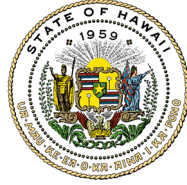


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



KENNETH S. HARA  
MAJOR GENERAL  
ADJUTANT GENERAL  
DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT

JAMES DS. BARROS  
ADMINISTRATOR  
HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
AGENCY

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
**KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA**  
**HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**  
4204 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816-4495

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 1018  
RELATING TO EMERGENCY POWERS

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON **PUBLIC SAFETY AND INTRAGOVERNMENTAL  
AND MILITARY AFFAIRS**

BY

JAMES DS. BARROS  
ADMINISTRATOR  
HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

FEBRUARY 2, 2023

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Elefante, and members of the committee:

I am James Barros, Administrator of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA).

HI-EMA provides written testimony to **SUPPORT** SB1018.

This measure would require the Governor to ensure continued operation of medical facilities upon declaration of a state of emergency and during times of a health or pandemic emergency; allows hospitals to suspend elective surgeries during a period of emergency to address bed capacity; and make other changes.

Hawaii's geographic isolation imposes high demands on the local health care system when an emergency occurs. The COVID-19 incident illustrated the importance of maintaining adequate capacity in Hawaii's healthcare system during an emergency, whether it is a pandemic or some other incident with the potential to cause casualties who would need medical care.

SB1018 would increase the flexibility of the healthcare system during emergencies, and we respectfully ask the committee to support it.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

James Barros: [james.barros@hawaii.gov](mailto:james.barros@hawaii.gov); 808-733-4300



**February 3, 2023 at 3:00 pm**  
**Conference Room 225**

**Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs**

To: Chair Glenn Wakai  
Vice Chair Brandon J.C. Elefante

From: Paige Heckathorn Choy  
Associate Vice President, Government Affairs  
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Submitting Comments**  
**SB 1018, Relating to Emergency Powers**

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), established in 1939, serves as the leading voice of healthcare on behalf of 170 member organizations who represent almost every aspect of the health care continuum in Hawaii. Members include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities and durable medical equipment suppliers. In addition to providing access to appropriate, affordable, high-quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 30,000 people statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **comments** on this measure. Specifically, our members are concerned with the broad, yet unspecified, authority that would be afforded to the governor in any future emergency, including a pandemic. During the height of the COVID pandemic, hospitals, nursing homes, and other medical facilities worked extensively with both federal and state officials to ensure the continuation of essential services. We appreciated that there was ample flexibility to respond to frequently-changing conditions, and that local, state, and federal officials at the executive and legislative levels were supportive of requests to ensure that residents had access to needed services. For example, the Department of Health and the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency were instrumental in securing federal funding for surge staffing during the height of the delta and omicron surges.

Hawaii fared far better than other states in our infection and death rates, and stands as one of the highest-vaccinated populations in the country. This was achieved through incredible cooperation between public and private entities to ensure continuation of services without requiring additional regulations. Further, we would note that hospitals had the authority to suspend elective surgeries to address any capacity issues and did so when it was necessary to ensure that there were enough resources and beds available.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



## THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEM

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To: The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair  
The Honorable Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair  
Members, Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental Affairs

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

Date: February 3, 2023

Re: Testimony re: SB1018

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The Queen's Health System (Queen's) is a nonprofit corporation that provides expanded health care capabilities to the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin. Since the founding of the first Queen's hospital in 1859 by Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV, it has been our mission to provide quality health care services in perpetuity for Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i. Over the years, the organization has grown to four hospitals, and more than 10,000 affiliated physicians, caregivers, and dedicated medical staff statewide. As the preeminent health care system in Hawai'i, Queen's strives to provide superior patient care that is constantly advancing through education and research.

Queen's appreciates the opportunity to provide comments with concerns on SB1018, relating to emergency powers. We would appreciate clarification on Section 1, (a) (1) of the bill providing the Governor power to regulate public and private medical facilities during a declared state or local emergency. We have concerns regarding the exercising of such powers, circumstances in which they would be utilized, and the duration.

During a declared emergency, Queen's would normally activate our Hospital Incident Command System protocols and stand-up operations to ensure the continued operation of services within our facilities. Our Hospital Incident Command System allows Queen's to streamline emergency management response and recovery capabilities for both unplanned and planned events.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have worked closely and collaboratively with federal, state and local government to ensure medical services were not interrupted and community confidence in our healthcare system remained strong and trusted. As such, we believe this bill to be unnecessary; the intent of the measure is better applied via emergency proclamation rather than statute.

Queen's appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

*The mission of The Queen's Health System is to fulfill the intent of Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV to provide in perpetuity quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i.*

**SB-1018**

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 8:38:05 PM

Testimony for PSM on 2/3/2023 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is not a Communist State all Communist should be Charged and sent to Gitmo!!!!