. Without that access I wouldn't have been able to take that first step and make it there to begin with let alone continue for several years.

On February 6<sup>th</sup> this year I celebrated 11 years of continuous recovery. I have been able to take all those years of adversity and turn them into a viable resource from which I now help others struggling with the same issues. I salute Champ clinic for its service to community and for giving the foundation for my new life.

Sincerely,  
PaijBritt Nakamura

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "PaijBritt", followed by a long, horizontal, wavy line that extends across the width of the page.

To Whom it may concern,


My Name is Lane Lee. I am a counselor at Champ Clinic. I have worked for champ for almost 2 yrs. I'm writing this letter in regards to a specific bill that is trying to get passed which would force champ clinic to move and relocate, somewhere probably far and out of the way from its current location.

Basically the bill points to champ clinic being to close to the middle school across the street. It is obvious that certain individuals and organizations believe champ clinic may pose some type of threat or danger. This idea is incorrect. One, the school itself doesn't consider us a danger, and when asked, verbally confirmed, even to the point of not knowing we existed across the street.

Secondly, we have a caring and capable security guard, who literally sits across the street up against the fence separating the school grounds and the city and county sidewalk. For years he has specifically been posted there making sure our clients stay on Champ's side of the street. He's posted there from the time we open to well after we close, periodically patrolling the school side of the sidewalk, making sure our clients are not loitering across the street, and also cleans any rubbish throughout his shift.

Third, my son used to be a student at that middle school between the years of 2017-2018. My schedule permitted me to personally be able to pick up my son from school almost everyday. I say this because for the two years my son attended that specific middle school and daily I would pick him up afterschool, that I myself and including my son, had no idea there was a methadone clinic across the street. There was absolutely no indication that a methadone clinic existed across the street, nor did I ever hear talk of such a one among my fellow parents. Also, I never heard my son and his friends ever mention or show any signs of having any knowledge of such a place across the street. I can honestly say that at no point did my son and I ever feel or experience any type of danger or threat due to the Clinics close proximity.

Lastly, the ones who will suffer the most from this move would be our clients. A large percentage our clients are homeless, living in the surrounding area. They would greatly be affected by no longer being in close proximity to the clinic, having no consistent access to proper transportation, and so would the ability to properly access our much needed services. Also, I personally know that a lot of my clients doctors, Therapists, Psychs, and other important appointments are all located near the clinic, which makes our location valuable and reachable to them. Moving this clinic would cause a shockwave that this community, in my opinion, would feel in a very negative way. Without Champ here, there would be hundreds of opiate addicts left with a very unaccessible way to receive their medication, and so eventually drifting back to the familiar once again, which for them is Heroin and other illicit narcotics. Those said narcotics are obviously not covered by their insurances, unlike the methadone which is, and so turning to crime to fund such purchases of illegal substances. That would set off a chain of events which will undoubtedly cause the crime rate to spike, and that will then pose a real and immediate danger to that specific middle school.

counselor, Lane Lee  


## CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

My name is George Tevis, and I've been a client of CHAMP Clinic for several years. I'd like CHAMP to stay in its location because of how easy it is to access by bus. I have problems with my back and knees from years of working, so the fact that I can off the bus right by the clinic is very important. Honestly, the possibility that CHAMP might have to move scares me. This isn't just like a regular business that easily put a sign up that says, "Hey, we're moving, check out our new location!". Half of us here are homeless, living in shelters, or been on the streets, and we know this area well. The clinic is one of the things that actually brings hope to a part of the city where everywhere you look, can seem full of despair. We come to the clinic, we get our medication, meet with our counselors when needed, and we go on with our day. Coming here to the CHAMP Clinic on Kukui is a privilege that I'm truly grateful for, depend on, and hopefully can continue to come to for as long as I need to.

Madelyn Barr  
February 7, 2023

### CHAMP Clinic Must Stay Where It Is

CHAMP Clinic is a SAMHSA and CARF-certified healthcare facility in Downtown Honolulu. CHAMP Clinic services nearly 200 people every day focusing on their substance abuse disorder needs as well as their overall physical and mental health.

Methadone is an evidence-based FDA-approved medication to treat Opiate Use Disorder (OUD). It has been used in the U.S. since the 1970s and is considered the 'gold standard' of opiate abuse treatment. Methadone does not get a person high - instead, the medication works to: 1) block the euphoric effects of opioids, 2) relieve cravings, 3) normalize brain chemistry, and 4) normalize physical functions without withdrawal effects. Taking methadone for opioid addiction is the same as taking medication for any other chronic disease like diabetes or asthma. When used according to a doctor's instructions, methadone is safe and effective, and will not create a new addiction.

Patients enrolled in Methadone Maintenance Treatment (MMT) have a 50% less chance of dying compared to abstinence-based models. Additionally, making methadone accessible reduces HIV risk by 54% among people with OUD. Participation in methadone maintenance treatment is also highly protective against hepatitis C. Methadone clinics also decrease the prevalence of crime in that area. A study published in the Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs found that crime was significantly higher around liquor stores and corner stores than near methadone clinics (Fakunle & Milam, n.d.). Crime is reduced by 38% in areas near methadone clinics (Fakunle & Milam, n.d.). Additionally, 85% of drug users who received MMT decreased drug-related crime (Fakunle & Milam, n.d.). Methadone is also associated with a 50% lower rate of hospitalization (Russolillo, 2019).

Social stigma is the disapproval of, or discrimination against, an individual or group based on perceived characteristics that serve to distinguish them from other members of a society. Unfortunately, people with OUD face a significant amount of stigma and discrimination against them, which flows into where they decide to seek treatment. It is so unfortunate that this stigma still exists in 2023. People with OUD, and the facilities that treat them, should not be attacked and ostracized, but rather thanked and appreciated for the work they do in the community. By CHAMP Clinic operating in the Downtown Honolulu community, a vast majority of its residents with OUD are able to receive the treatment they so desperately need. It is imperative that CHAMP Clinic stays in its current location and is not forced to move as its current location is central with easy access to all major freeways and bus routes as well as being in walking distance to where many of its houseless clients stay. Easy access to a treatment facility is imperative for CHAMP's houseless individuals who make up a majority of CHAMP's clientele. If CHAMP Clinic were forced to move, these houseless individuals would have a difficult time getting transportation to the clinic as many of them walk to the clinic every day. By having CHAMP Clinic forced to move locations, a majority of their clients would not be able to

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2728000#:~:text=For%20hospital%20admissions%20due%20to,hospital%20admissions%20per%20100%20PYs.>

Rita Vande Berghe


To whom it may concern,

Champ Clinic is located in the middle downtown Honolulu, especially for drug addicts and homeless population. Since we have numerous parks surrounding us, it is very easy for anyone to walk to. Buses are accessible for anyone who is in need since they can be let off a block away from the clinic no matter where on the island they are coming from.

Also, housing assistance, welfare, Social Security, job training programs, Disability Rights Center, Legal Aid, Queens intensive outpatient services for dual diagnosed individuals, Adult Probation and Parole, Harm Reduction, the major behavioral health services and more that our clients depend on have their offices downtown which makes it easier on our clients to make it to their appointments. Many of our clients live in the area which makes life easier all around because of the clinics central location.

We want our people to live in a community where they feel secure, while at the same time assist them to reduce the harms in their lives which in turn reduces the harms in the community.

Sincerely,



Rita Vande Berghe

-substance abuse counselor, 8 years at Champ Clinics

02/09/2022

To: Whom it may concern  
From: HaneefBilal Salahuddin-Abdul Shafiq  
RE: CHAMP CLINIC LOCATION

Dear:

In retrospect, I've been employed at CHAMP for over 30 years and we have been at 173 Kukui Street for 28 years. And management has improved the clinic via more staffing, security guard, remodeled the building, etc. Our patients have not caused any problems, a school is located across from us and we had no issues with the school or students. Our patients stay away from the area, which is mandated by CHAMP's owner, any violations will result in patient being discharged.

We have served the community by treating addicts that would be engaging in criminal activities if they weren't being treated for their addiction via CHAMP. Most of our patients are productive, business owners, professionals, laborers, etc.

Our location better serves our patients because we are centrally located on the bus line, and in the city where patients can come for treatment and return to work etc. via bus, cab, or walking.

Otherwise, if a location is difficult for them to attend they will return to street drugs and commit crimes, etc. I'm a former prison guard and currently psych social worker for the Women's prison-23 years. And I can safely say, our patients follow clinic rules-have not caused any harm to the community, in fact we have treated and continue to treat people who would otherwise be incarcerated, sick, or dead. Via treatment most of them are able to live normal lives, and others we are assisting with establishing a positive life. Removing CHAMP from current location will have a detrimental effect on the community

Our patients are referred to psychologists/psychiatrists, which are located few blocks from the clinic, so they able to dose and walk a few blocks to their therapists. Most would never make their appointments if they had to travel to another location.

For further information please contact me at the following number: 808 722 4678.

Sincerely,



HaneefBilal Salahuddin-AbdulShafiq

MA, Sociology

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Madelyn Barr  
February 7, 2023

### CHAMP Clinic Must Stay Where It Is

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Social stigma is the disapproval of, or discrimination against, an individual or group based on perceived characteristics that serve to distinguish them from other members of a society. Unfortunately, people with OUD face a significant amount of stigma and discrimination against them, which flows into where they decide to seek treatment. It is so unfortunate that this stigma still exists in 2023. People with OUD, and the facilities that treat them, should not be attacked and ostracized, but rather thanked and appreciated for the work they do in the community. By CHAMP Clinic operating in the Downtown Honolulu community, a vast majority of its residents with OUD are able to receive the treatment they so desperately need. It is imperative that CHAMP Clinic stays in its current location and is not forced to move as its current location is central with easy access to all major freeways and bus routes as well as being in walking distance to where many of its houseless clients stay. Easy access to a treatment facility is imperative for CHAMP's houseless individuals who make up a majority of CHAMP's clientele. If CHAMP Clinic were forced to move, these houseless individuals would have a difficult time getting transportation to the clinic as many of them walk to the clinic every day. By having CHAMP Clinic forced to move locations, a majority of their clients would not be able to

access treatment - undoubtedly increasing their risk and chance of overdosing and dying. Moving CHAMP Clinic could easily cause a burden to our houseless community that is currently seeking help for their OUD. Forcing CHAMP Clinic to move locations will also increase admissions to the hospital and utilizations of emergency services (ie. ambulances, etc.). Healthcare is a resource Hawaii is already lacking in a multitude of areas, and this will only increase resource expenditure in this area when these resources could go to more urgent and critical matters. Removing CHAMP Clinic from its current location could possibly correlate to an increase in crime (including in school areas). Having CHAMP Clinic operate where it currently is may potentially reduce crime around schools.

Lastly, CHAMP Clinic has given me my life back. I am forever indebted to this facility for how much they have helped me get my life back on track. Not only was I able to get clean, I was able to go back to doing my master's and as of now, I only have one class left to finish. Currently, I commute from Kaneohe to CHAMP Clinic every day. Because CHAMP Clinic is right off the Pali Highway (and in such a central location), it allows me to receive the treatment I desperately need. If CHAMP were to move, this would undoubtedly affect me as well as the rest of the patients here at CHAMP.

2415  
MB

#### References

Fakunle, D., & Milam, A. (n.d.). *Not in my back yard: A comparative analysis of crime around publicly ...* Journals of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs. Retrieved February 8, 2023, from <https://www.jsad.com/doi/full/10.15288/jsad.2016.77.17>

Russolillo, A. (2019, March 15). *Methadone treatment and substance-related admissions in a population with criminal convictions*. JAMA Network Open. Retrieved February 7, 2023, from

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2728000#:~:text=For%20hospital%20admissions%20due%20to,hospital%20admissions%20per%20100%20PYs.>



Aisha Esker <aishachamphon@gmail.com>

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## Fwd: CHAMP Clinic

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**Mohamed Ayman El-Dakhakhni**

<aymand5000@gmail.com>

To: Aisha Esker <aishachamphon@gmail.com>

Wed, Feb 8, 2023

at 7:54 PM

Another one

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Johnny Hawkins <johnnyhawkins@yahoo.com>

**Date:** February 8, 2023 at 7:47:02 PM HST

**To:** aymand5000@gmail.com

**Subject:** CHAMP Clinic

**Reply-To:** "johnnyhawkins@yahoo.com"

<johnnyhawkins@yahoo.com>

From: Johnny Hawkins

98-1284 B Hoohiki Plc

Pearl City, HI 96782

To: Whom It May Concern

It has come to my attention that CHAMP Clinic is being asked to relocate. As a former Counselor and Administrator for the clinic from 1996-2001, I respectfully have some comments and concerns.

I am over 32 years clean and sober from being a former addict and alcoholic. I worked at the clinic in order to help others get through what I had myself gone through, and I indeed wanted to make

meaningful contributions to society. Indeed we helped so many individuals. I physically helped them move into the current location. The clinic is perfectly placed to aid so many individuals in need from that exact same downtown and surrounding areas. We were good neighbors in that community and never received complaints from the nearby school. I have remained in touch because of the mentorship I received from the staff and management. I am aware that security guards have remained outside of the clinic to facilitate proper community relations for the past approximate 20 years.

I therefore request that the clinic remain in place as such. I have a business of my own for the past 27 years and I am a man of faith. I ask you, why not let CHAMP Clinic remain and serve? My phone number is 808-256-0713. If you would like to authenticate or have questions, please call.

Aloha.



Johnny Hawkins

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android



February 8, 2023

In re, Letter in Support of 173 S. Kukui St (Champ Clinic/Ayman El-Dakhakhni)

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Mr. Ayman El-Dakhakhni and his commercial property located at 173 S. Kukui Street (dba Champ Clinic).

I have known Mr. El-Dakhakhni for many years. In recent years I have been involved in several projects (Architectural Design & Construction) with him. Some of those projects involved design work and renovations/upgrades at 173 S. Kukui, the location of Champ Clinic which occupies the lower level.

I can tell you this with absolute certainty. Mr. El-Dakhakhni goes to great measures to ensure the security of his property and the surrounding properties, especially as it pertains to the Patients of Champ Clinic. I have visited the site dozens of times in the last few years, and not once – not a single time – have I encountered any issues with the Champ Clinic Patients that utilize the clinic. Not once has a Patient in the vicinity asked for a cigarette (for example), nor attempted to engage me, harass me, let alone present a threat. In fact, when I usually arrive and there may be a few Patients awaiting their appointment outside, they even move out of the way. I can say that none of my associates (ie contractors, inspectors, etc) ever experienced an issue there. Quite frankly, I was personally surprised at how well managed the security of the property, it's patients, and it's passersby.

Mr. El-Dakhakhni always has at least one or two security personnel who keep close eye on the goings on at 173 S. Kukui, also ensuring other members of the public are not bothered. He does not allow the Patients to congregate/loiter across the street (along the fence separating Central Intermediate School from the sidewalk on Kukui St. He also makes sure Patients don't park and "camp" around the location.

The same *cannot* be said for *most* other random locations throughout downtown Honolulu. I am often approached or accosted in different parts of downtown, Kakaako, Chinatown at random locations by homeless et al.

(continued on next page)



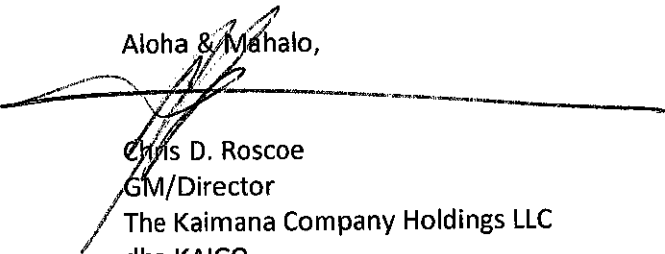
Champ Clinic on the other hand is a necessary and important medical treatment center for those with disabilities (substance abuse) that is well managed and secure. It is also vital to helping to keep crime *down* by treating it's Patients. It has been in that location for more than two decades and is working, with no apparent danger to the public nor school students and staff across the street.

It should also be mentioned that Mr. El-Dakhakhni also spent a great deal of money, effort, and time upgrading the premises, both cosmetically and otherwise. He planted flowers and grass out front, painted the building, and revitalized the site. He cares about 173 S. Kukui Street, he cares about his Patients and Staff, and he cares about the neighborhood and its people.

I urge you *not* to pursue any actions that would require the closure and/or relocation of Champ Clinic and the offices at 173 S. Kukui Street.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (808) 589-8717 or [cdr@kaimanacompany.com](mailto:cdr@kaimanacompany.com). I would be happy to testify and/or speak on behalf of my support for Mr. El-Dakhakhni should that be requested.

Aloha & Mahalo,



Chris D. Roscoe  
GM/Director  
The Kaimana Company Holdings LLC  
dba KAICO



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that work nearby:

1418

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

CHAMP has been important in  
this location as it is close to  
my work downtown. I have  
worked downtown for 12 years and  
have been coming to CHAMP for  
12 years as well Bradley Chong

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It is very important  
for me to get to work on  
time This place is perfect  
location We need to keep  
it open please

B. H. P. #640





# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that work nearby:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I work and  
this program  
helped me get a  
normal life  
I like this location  
2457 MJS

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Because it keeps me clean  
and I have a son now nearby  
Jose  
2329



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

#1000

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

This location really matters  
to me because I cannot ride  
the bus & I need to walk  
here close to living. Please

*[Signature]*

#2383

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

KK

It is easy for me to get to  
by bus along with other  
services in the area.  
Please don't take it away.

Thank you



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

Leticia Luna 971 2090883

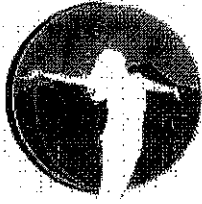
It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

We really need to stay  
open at this location  
I ride the bus here  
everyday, I walk here  
for so please don't  
move our location.

#2288

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

ITS A VERY CONVENIENT LOCATION  
FOR ME. I TAKE ONE BUS ROUTE  
TO GET HERE WHICH ALLOWS ME  
TO SAVE WHATEVER I CAN ON  
OTHER NECESSITIES. AFTER WORK  
I FINISH IN THE MORNING. I COME  
STRAIGHT TO THIS LOCATION WHICH  
MAKES THINGS ALOT EASIER FOR MY  
SCHEDULE THROUGHOUT THE WEEK.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It's convenient for  
me. I'm 75 yrs. young &  
take the bus from  
Kaneohe #101

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

to near all my  
other services  
Thank you,  
Doris



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

this location is important because  
it is so centrally located. I live  
in Kalihi and don't drive so my  
ride comes from Kakaia  
This is the ideal location. The bus  
comes right here if I don't get a ride

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It is close to rapid transit and  
convenient for going to other Dr.'s  
appointments. We have come  
here for 20+ yrs. Mt 872



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use nearby medical services:

Client # 2232

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

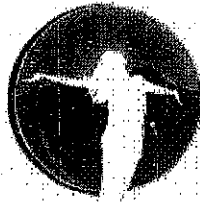
I have appointments at queen's  
Right After I go to Champs  
almost daily. please don't  
move the clinic it will make  
it very hard for me to get to  
clinic.

*[Signature]*

#31 KC

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Champ location is convenient  
for me because of its location  
I come from Kailua and  
I am disable and Champ  
is centrally located to my  
doctors as well



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use nearby medical services:

Paula Campos

Paula Campos  
(808) 490-3000

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because:

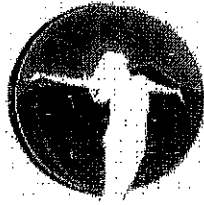
I have regular medical visits near here and it is very close to CHAMP here

PLEASE understand my situation thank you

1041 E.H.

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because:

It is close to the Hospital and other services for us (patients)



# CHAMP Clinic

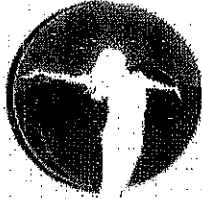
173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use nearby medical services:

**It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:**

*it saved my life - its close to  
my doctor and I'm a terminal  
cancer patient.*





# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that work nearby:

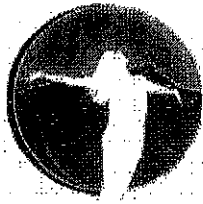
It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Because it keeps me clean  
and I have a job now nearby  
Jesse  
2329

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It is very important  
for me to get to work on  
time this place is perfect  
location we need to keep  
it open please

B.H.P #640



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

702 JK

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live near here and  
would be difficult for  
me too move

116

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live here.  
A CHAMP has always been here for me  
and the location is key. All the people  
that work at CHAMP are my friends.  
Anywhere else would be a big mistake,  
The community here accepts us. The  
security keeps things calm on the block.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

702 JL

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live near here and  
would be difficult for  
me too move

116

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live here.  
A CHAMP has always been here for me  
and the location is key. All the people  
that work at CHAMP are my friends.  
Anywhere else would be a big mistake,  
The community here accepts us. The  
security keeps things calm on the block.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

702 JL

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live near here and  
would be difficult for  
me to move

116

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live here.  
A CHAMP has always been here for me  
and the location is key. All the people  
that work at CHAMP are my friends.  
Anywhere else would be a big mistake.  
The community here accepts us. The  
security keeps things calm on the block.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

2337

JTM

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Cant afford 2 travel far,  
I need my methadone so I  
can stay clean.

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live in this area, whether  
down like it or not. Peoples lives  
are at stake here. And its life  
and death.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live close by and  
I have a hard time dealing  
with it far away  
Mary Lou

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

CHAMP's central location is vital  
for the many clients to easily  
access the location. Many  
of the clinic's clients live  
serious mobility issues ~~and~~ & would  
face serious difficulties if the  
clinic were moved.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

1750

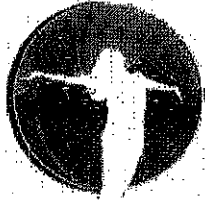
It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

*[Signature]*

Close to where I  
live

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

it's close to my house and helps me get to  
my two jobs quicker. If relocated by the airport,  
it would take me almost twice as long to get to  
and from the new location (if moved)



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

2407 AM

I CAN'T GET AROUND WITHOUT  
A WALKER AND IT IS CONVENIENT  
I HAVE NO TRANSPORTATION  
CHAMP NEEDS TO STAY HERE!

From: 1210 - W.C.

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Majority of us (1) live on  
Foot, (2) come from the other  
side of island (3) majority of  
us can't afford bus passes,  
(4) or we are traveling w/  
pain due to injuries in bones.  
cannot travel at all, but to make  
it to this location stay here





# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

To whom it may concern:

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because it is very convenient for me as a disabled person. It is close to all the bus routes and makes it so easy for me to come to this clinic. The other clinic is too far and only 2 buses go that way. This place has saved my life. It would be very upsetting if it were relocated. Please let it stay where it's been for the 20yrs

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because:

Coz I'm Homeless & I stay  
in downtown

Altona Shyman

A. Leanne Simon

REGARDING: SB983 and HB378 impact on CHAMP Clinic.

9 February 2023

My name is Leanne Simon, and I am one of the counselors at CHAMP Clinic, located at 173 S. Kukui St., District 13, Honolulu, HI 96813. I have lived and worked in harm reduction and addictions services in District 13 since 2020, and in organizations providing services to underrepresented residents nationally and internationally since 2009. This testimony is written on behalf of the clients<sup>1</sup>, staff (including myself), and owner of CHAMP Clinic.

CHAMP Clinic has been in business for over 30 years, with 28 of those years in its current location. We have recently been re-certified with CARF, and remain in good standing with the FDA and DEA, and are fully licensed as a Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Clinic/Methadone Clinic with the State of Hawaii. Our facility has helped over 3500 people on Oahu, and even more in our Maui location. This bill, like others before it, seeks to single out specifically and unfairly target our clinic as it is the only one of its kind in the state that is within 750 feet of a school.

To challenge this discriminatory bill and request its immediate dismissal, I present the following:

1. CHAMP Clients are required to submit to multiple, random urine-analysis drug screenings per month. These tests must prove the presence of methadone at levels appropriate to their prescribed doses and the *absence of all other drugs* for no fewer than 6 months, as well as approval from their counselor, before take-home doses are allowed. This privilege is immediately revoked should a test come back unsatisfactory.
2. Each dose is strictly regulated by the DEA, and each has a unique "signature" that can be traced back to the point of production and sale. This means that doses are easily traced by lot number. We have never had a complaint from the DEA - demonstrating that any methadone diverted into the community has not come from a patient at our clinic.
3. CHAMP employs a security guard that monitors the area all along the block between the clinic and the school. He ensures that clients remain on the clinic side of the street, and enforces our zero tolerance presence on school side rule that has been in place for nearly 20 years. CHAMP also has 24-hour, independently monitored, surveillance cameras installed that record all activity on the front and sides of the clinic building, as well as capturing activity on the school sidewalk. Footage is held securely, off-site, for a minimum of 90 days.
4. In the 28 years that CHAMP has been at this location, we haven't had any official complaint from the school about any of our practices, procedures, nor people. In fact, most at the school do *not even know we are here* (see their testimony regarding this).

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<sup>1</sup> Clients also provided handwritten submissions. Please see addendum at the end of this testimony.

5. CHAMP's current location is of the utmost importance to deliver services as:

- a) We are at the epicenter of public transportation; 95% of the public bus routes for the entire island have stops within one city block of our front door. Most of our clients are living on limited incomes and rely heavily on public transportation. Additionally, many have some form of physical or cognitive disability and proximity to bus stops is crucial to protecting their right to mobility under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- b) Three of the major hospitals on Oahu are within walking distance of the clinic. This means that if, for whatever reason, we are unable to provide dosing services to them, or they are experiencing another urgent medical issue, they can quickly and independently get help without reliance on calling 911, which uses public money to access emergency services.
- c) The clinic is located within a few blocks of the courthouse, probation offices, and other legal aid outlets. This nearness means that there is less recidivism, or return to incarceration, due to unnecessarily missed appointments, thereby saving city and state money. Additionally, the clinic is able to maintain communication with parole officers, et al, regarding progress and potential hurdles they may be facing now or in the future.
- d) We are nearby all the major social service departments. Our clients rely heavily on welfare options such as SNAP/EBT, social security, disability, child care subsidy, and employment services to cover their necessities and train them up on skills necessary to engage positively in our society.
- e) The clinic is nearby other venues that host other addiction services, such as 12-step and other support groups, and intensive outpatient addiction services. Continuity of care is critical, especially in the first few years of recovery to find new ways to get their needs met and prevent bad habits from returning.
- f) As we saw in the 1992 move, and is reflected by other clinics that have been forced to relocate in other areas of the nation, the clinic stands to lose about 50% of our clients in any move- even if just down the block. I saw evidence of this first hand when I was running the syringe exchange for HHHRC. When we moved the outreach van, usually parked at the corner of River and Kukui St., just a few parking spaces down the block, our clients would often miss us, not having seen us just up the road. This is due to the repetitive and habitual nature that is characteristic in addiction.
- g) Fifty percent is a substantial number of people returning to active addiction. Imagine several hundred people relapsing simultaneously, each returning to behaviors that they used in the past- usually illegal, potentially violent, to get the drugs that they need to prevent the onset of withdrawal symptoms. Removal of

the clinic's safe, free alternatives to crime is just a drop in the bucket of social ills possible if this bill passes.

6. Moving the clinic would be too great a financial burden on the clinic owner. When he bought this building nearly 5 years ago, it was at 3% interest rate. The going rate for this area is now at 8%. That is more than double, and creates a substantial financial loss. Renting another space is not an option, as any landlord would be subject to the same social, financial, and now legislative bullying as is being suffered currently by CHAMP. The clinic would be at the mercy of someone unaffiliated to maintain their space. This is highly unlikely, given the amount of pressure put upon CHAMP as it is.
7. If this bill passes, the reality is that the clinic will close, along with its sister clinic in Maui. That means that an untold number of people would be returning to active addiction and all that comes with it. And, as stated earlier, the clinic did not bring the problems here- it came to meet the people where they are at. Removing the clinic will not remove the problem, just one of the solutions. I hardly think that a revival of active addiction, and its attendant crimes against property and person, is what one might call "luxury living".
8. Let's face it- this bill is not about the safety of school children. Nowhere in the bill does it mention anything about safety- only distance. And that is precise to singling out a CHAMP. They think that the clinic is an eyesore and that, by forcing us out, in keeping with their NIMBY ("Not In My Back Yard") stance, they will be able to milk even more money from the bourgeoisie new residents that are willing to pay for downtown "cool" at uptown price points.
9. I have not, in my 15 years in the industry across six countries, seen any wealthy business owner with the same passion and fervor for helping the downtrodden as I have seen in Ayman. Though CHAMP is a for-profit clinic, all services are free for the clients, including pricey urine analysis drug screenings. He does this, not because he is trying to get their vote, or campaign donations, and his wealth is certainly not from these clinics lining his pockets. He does this because it is the right thing to do. Not just for the clients that show up at our door, ravaged by the effects of drugs and life on the streets, trying to find a better way to live- but also for those new residents, the ones that turn their noses up at us - and for the school. Why? Because none among us is too wealthy, too smart, nor too "good" to be affected hell that drug addiction brings.

The wealthy in this area have the option to go to the high-priced doctors operating nearby that offer a month's worth of take-home methadone at a time, with zero oversight, through prescription easily fillable at the pharmacy. But no one is lobbying legislation at them. And why not? Isn't the point of this to protect the community from the possibility of access to controlled substances due to drug diversion? Hardly.

Please consider my testimony carefully, and weigh the actual repercussions of closing CHAMP Clinic should this bill pass. There are serious consequences facing this entire zone should services be cut or displaced for this vulnerable population. Do you want to be one of the ones

responsible for those grim nightly news stories? Or do you want to go to sleep at night knowing that you are on the right side of history?

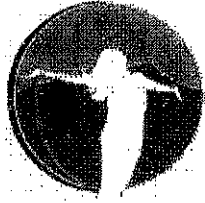
Thank you for your time.

Yours in Service,

A. Leanne Simon  
Counselor, CHAMP Clinic  
MA – Human Development  
MpaCS – Peace & Conflict Studies

#### ADDENDUM:

In addition to my own testimony, most of the CHAMP clients were eager to add their voices to this discussion. It is, after all, a decision that most impacts them and the direction that their lives might take should this invaluable resource be snatched away. In accordance with HIPAA law, names and identifying information has been redacted, except in the cases we have signed permission to disclose. There are over 100 individual cards by as many clients, completed in handwriting which are being submitted in person by Aisha Esker. I have randomly selected a representative sample of these testimonials, categorized by general topic (as labeled at top of each page).



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that work nearby:

1418

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

CHAMP has been important in  
this location as it is close to  
my work downtown. I have  
worked downtown for 12 years and  
have been coming to CHAMP for  
12 years as well Bradley Chung

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It is very important  
for me to get to work on  
time This place is perfect  
location we need to keep  
it open please

BHP #640



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that work nearby:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I work and  
this program  
helped me get a  
normal life  
I like this location  
2457 JJS

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Because it keeps me clean  
and I have a SOD now nearby  
Jesse  
2329



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

#1000

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

This location really matters  
to me because I cannot ride  
the bus & I have to walk  
here close to living. Please

*[Signature]*

#2383

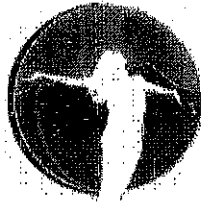
It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

KK

It is easy for me to get to  
by bus along with other  
services in the area.  
Please don't take it away.

Thank You





# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

Leticia Luna 971 2090853

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

We really need to stay  
open at this location  
I ride the bus here  
everyday, I walk here  
for so please don't  
move our location.

#2288

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

ITS A VERY CONVENIENT LOCATION  
FOR ME. I TAKE ONE BUS ROUTE  
TO GET HERE WHICH ALLOWS ME  
TO SAVE ~~WHATEVER~~ WHATEVER I CAN ON  
OTHER NECESSITIES. AFTER WORK  
I FINISH IN THE MORNING I COME  
STRAIGHT TO THIS LOCATION WHICH  
MAKES THINGS A LOT EASIER FOR MY  
SCHEDULE THROUGHOUT THE WEEK.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It's convenient for  
me. I'm 75 yrs. Young &  
take the bus from  
Kaneohe #ADM 101

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

to near all the  
other services  
Thank you.  
2411 Dick.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

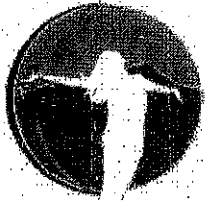
Testimony from clients that use bus service to attend:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

this location is important because  
it is so centrally located. I live  
in Kalihi and don't drive so my  
ride comes from Kalaheo  
This is the ideal location. The bus  
comes right here if I don't get a ride

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It is close to rapid transit and  
convenient for going to other Dr's  
appointments. We have come  
here for 20<sup>+</sup> yrs. Mt 872



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use nearby medical services:

Client # 2232

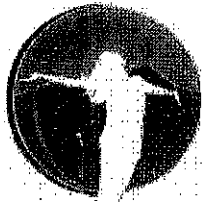
It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I have appointments at queens  
Right After I go to Champs  
almost daily. please don't  
move the clinic it will make  
it very hard for me to get to  
clinic.

#31 KC

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Champ location is convenient  
for me because of its location  
I come from Kailua and  
I am disable and Champ  
is centrally located to my  
doctors as well



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use nearby medical services:

Paula Campos

Paula Campos  
808-426-4515

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because:

I have regular medical visits near here and I ride the bus to Champ here

PLEASE understand my situation thank you

1044 EH

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because:

It is close to the Hospital and other services for us (patients)



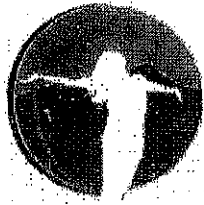
# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that use nearby medical services:

**It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:**

*it saved my life - its close to  
my doctor and I'm a terminal  
cancer patient.*



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that work nearby:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Because it keeps me clean  
and I have a Sub now nearby  
Jesse  
2329

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

It is very important  
for me to get to work on  
time this place is perfect  
location we need to keep  
it open please

B.H.P #640



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

702 JK

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

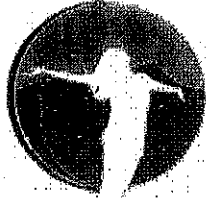
I live near here and  
would be difficult for  
me to move

116

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live here.  
CHAMP has always been here for me  
and the location is key. All the people  
that work at CHAMP are my friends.  
Anywhere else would be a big mistake,  
The community here accepts us. The  
security keeps things calm on the block.





# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

702 JK

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live near here and  
would be difficult for  
me too move

116

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live here.  
A CHAMP has always been here for me  
and the location is key. All the people  
that work at CHAMP are my friends.  
Anywhere else would be a big mistake,  
the community here accepts us. The  
security keeps things calm on the block.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

702 JL

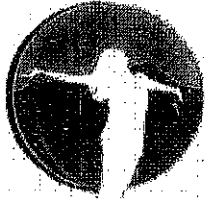
It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live near here and  
would be difficult for  
me to move

116

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live here.  
A CHAMP has always been here for me  
and the location is key. All the people  
that work at CHAMP are my friends.  
Anywhere else would be a big mistake,  
The community here accepts us. The  
security keeps things calm on the block.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

2337

JTM

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Cant afford 2 travel far.  
I need my methadone so I  
can stay clean.

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live in this area, whether  
you like it or not Peoples LIVES  
ARE AT STAKE HERE. AND IT IS LIFE  
AND DEATH



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

I live close by and  
I have a hard time dealing  
with it far away  
Mary Lou

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

CHAMP's central location is vital  
for the many clients to easily  
access its location. Many  
of the clinic's clients have  
serious mobility issues ~~and~~ and would  
face serious difficulties if the  
clinic were moved.



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

1750

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

*K M*

*Close to where I  
live*

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

*it's close to my house and helps me get to  
my two jobs quicker. If relocated by the airport,  
it would take me almost twice as long to get to  
and from the new location (if moved)*



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

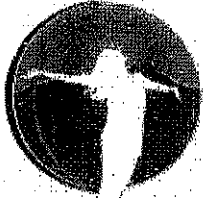
It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

2407 am.  
I CAN'T GET AROUND WITHOUT  
A WALKER AND IT IS CONVENIENT  
I HAVE NO TRANSPORTATION  
CHAMP NEEDS TO STAY HERE!

From: 1210 - W.C.

It is important to me that CHAMP  
stay in its current location because:

Majority of us (1) live on  
Foot, (2) come from the other  
side of island (3) majority of  
us can't take bus passes,  
(4) or we are traveling w/  
pain due to injuries in bones.  
Cannot travel at all but to make  
it to this location stay here



# CHAMP Clinic

173 Kukui St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

Testimony from clients that live nearby:

To whom it may concern:

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because: it is very convenient for me as a disabled person. It is close to all the bus routes and makes it so easy for me to come to this clinic. The other clinic is too far and only 2 buses go that way. This place has saved my life. It would be very upsetting if it were relocated. Please let it stay where it's been for the 20yrs

It is important to me that CHAMP stay in its current location because:

cuz I'm Homeless & I stay  
 in downtown

Anna Shipman

February 8, 2023

Good Day, Citizens of the State of Hawaii,

My name is Eric James Olmos. I am the security/safety employee at CHAMP Clinic and have worked here for over two and a half years. My task is to ensure that the clients and others remain safe during their visit to the clinic- especially to ensure that clients have no contact with the school or the school's property.

I am literally stationed across the street from the clinic, next to the school, along their fence. My bright orange safety vest is a gently reminder that -per their agreement- they do not loiter in the area or have any contact with the school.

I am familiar with some of the staff at the school and, aside from a pleasant greeting, have had no contact – and definitely no negative contact from them in regard to client behavior, and I have been here for almost three years.

The people of the downtown community need to face the hard truth: There is a major drug problem where they live.

The most effective way to deal with the problem , in my opinion, is to provide services within the community itself.

The problem is not CHAMP Clinic. The problem is that not enough of the at-risk people who live in the community are taking advantage of the services offered by CHAMP Clinic.

Thank you for your time.

Eric James Olmos



A. Leanne Simon

REGARDING: SB983 and HB378 impact on CHAMP Clinic.

5 February 2023

My name is Leanne Simon, and I am one of the counselors at CHAMP Clinic, located at 173 S. Kukui St., District 13, Honolulu, HI 96813. I have lived and worked in harm reduction and addictions services in District 13 since 2020, and in organizations providing services to underrepresented residents nationally and internationally since 2009. This testimony is written on behalf of the clientele, staff (including myself), and owner of CHAMP Clinic.

CHAMP Clinic has been in business for over 30 years, with 28 of those years in its current location. We have recently been re-certified with CARF, and remain in good standing with the FDA and DEA, and are fully licensed as a Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Clinic/Methadone Clinic with the State of Hawaii. Our facility has helped over 3500 people on Oahu, and even more in our Maui location. This bill, like others before it, seeks to single out and specifically and unfairly target our clinic as it is the only one of its kind in the state that is within 750 feet of a school.

To challenge this discriminatory bill and request its immediate dismissal, I present the following:

1. CHAMP Clients are required to submit to multiple, random urine-analysis drug screenings per month. These tests must prove the presence of methadone at levels appropriate to their prescribed doses and the *absence of all other drugs* for no fewer than 6 months, as well as approval from their counselor, before take-home doses are allowed. This privilege is immediately revoked should a test come back unsatisfactory.
2. Each dose is strictly regulated by the DEA, and each has a unique "signature" that can be traced back to the point of production and sale. This means that doses are easily traced by lot number. We have never had a complaint from the DEA - demonstrating that any methadone diverted from a patient into the community has not come from our clinic.
3. CHAMP employs a security guard that monitors the area all along the block between the clinic and the school. He ensures that clients remain on the clinic side of the street, and enforces our zero tolerance presence on school siderule that has been in place for nearly 20 years. CHAMP also has 24-hour, independently monitored, surveillance cameras installed that record all activity on the front and sides of the clinic building, as well as capturing activity on the school sidewalk. Footage is held securely, off-site, for 90 days.
4. In the 28 years that CHAMP has been at this location, we haven't had any official complaint from the school about any of our practices, procedures, nor people. In fact, most at the school do *not even know we are here* (see their testimony regarding this).
5. Our location is of the utmost importance to deliver services as

- a) We are at the epicenter of public transportation; 95% of the public bus routes for the entire island have stops within one city block of our front door. Most of our clients are living on limited incomes and rely heavily on public transportation. Additionally, many have some form of physical or cognitive disability and proximity to bus stops is crucial to protecting their right to mobility under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- b) Three of the major hospitals on Oahu are within walking distance of the clinic. This means that if, for whatever reason, we are unable to provide dosing services to them, or they are experiencing another urgent medical issue, they can quickly and independently get help without reliance on calling 911, which uses public money to access emergency services.
- c) The clinic is located within a few blocks of the courthouse, probation offices, and other legal aid outlets. This nearness means that there is less recidivism, or return to incarceration, due to unnecessarily missed appointments, thereby saving city and state money. Additionally, the clinic is able to maintain communication with parole officers, et al, regarding progress and potential hurdles they may be facing now or in the future.
- d) We are nearby all the major social service departments. Our clients rely heavily on welfare options such as SNAP/EBT, social security, disability, child care subsidy, and employment services to cover their necessities and train them up on skills necessary to engage positively in our society.
- e) The clinic is nearby other venues that host other addiction services, such as 12-step and other support groups, and intensive outpatient addiction services. Continuity of care is critical, especially in the first few years of recovery to find new ways to get their needs met and prevent bad habits from returning.
- f) As we saw in the 1992 move, and is reflected by other clinics that have been forced to relocate in other areas of the nation, the clinic stands to lose about 50% of our clients in any move- even if just down the block. I saw evidence of this first hand when I was running the syringe exchange for HHHRC. When we moved the outreach van, usually parked at the corner of River and Kukui St., just a few parking spaces down the block, our clients would often miss us, not having seen us just up the road. This is due to the repetitive and habitual nature that is characteristic in addiction.
- g) Fifty percent is a substantial number of people returning to active addiction. Imagine several hundred people relapsing simultaneously, each returning to behaviors that they used in the past- usually illegal, potentially violent, to get the drugs that they need to prevent the onset of withdrawal symptoms. Removal of the clinic's safe, free alternatives to crime is just a drop in the bucket of social ills possible if this bill passes.

6. Moving the clinic would be too great a financial burden on the clinic owner. When he bought this building nearly 5 years ago, it was at 3% interest rate ???. The going rate for this area is now at 8%. That is more than double, and creates a substantial loss. Renting another space is not an option, as any landlord would be subject to the same social, financial, and now legislative bullying as is being suffered currently by CHAMP. The clinic would be at the mercy of someone unaffiliated to maintain their space. This is highly unlikely, given the amount of pressure put upon CHAMP as it is.
7. If this bill passes, the reality is that the clinic will close, along with its sister clinic in Maui. That means that an untold number of people would be returning to active addiction and all that comes with it. And, as stated earlier, the clinic did not bring the problems here- it came to meet the people where they are at. Removing the clinic will not remove the problem, just one of the solutions. I hardly think that a revival of active addiction, and its attendant crimes against property and person, is what one might call "luxury living".
8. Let's face it- this bill is not about the safety of school children. Nowhere in the bill does it mention anything about safety- only distance. And that is precise to singling out a CHAMP. They think that the clinic is an eyesore and that, by forcing us out, in keeping with their NIMBY ("Not In My Back Yard") stance, they will be able to milk even more money from the bourgeoisie new residents that are willing to pay for downtown "cool" at uptown price points.
9. I have not, in my 15 years in the industry across six countries, seen any wealthy business owner with the same passion and fervor for helping the downtrodden as I have seen in Ayman. Though CHAMP is a for-profit clinic, all services are free for the clients, including pricey urine analysis drug screenings. He does this, not because he is trying to get their vote, or campaign donations, and his wealth is certainly not from these clinics lining his pockets. He does this because it is the right thing to do. Not just for the clients that show up at our door, ravaged by the effects of drugs and life on the streets, trying to find a better way to live- but also for those new residents, the ones that turn their noses up at us - and for the school. Why? Because none among us is too wealthy, too smart, nor too "good" to be affected hell that drug addiction brings.

The wealthy in this area have the option to go to the high-priced doctors operating nearby that offer a month's worth of take-home methadone at a time, with zero oversight, through prescription easily fillable at the pharmacy. But no one is lobbying legislation at them. And why not? Isn't the point of this to protect children from the possibility of access to controlled substances due to drug diversion? Hardly.

Please consider my testimony carefully, and weigh the actual repercussions of closing CHAMP Clinic should this bill pass. There are serious consequences facing this entire zone should services be cut or displaced for this vulnerable population. Do you want to be one of the ones responsible for those grim nightly news stories? Or do you want to go to sleep at night knowing that you are on the right side of history?

Thank you for your time.

Dr. Zube Khan MD

173 S Kukui Street, Honolulu, HI, 96813

2-7-2023

To Whom It May Concern:

Aloha! My name is Dr. Zube Khan and I have been living here in Oahu since 1999. I have 40 years of clinical experience of treating multiple patients in the field of Dermatology as well as Occupational Medicine in Canada and US. Since 2020 I have been working as an Addiction Medicine Physician at CHAMP CLINIC in Honolulu. Therefore, CHAMP clientele has daily access to any or all of the above specialty needs during working hours.

As we are all aware opioid related overdoses and deaths are a public health epidemic that has been curtailed by having access to Methadone treatment clinics. These clinics must be in a centrally placed, well known and established facility run by competent and empathetic staff, who are fully trained in the field of addiction medicine and who follow federally programmed SAMHSA based rules and regulations with a successful but realistic approach for helping those human beings that are stuck in a vicious cycle. Many times these individuals have been prescribed Opiates by licensed physicians. These narcotics can be addicting in nature causing Opioid Use Disorder (OUD ) and subsequent Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome ( OWS). These individuals, due to unusual circumstances may no longer have regular access to the aforementioned prescription opiates. These unfortunate individuals are now dependent on street drugs and their dealers who promote Heroin as well as Fentanyl laced opiates.

In the year 2020 around Covid time I joined the team here at CHAMP Clinic after a long discussion with Dr. Fred Royce, the Medical Director and Mr. El-Dakhakhni, the owner who were anxious to get me on board in order to provide complete and much needed comprehensive treatment for all individuals that were in need of skin care and other general timely medical care. I was motivated to help these individuals in need as well as other surrounding medical facilities that were dealing with the on-going Covid pandemic situation. The goal was to concentrate on HARM REDUCTION. This was mentioned in my initial interview with the owner Mr. Dakhakhni and is now a recurring positive thought.

CHAMP CLINIC is a well-established, strategically placed clinic for over 25 years with quick and easy access to all individuals in need, due to BUS route and Private access roads. The public school " Central Middle School " is facing away with its entrance more than a 1000 feet . There is no interaction of individuals from the school or the clients that come to this clinic. Clients are not allowed to loiter around the clinic. Clinic hours are 6:30AM to 12:30 PM. Security Guards and Surveillance Cameras are in place.

We therefore, humbly request that this Federally approved clinic and its program be allowed to fulfill its goal of HELPING the vulnerable population via HARM REDUCTION as well as timely access to HEALTHCARE by breaking the vicious cycle of HEROIN addiction and allowing a complete path to RECOVERY.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Z. Khan" with a stylized flourish underneath.

Zube Khan MD (Derm,Occ-Med,Addiction -Medicine)

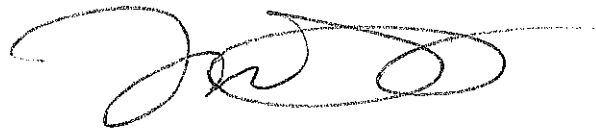
Marie Paishon  
Program Director  
173 S. Kukui St  
Honolulu, HI 96813

February 7, 2023

Being employed at CHAMP Clinic for 21 years; this location is very convenient for our clients. Everything is within walking distance for them such as post office, banks, stores, & the courthouse. Where we can help our clients when they have to appear in court, and need us to speak on their behalf. Or have appointments with their P.O. everything is nearby for us to help them.

Few of our clients used to live/hang out in the park behind the fire station on Pali/Beretania; because of resources that are close by they now have housing and no longer live at the park. And with respect to our neighbors we ensure that our Security person duties includes keeping our client away from the school area, and not loiter around businesses next to our clinic.

Being centrally located the bus stop is just around the corner which is very good especially for clients who travel from the West & Leeward side of the island. Also few of our clients who have to travel from the North Shores , and the windwaed side.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Marie Paishon', written in a cursive style.

CHAMP CLINIC  
173 Kukui St  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-426-4515

2/8/2023

To Whom it may concern:

My name is Natasha Silva and I've been employed at CHAMP Clinic as an intake coordinator and counselor for one year. In this short time, I have seen hundreds of clients walk through our doors. The current location for CHAMP Clinic is important because it services Chinatown and its surrounding areas. This area is home to many of our housed and unhoused clients.

This location is not only a convenient location for them to receive methadone dosing, but the clinic is also located near major bus lines, three area hospitals, courthouses, probation offices, and other social service agencies our clientele must have access to. Moving locations is not an option, as it would displace our clients, and leave them at a disadvantage should they need to access these agencies. Our population also requires routine to keep up with their daily dosing. They do not need a reason to discontinue use or abandon their required dosing maintenance.

CHAMP Clinic continues to uphold measures to ensure the area around the clinic is safe. This includes security cameras around the perimeter of the clinic, as well as having a security guard stationed across the street at the middle school. I have a close friend who is employed at the middle school, who wasn't aware we were located across the street until I informed her. CHAMP Clinic didn't bring problems to the neighborhood, there were already issues present. Our current location is vital for the healing of our stigmatized community members.





CHAMP, INC.  
173 South Kekua Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
(808) 426-4515

To Whom it May Concern,

I have been employed by CHAMP Clinic for over 4 years now. This location is vital to the community as the majority of our clients are centrally located, and we make it easy for them to access services.

All the major bus routes stop within a couple blocks of the clinic. Also, most major medical facilities are within walking distance from CHAMP.

Our clients do not do well with change. If you change our location, after being here for nearly 30 years, it would be a major shock for most of them. Our clients will be lost in this community without us here to help guide them to their appointments, which are centrally located.

We are working hard to make this community a better place for all to share, work, live, and play in. Relocating our clinic would be disastrous for all parties here. Crime would increase.

Our clinic would best serve our community if it is to stay in its location, where it has been for nearly three decade. Change would do more harm than good to this community. We love this community and care for it to the best of our abilities. To change that would be harmful to the people we serve and we are here for the people who need help. So help us help them, by not making big changes to their lives.

Sincerely,

Brian Peroff

*Lab Tech / Receptionist*

*Brian Peroff*

**Bruce Kato**  
Certified Public Accountant  
173 South Kukui Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
(808) 292-1855

February 7, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to inform whatever interested parties out there that I have had my office situated at the above address for well over six years now doing my practice as a Tax Preparer and Financial Advisor. I deal with roughly two hundred individuals and businesses. The majority of my clients are elderly and somewhat affluent. In all of my years here I have never had a client raise an issue about the presence of Champ Inc. on the ground floor of the building. They have expressed that they are reassured of the safety for themselves and their automobiles parked on the street in front of the building due to the presence of the Security Person provided by the Clinic.

I have personally observed the fact that the Security Person hired by the Clinic is in place for all of the hours that the Clinic is servicing patients. His job is to insure that the patients don't loiter or congregate, they are there to dose, see their counselor and then leave the area. He also oversees the patients so that there is no interaction with any non-clinic personnel or any of the school students or staff. It is unfortunate, but true that the Clinic's patients are not the best our society has to offer but the Clinic does it best to insure that there is no negative impact upon our surrounding community by providing the Security Person as well as the Staff's in counseling the patients attempt to instruct them that they must avoid all adverse contact with our neighbors.

As I have stated there is no question in my mind that my clients are safe and secure when visiting my office. If there was ever a doubt in my mind or any incident where a client felt uncomfortable I would seriously consider it. After doing my clients returns for some 27 years now they are more than clients I feel like they are family and I would never want a family member to feel uncomfortable while visiting me.

Very Truly Yours,

Bruce Kato

PaijBritt Nakamura  
1423 Lusitana Street # C  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
808-979-4177

To whom it may concern,

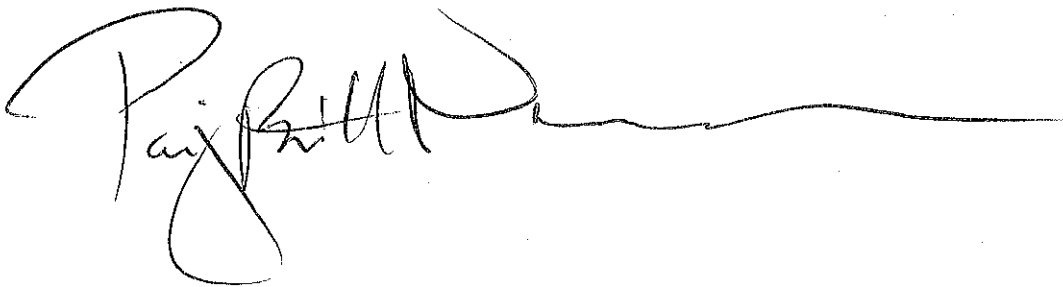
Back in the early 1990s, I was struggling with active addiction. My life had become completely overtaken by drugs; I was despondent and frequently felt suicidal. One day I heard an advertisement for medically assisted treatment on the radio and decided to look into it. That was the beginning of my journey to recovery with the help of Champ clinic. I had lost custody of my two young children at the time but when I got on the clinic and stabilized, Judge Uale returned them to me. My sons father refused to take me to dose in the morning, but I didn't know how to drive. I had no choice but to get in the car and drive myself. I learned how to drive so I could get to the methadone clinic in Kapahulu because there was no nearby bus route to get there easily from my home.

Time went by and I experienced a lot of adversity; relapse, acrimonious divorce, incarceration, serious health issues, homelessness and the overwhelming specter of chronic addiction. I was living under the Kuikini bridge and trying to survive on the streets of Honolulu while strung out on heroin. One day while at I was receiving services at the syringe exchange van, I was offered a scholarship for methadone treatment at Champ clinic. I had no money no insurance nothing but they accepted back into treatment, no judgement. Being homeless and broke on the streets made it unduly hard if I had to go anywhere. So I was so grateful to be able to walk to treatment every morning.

Later on after becoming stable again on the program, I found an affordable apartment in the area that put me in proximity to the clinic, so I would have no reason not to make it there every day by 11 am to take my dose. Consistency is the key to successful methadone maintenance treatment and having a geographically easy to access place to get that treatment from is imperative. Without that access I wouldn't have been able to take that first step and make it there to begin with let alone continue for several years.

On February 6<sup>th</sup> this year I celebrated 11 years of continuous recovery. I have been able to take all those years of adversity and turn them into a viable resource from which I now help others struggling with the same issues. I salute Champ clinic for its service to community and for giving the foundation for my new life.

Sincerely,  
PaijBritt Nakamura

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'PaijBritt Nakamura', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

To Whom it may concern,

My Name is Lane Lee. I am a counselor at Champ Clinic. I have worked for champ for almost 2 yrs. I'm writing this letter in regards to a specific bill that is trying to get passed which would force champ clinic to move and relocate, somewhere probably far and out of the way from its current location.

Basically the bill points to champ clinic being to close to the middle school across the street. It is obvious that certain individuals and organizations believe champ clinic may pose some type of threat or danger. This idea is incorrect. One, the school itself doesn't consider us a danger, and when asked, verbally confirmed, even to the point of not knowing we existed across the street.

Secondly, we have a caring and capable security guard, who literally sits across the street up against the fence separating the school grounds and the city and county sidewalk. For years he has specifically been posted there making sure our clients stay on Champ's side of the street. He's posted there from the time we open to well after we close, periodically patrolling the school side of the sidewalk, making sure our clients are not loitering across the street, and also cleans any rubbish throughout his shift.

Third, my son used to be a student at that middle school between the years of 2017-2018. My schedule permitted me to personally be able to pick up my son from school almost everyday. I say this because for the two years my son attended that specific middle school and daily I would pick him up afterschool, that I myself and including my son, had no idea there was a methadone clinic across the street. There was absolutely no indication that a methadone clinic existed across the street, nor did I ever hear talk of such a one among my fellow parents. Also, I never heard my son and his friends ever mention or show any signs of having any knowledge of such a place across the street. I can honestly say that at no point did my son and I ever feel or experience any type of danger or threat due to the Clinics close proximity.

Lastly, the ones who will suffer the most from this move would be our clients. A large percentage our clients are homeless, living in the surrounding area. They would greatly be affected by no longer being in close proximity to the clinic, having no consistent access to proper transportation, and so would the ability to properly access our much needed services. Also, I personally know that a lot of my clients doctors, Therapists, Psychs, and other important appointments are all located near the clinic, which makes our location valuable and reachable to them. Moving this clinic would cause a shockwave that this community, in my opinion, would feel in a very negative way. Without Champ here, there would be hundreds of opiate addicts left with a very unaccessible way to receive their medication, and so eventually drifting back to the familiar once again, which for them is Heroin and other illicit narcotics. Those said narcotics are obviously not covered by their insurances, unlike the methadone which is, and so turning to crime to fund such purchases of illegal substances. That would set off a chain of events which will undoubtedly cause the crime rate to spike, and that will then pose a real and immediate danger to that specific middle school.

Counselor, Lane Lee  
*Lane Lee*

## CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

My name is George Tevis, and I've been a client of CHAMP Clinic for several years. I'd like CHAMP to stay in its location because of how easy it is to access by bus. I have problems with my back and knees from years of working, so the fact that I can off the bus right by the clinic is very important. Honestly, the possibility that CHAMP might have to move scares me. This isn't just like a regular business that easily put a sign up that says, "Hey, we're moving, check out our new location!". Half of us here are homeless, living in shelters, or been on the streets, and we know this area well. The clinic is one of the things that actually brings hope to a part of the city where everywhere you look, can seem full of despair. We come to the clinic, we get our medication, meet with our counselors when needed, and we go on with our day. Coming here to the CHAMP Clinic on Kukui is a privilege that I'm truly grateful for, depend on, and hopefully can continue to come to for as long as I need to.

Madelyn Barr  
February 7, 2023

### CHAMP Clinic Must Stay Where It Is

CHAMP Clinic is a SAMHSA and CARF-certified healthcare facility in Downtown Honolulu. CHAMP Clinic services nearly 200 people every day focusing on their substance abuse disorder needs as well as their overall physical and mental health.

Methadone is an evidence-based FDA-approved medication to treat Opiate Use Disorder (OUD). It has been used in the U.S. since the 1970s and is considered the 'gold standard' of opiate abuse treatment. Methadone does not get a person high - instead, the medication works to: 1) block the euphoric effects of opioids, 2) relieve cravings, 3) normalize brain chemistry, and 4) normalize physical functions without withdrawal effects. Taking methadone for opioid addiction is the same as taking medication for any other chronic disease like diabetes or asthma. When used according to a doctor's instructions, methadone is safe and effective, and will not create a new addiction.

Patients enrolled in Methadone Maintenance Treatment (MMT) have a 50% less chance of dying compared to abstinence-based models. Additionally, making methadone accessible reduces HIV risk by 54% among people with OUD. Participation in methadone maintenance treatment is also highly protective against hepatitis C. Methadone clinics also decrease the prevalence of crime in that area. A study published in the Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs found that crime was significantly higher around liquor stores and corner stores than near methadone clinics (Fakunle & Milam, n.d.). Crime is reduced by 38% in areas near methadone clinics (Fakunle & Milam, n.d.). Additionally, 85% of drug users who received MMT decreased drug-related crime (Fakunle & Milam, n.d.). Methadone is also associated with a 50% lower rate of hospitalization (Russolillo, 2019).

Social stigma is the disapproval of, or discrimination against, an individual or group based on perceived characteristics that serve to distinguish them from other members of a society. Unfortunately, people with OUD face a significant amount of stigma and discrimination against them, which flows into where they decide to seek treatment. It is so unfortunate that this stigma still exists in 2023. People with OUD, and the facilities that treat them, should not be attacked and ostracized, but rather thanked and appreciated for the work they do in the community. By CHAMP Clinic operating in the Downtown Honolulu community, a vast majority of its residents with OUD are able to receive the treatment they so desperately need. It is imperative that CHAMP Clinic stays in its current location and is not forced to move as its current location is central with easy access to all major freeways and bus routes as well as being in walking distance to where many of its houseless clients stay. Easy access to a treatment facility is imperative for CHAMP's houseless individuals who make up a majority of CHAMP's clientele. If CHAMP Clinic were forced to move, these houseless individuals would have a difficult time getting transportation to the clinic as many of them walk to the clinic every day. By having CHAMP Clinic forced to move locations, a majority of their clients would not be able to

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2728000#:~:text=For%20hospital%20admissions%20due%20to,hospital%20admissions%20per%20100%20PYs.>

Rita Vande Berghe


To whom it may concern,

Champ Clinic is located in the middle downtown Honolulu, especially for drug addicts and homeless population. Since we have numerous parks surrounding us, it is very easy for anyone to walk to. Buses are accessible for anyone who is in need since they can be let off a block away from the clinic no matter where on the island they are coming from.

Also, housing assistance, welfare, Social Security, job training programs, Disability Rights Center, Legal Aid, Queens intensive outpatient services for dual diagnosed individuals, Adult Probation and Parole, Harm Reduction, the major behavioral health services and more that our clients depend on have their offices downtown which makes it easier on our clients to make it to their appointments. Many of our clients live in the area which makes life easier all around because of the clinics central location.

We want our people to live in a community where they feel secure, while at the same time assist them to reduce the harms in their lives which in turn reduces the harms in the community.

Sincerely,

  
Rita Vande Bergh

-substance abuse counselor, 8 years at Champ Clinics



02/09/2022

To: Whom it may concern  
From: HaneefBilal Salahuddin-Abdul Shafiq  
RE: CHAMP CLINIC LOCATION

Dear:

**In retrospect, I've been employed at CHAMP for over 30 years and we have been at 173 Kukui Street for 28 years. And management has improved the clinic via more staffing, security guard, remodeled the building, etc. Our patients have not caused any problems, a school is located across from us and we had no issues with the school or students. Our patients stay away from the area, which is mandated by CHAMP's owner, any violations will result in patient being discharged.**

**We have served the community by treating addicts that would be engaging in criminal activities if they weren't being treated for their addiction via CHAMP. Most of our patients are productive, business owners, professionals, laborers, etc.**

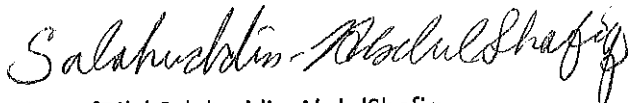
**Our location better serves our patients because we are centrally located on the bus line, and in the city where patients can come for treatment and return to work etc. via bus, cab, or walking.**

**Otherwise, if a location is difficult for them to attend they will return to street drugs and commit crimes, etc. I'm a former prison guard and currently psych social worker for the Women's prison-23 years. And I can safely say, our patients follow clinic rules-have not caused any harm to the community, in fact we have treated and continue to treat people who would otherwise be incarcerated, sick, or dead. Via treatment most of them are able to live normal lives, and others we are assisting with establishing a positive life. Removing CHAMP from current location will have a detrimental effect on the community**

**Our patients are referred to psychologists/psychiatrists, which are located few blocks from the clinic, so they able to dose and walk a few blocks to their therapists. Most would never make their appointments if they had to travel to another location.**

For further information please contact me at the following number: 808 722 4678.

Sincerely,



HaneefBilal Salahuddin-AbdulShafiq

MA, Sociology

---

Madelyn Barr  
February 7, 2023

### CHAMP Clinic Must Stay Where It Is

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access treatment - undoubtedly increasing their risk and chance of overdosing and dying. Moving CHAMP Clinic could easily cause a burden to our houseless community that is currently seeking help for their OUD. Forcing CHAMP Clinic to move locations will also increase admissions to the hospital and utilizations of emergency services (ie. ambulances, etc.). Healthcare is a resource Hawaii is already lacking in a multitude of areas, and this will only increase resource expenditure in this area when these resources could go to more urgent and critical matters. Removing CHAMP Clinic from its current location could possibly correlate to an increase in crime (including in school areas). Having CHAMP Clinic operate where it currently is may potentially reduce crime around schools.

Lastly, CHAMP Clinic has given me my life back. I am forever indebted to this facility for how much they have helped me get my life back on track. Not only was I able to get clean, I was able to go back to doing my master's and as of now, I only have one class left to finish. Currently, I commute from Kaneohe to CHAMP Clinic every day. Because CHAMP Clinic is right off the Pali Highway (and in such a central location), it allows me to receive the treatment I desperately need. If CHAMP were to move, this would undoubtedly affect me as well as the rest of the patients here at CHAMP.

2415  
MB

#### References

Fakunle, D., & Milam, A. (n.d.). *Not in my back yard: A comparative analysis of crime around publicly ...* Journals of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs. Retrieved February 8, 2023, from <https://www.jsad.com/doi/full/10.15288/jsad.2016.77.17>

Russolillo, A. (2019, March 15). *Methadone treatment and substance-related admissions in a population with criminal convictions*. JAMA Network Open. Retrieved February 7, 2023, from

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2728000#:~:text=For%20hospital%20admissions%20due%20to,hospital%20admissions%20per%20100%20PYs.>



Aisha Esker <aishachamphon@gmail.com>

**Fwd: CHAMP Clinic**

Mohamed Ayman El-Dakhakhni  
<aymand5000@gmail.com>  
To: Aisha Esker <aishachamphon@gmail.com>

Wed, Feb 8, 2023  
at 7:54 PM

Another one  
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Johnny Hawkins <johnnyhawkins@yahoo.com>  
**Date:** February 8, 2023 at 7:47:02 PM HST  
**To:** aymand5000@gmail.com  
**Subject:** CHAMP Clinic  
**Reply-To:** "johnnyhawkins@yahoo.com"  
<johnnyhawkins@yahoo.com>

From: Johnny Hawkins  
98-1284 B Hooiki Plc  
Pearl City, HI 96782

To: Whom It May Concern

It has come to my attention that CHAMP Clinic is being asked to relocate. As a former Counselor and Administrator for the clinic from 1996-2001, I respectfully have some comments and concerns.

I am over 32 years clean and sober from being a former addict and alcoholic. I worked at the clinic in order to help others get through what I had myself gone through, and I indeed wanted to make

meaningful contributions to society. Indeed we helped so many individuals. I physically helped them move into the current location. The clinic is perfectly placed to aid so many individuals in need from that exact same downtown and surrounding areas. We were good neighbors in that community and never received complaints from the nearby school. I have remained in touch because of the mentorship I received from the staff and management. I am aware that security guards have remained outside of the clinic to facilitate proper community relations for the past approximate 20 years.

I therefore request that the clinic remain in place as such. I have a business of my own for the past 27 years and I am a man of faith. I ask you, why not let CHAMP Clinic remain and serve? My phone number is 808-256-0713. If you would like to authenticate or have questions, please call.

Aloha.



Johnny Hawkins

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android



February 8, 2023

In re, Letter in Support of 173 S. Kukui St (Champ Clinic/Ayman El-Dakhakhni)

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Mr. Ayman El-Dakhakhni and his commercial property located at 173 S. Kukui Street (dba Champ Clinic).

I have known Mr. El-Dakhakhni for many years. In recent years I have been involved in several projects (Architectural Design & Construction) with him. Some of those projects involved design work and renovations/upgrades at 173 S. Kukui, the location of Champ Clinic which occupies the lower level.

I can tell you this with absolute certainty. Mr. El-Dakhakhni goes to great measures to ensure the security of his property and the surrounding properties, especially as it pertains to the Patients of Champ Clinic. I have visited the site dozens of times in the last few years, and not once – not a single time – have I encountered any issues with the Champ Clinic Patients that utilize the clinic. Not once has a Patient in the vicinity asked for a cigarette (for example), nor attempted to engage me, harass me, let alone present a threat. In fact, when I usually arrive and there may be a few Patients awaiting their appointment outside, they even move out of the way. I can say that none of my associates (ie contractors, inspectors, etc) ever experienced an issue there. Quite frankly, I was personally surprised at how well managed the security of the property, it's patients, and it's passersby.

Mr. El-Dakhakhni always has at least one or two security personnel who keep close eye on the goings on at 173 S. Kukui, also ensuring other members of the public are not bothered. He does not allow the Patients to congregate/loiter across the street (along the fence separating Central Intermediate School from the sidewalk on Kukui St. He also makes sure Patients don't park and "camp" around the location.

The same *cannot* be said for *most* other random locations throughout downtown Honolulu. I am often approached or accosted in different parts of downtown, Kakaako, Chinatown at random locations by homeless et al.

(continued on next page)



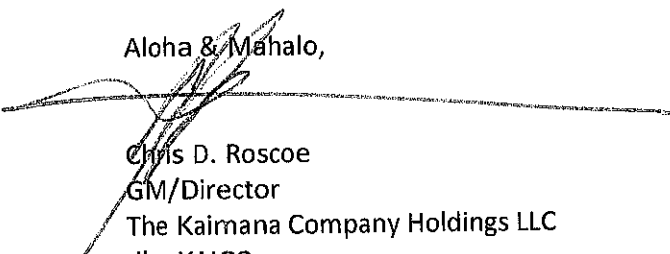
Champ Clinic on the other hand is a necessary and important medical treatment center for those with disabilities (substance abuse) that is well managed and secure. It is also vital to helping to keep crime *down* by treating it's Patients. It has been in that location for more than two decades and is working, with no apparent danger to the public nor school students and staff across the street.

It should also be mentioned that Mr. El-Dakhakhni also spent a great deal of money, effort, and time upgrading the premises, both cosmetically and otherwise. He planted flowers and grass out front, painted the building, and revitalized the site. He cares about 173 S. Kukui Street, he cares about his Patients and Staff, and he cares about the neighborhood and its people.

I urge you *not* to pursue any actions that would require the closure and/or relocation of Champ Clinic and the offices at 173 S. Kukui Street.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (808) 589-8717 or [cdr@kaimanacompany.com](mailto:cdr@kaimanacompany.com). I would be happy to testify and/or speak on behalf of my support for Mr. El-Dakhakhni should that be requested.

Aloha & Mahalo,



Chris D. Roscoe  
GM/Director  
The Kaimana Company Holdings LLC  
dba KAICO



## To Whom It May Concern:

This testimony is in regards to HB 378. Some key changes were made to this bill which seem to specifically target our business. We are the only methadone clinic within 750ft from a school and as such our Honolulu clinic alone would be targeted by this bill and action. The 750ft law was originally put into place for Drug Dealers not for recovery clinics. However, it seems this new bill directly impedes the operation of our rehabilitation center.

To begin, our Methadone clinic has been in operation for the past 30 years, and at this location for the past 28 years. Our facility has helped over 3000 clients on their way to recovery. We are licensed and certified by the State of Hawaii and CARF and we are heavily regulated by the DEA. We are in good standing and have been so for the past 30 years.

Bill HB378 seems to specifically target CHAMP Clinic Honolulu due to its location. As stated earlier we have been in operation in good standing for the past 30 years.

1. This Bill seems very strange to us because it proposes that we move within 3 years and then a committee will decide the impact on the community. This is a classic case of shoot then aim. It's like saying let's hang this person and then afterwards hold a trial to see if they are guilty or not. If we take this approach, it will be near impossible to reverse this bill, because someone needs to sponsor a new bill and get the votes, and we all know this won't happen and the damage would be done to the community and nearly 300 clients. Instead we need to put this bill on hold. We agree with having a committee and then after the committee makes recommendations a bill should be proposed not passed before any discussion has taken place.
2. We would also like to bring to the attention of the committee that this bill is against federal law as Methadone Clinics are protected from discriminatory zoning under the ADA. I would like to remind the committee that every time this has gone to court in other states (New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, Texas, Maryland etc.) the federal court sided with the methadone clinic against discriminatory zoning and prohibition of federally protected citizens from receiving treatment. People with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) have a disability and they are protected from discrimination by the American Disability Act ADA. They must be allowed to take their medication in a federally approved facility which is accessible to them. Passing this law would be in violation of the American Disability Act. We are protected and our clients are protected by the Federal Government.
3. For the past 28 years there have been no documented cases of clients interacting with schools or students in the vicinity or on school grounds.

4. The clinic is in operation from 6:30AM to 12:30AM and clients are monitored by a security guard. We are only open 12 hours concurrently with school hours.
5. We have installed 24 Hr surveillance cameras which are independently monitored. The sidewalk in front of and on the side of the clinic as well as the school side walk are monitored with cameras that record and maintain footage for 90 days at a time. They have been in position for the last 15 years.
6. We have a security guard that monitors the sidewalk in front of the building as well as across the street including the school sidewalk. He is sitting on the school sidewalk. No client is allowed to loiter around the building, across the street, or near the school. The security guard sitting on the school sidewalk does not allow any of our clients to loiter or stand on the sidewalk. This policy has been maintained for the last 15 years.
7. Patients dose at the clinic under the supervision of a doctor and a nurse. None of our patients are allowed take home doses unless they demonstrate clean U/A's for at least six months. This is strictly regulated by the DEA.
8. The take home doses are in clear liquid form in small sealed bottles. Liquid doses make it much harder to sell to a second party unlike some physician offices that might prescribe a 30 day dose in pill form which are much more easily sold on the black market.
9. Our location is of utmost importance as we are conveniently located amid all major bus lines. We are within 2 blocks of major hospitals and government assistance facilities. It is extremely important for us to maintain this location for the convenience and ease of access for our clients.
10. Many of our clients are disabled and require easy access from bus service lines.
11. It is our belief that removal of our clinic from this location would make it difficult for our clients to receive recovery services. This would force them back onto the streets rather than remaining in treatment.
12. Forcing the clinic to move its location would cause a huge financial hardship for our business which could prohibit our business from existing. We believe that we should be granted a grandfathered position.
13. In addition, if the clinic were to be moved, it would cause great hardship to the business. I would like to bring to the attention of the committee that we own our clinic which we bought five years ago at 3%. If we were to purchase another building we would be exposed to the high price of current interest rates which is approximately 8% for commercial properties. If we were to rent, it would be nearly impossible to find a lease or a landlord who will not be pressured to move us. In the first four years on Oahu, we had to move four times due to pressure from landlords. And in Maui in the first three years we had to move three times, due to pressure from the landlords. This put tremendous pressure on us and our clients, but to keep peace we were forced to move.

14. It is our opinion that major development occurring in the surrounding area may be influencing policy to specifically target and remove our clinic because they feel it might lower property values. It seems to be a case of "not in my neighborhood" when it comes to substance abuse rehabilitation. In the past, the outskirts of downtown Honolulu remained underdeveloped. We built our business in this area to serve the underprivileged who were neglected for so many years. We have operated successfully for the past 26 years serving the people of this community. In recent years, big business seeking to install luxury condominiums, have specifically targeted our business because it does not fit in with their vision of luxury living. If big business gets its way, our clients, the silent underprivileged, would suffer and they would be the one to pay the price. We are their voice and we will fight to have their needs met. We are not in business to satisfy the concerns of luxury condo owners. We seek to help the underprivileged citizens who need a helping hand on their path to recovery.

We would like to humbly submit this testimony to the House in regards to our opposition of bill HB378 as we feel this bill specifically targets our business and clients receiving substance abuse rehabilitation services.

Thank you

Mohamed El-Dakhakhni

President Champ Inc.

# CHAMPCLINICS™

*We're here for you, because we're here with you.*

Dear Senate Committee members,

My name is Brian Peroff, and I have been the office manager at Champ Clinic for the last 3 years. This location is vital to the community as the majority of our clients are centrally located, and we make it easy for them to access services. The major bus routes stop within a couple blocks of the clinic. Also, most major medical facilities are within walking distance from CHAMP. Our clients do not do well with change. If you change our location, after being here for nearly 30 years, it would be a major shock for most of them. Our clients will be lost in this community without us here to help guide them to their appointments, which are centrally located. We are working hard to make this community a better place for all to share, work, live, and play in. Relocating our clinic would be disastrous for all parties here. Crime would increase. Our clinic would best serve our community if it is to stay in its location, where it has been for nearly three decades. Change would do more harm than good to this community. We love this community and care for it to the best of our abilities. To change that would be harmful to the people we serve and we are here for the people who need help. So help us help them, by not making big changes to their lives.

Sincerely,

*Brian Peroff*

Office Manager, Champ Clinic

**HB-378-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/10/2023 6:30:26 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/13/2023 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Aisha Esker	Testifying for Champ Inc	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

**Aisha Esker MA**

**Manager CHAMP Inc.**

**173 S Kukui St.**

**Honolulu, HI, 96813**

**February, 8, 2023**

**To Whom It May Concern:**

**My name is Aisha Esker, I was hired as office manager at CHAMP Inc. approximately two years ago. A few days ago, Mr. Eldakhakhni requested that I do a survey of the surrounding community. We regularly survey the surrounding community in terms of suggestions and improvements we can make. I called Central Middle School to leave a message for the Vice Principal Jon Hamilton, to ask if he had any suggestions for us. Although, I have not received a direct reply from him (as of this moment, two days later I have received no response), the administrative assistant Joel, was very helpful. He was not familiar with our business and did not know we existed, but he said as far as he knows the school has no suggestions for us to improve services. I told him that he probably wasn't aware of us because we open before school hours begin (three days out of the work week) and are closed before school lets out in the afternoon, therefore he probably never noticed us because we have so few coinciding hours. I mentioned this to Mr. Eldakhakhni, and he informed me that this business has been at this location for 28 years and in that time, there have been no formal complaints to him or the previous office manager; no complaints from the school, its attendants or any surrounding business or resident.**

**Over the past two years, I have overseen many activities at CHAMP Clinic. I have gotten to know the staff and clientele quite well. My work day starts early in the morning on some days and I am often here past closing time. We have an excellent security guard who monitors the perimeter, and I have never had an issue with any clients who attend the clinic. In the entire time that I have worked here, I have never gotten a formal complaint from any business, resident or school attendant in regard to any client who participates in**

**the program. Nor have I gotten any formal complaint about our business being in this location. Quite the contrary, I have gotten many comments and compliments about the good work we do in the community and how our being at this location has saved people's lives.**

**In addition to this Here at CHAMP we take great pride in the work that we do and service we provide to the community. Not only do we provide services to a population of people protected by the American Disability Act who are suffering from Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) but we are centrally located which enables access for the entire Island. As I am sure people are becoming more and more aware, the opioid epidemic is widespread in the United States and it has hit Hawaii with tragic results. People suffering from OUD need help and services. They must have access to those services at a central location. We are located in the heart of a community ravaged by drug abuse, but the job of this clinic is to provide a way out of that viscous cycle. If help is not provided in an easily accessible location then these people have no options to seek treatment. We provide that helping hand, and I am proud to be of service and work at an establishment that takes its responsibility to the community and its residents so seriously.**

**Thank you,**

**Aisha Esker**

**Manager CHAMP Inc.**

# CHAMP CLINICS™

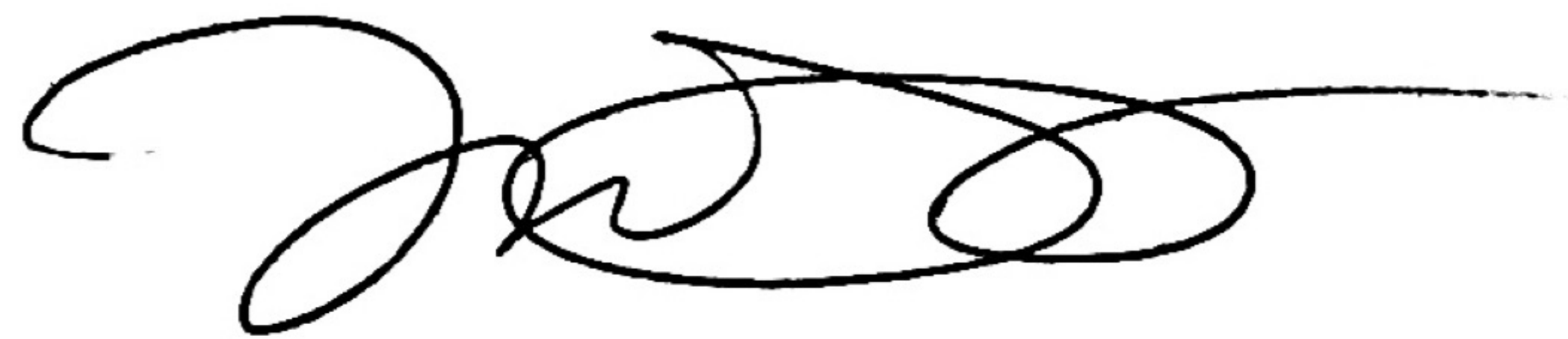
*We're here for you, because we're here with you.*

February 7, 2023

Being employed at CHAMP Clinic for 21 years; this location is very convenient for our clients. Everything is within walking distance for them such as post office, banks, stores, & the courthouse. Where we can help our clients when they have to appear in court, and need us to speak on their behalf. Or have appointments with their P.O. everything is nearby for us to help them.

Few of our clients used to live/hang out in the park behind the fire station on Pali/Beretania; because of resources that are close by they now have housing and no longer live at the park. And with respect to our neighbors we ensure that our Security person duties includes keeping our client away from the school area, and not loiter around businesses next to our clinic.

Being centrally located the bus stop is just around the corner which is very good especially for clients who travel from the West & Leeward side of the island. Also few of our clients who have to travel from the North Shores , and the windwaed side.



Marie Paishon  
Program Director  
CHAMP Clinic

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To whom it may concern,

Back in the early 1990s, I was struggling with active addiction. My life had become completely overtaken by drugs; I was despondent and frequently felt suicidal. One day I heard an advertisement for medically assisted treatment on the radio and decided to look into it. That was the beginning of my journey to recovery with the help of Champ clinic. I had lost custody of my two young children at the time but when I got on the clinic and stabilized, Judge Uale returned them to me, My sons father refused to take me to dose in the morning, but I didn't know how to drive. I had no choice but to get in the car and drive myself. I learned how to drive so I could get to the methadone clinic in Kapahulu because there was no nearby bus route to get there easily from my home

Time went by and I experienced a lot of adversity; relapse, acrimonious divorce, incarceration, serious health issues, homelessness and the overwhelming specter of chronic addiction. I was living under the Kuikini bridge and trying to survive on the streets of Honolulu while strung out on heroin. One day while at I was receiving services at the syringe exchange van, I was offered a scholarship for methadone treatment at Champ clinic. I had no money no insurance nothing but they accepted back into treatment, no judgement. Being homeless and broke on the streets made it unduly hard if I had to go anywhere. So I was so grateful to be able to walk to treatment every morning.

Later on after becoming stable again on the program, I found an affordable apartment in the area that put me in proximity to the clinic, so I would have no reason not to make it there every day by 11 am to take my dose. Consistency is the key to successful methadone maintenance treatment and having a geographically easy to access place to get that treatment from is imperative. Without that access I wouldn't have been able to take that first step and make it there to begin with let alone continue for several years.

On February 6<sup>th</sup> this year I celebrated 11 years of continuous recovery. I have been able to take all those years of adversity and turn them into a viable resource from which I now help others struggling with the same issues. I salute Champ clinic for its service to community and for giving the foundation for my new life.

Sincerely,  
PaijBritt Nakamura



**HB-378-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2023 8:44:53 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/13/2023 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and HHS Committee Members,

**I write in strong opposition to HB378 HD2**, which would require methadone clinics in Hawai'i to only be able to provide services "contingent upon its location being at least 750 feet away from a school".

As a public health professional and concerned citizen, this bill does not take into account the impact on existing methadone clinics that may already be in such locations. With only 4 methadone clinic sites statewide, this bill would effectively reduce access to evidence-based and necessary care. As the opioid epidemic has now evolved into a poly-drug use crisis, we cannot afford to reduce the number of resources to manage substance use among our community members. Furthermore, less access to stable substance treatment will lead to more chaotic substance use, which can easily lead to increases in HIV and hepatitis C outbreaks.

For the sake of our community's health, I urge you not to pass this bill.

With thanks,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)