

**LATE**

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

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

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**  
Wednesday, February 22, 2023  
9:30 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference  
**In Support of**  
**S.B. No. 1454, SD1, Relating to Psilocybin**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the committee:

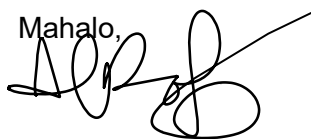
The Office of the Wellness and Resilience (OWR) in the Governor's Office **SUPPORTS** S.B. No. 1454, SD1 Relating to Psilocybin.

Established through Act 291, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022, OWR will address barriers and build wellness and resilience through trauma-informed, strengths-based strategies and support agencies in their efforts to address trauma-informed care and move toward a collaborative, shared purpose of collective system reform.

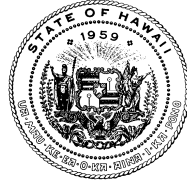
Research being conducted on use of psilocybin and psilocybin-based products in treating mental health disorders caused by traumatic experiences, specifically depression, have suggested substantial antidepressant effects.

As negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to show up in our daily lives, promising interventions for mental health disorders should be included in conversations relating to trauma. To make informed decisions on how we should address and resource attention on complex social issues like mental health disorders and trauma, research needs to be examined. The OWR supports the purpose of SB1454, SD1 to establish a working group to provide recommendations on their findings on the potential benefits of the therapeutic use of psilocybin.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

Mahalo,  


Tia L R Hartsock, MSW, MSCJA  
Executive Director, Office of Wellness & Resilience  
Office of the Governor



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

**LATE**

**Testimony COMMENTING on SB1454 SD1  
RELATING TO PSILOCYBIN.**

SEN. DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date: January 30, 2023

Room Number: 225

1 **Fiscal Implications:** N/A.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health respectfully recommends that a working  
3 group convened to produce research and findings regarding psilocybin as treatment for mental  
4 health conditions be so requested as a Concurrent Resolution. This will greatly decrease the  
5 administrative buren and likely accelerate the productivity of the working group.

6 The Executive Branch has a long-standing practice of responsiveness to Concurrent Resolutions  
7 as an expression of the will of Legislature, and will recognize as such as related to psilocybin.

8 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

9 **Offered Amendments:** N/A.

10

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2023 8:48:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
TY Cheng	Testifying for Aloha Green Holdings Inc.	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Green Apothecary is one of the the eight licensed medical cannabis dispensaries in Hawaii. We SUPPORT the intent of this bill to explore the potential benefits of psilocybin. We hope more research is conducted on all plant-based medicines.



**Testimony in Support of the Psilocybin Working Group ([SB1454](#) / [HB1337](#))**  
Committee Hearing | 2023 Legislative Session

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ashley Lukens. For the past 17 years, I have worked as a community organizer and advocate in Hawaii. I received my PhD in Political Science from UH Manoa in 2013. Today, I am writing in strong support of **SB 1454**, a bill which begins an important conversation around therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawaii. For the past 3 years you have advanced similar measures out of this committee and I'm hoping you do so again today.

In 2017, I was diagnosed with brain cancer. Because brain cancer is treatable but not curable, I was faced very immediately with the prospect of my own early death. As a 36 year old single mother to a then 9 year old little girl, you can imagine the amount of stress a diagnosis like this caused. Luckily, having read many of the popular books like Michael Pollan's *How to Change your Mind*, I was familiar with the research on psilocybin assisted treatment for end of life anxiety and chose to experience first hand the power of this plant medicine in reducing the negative effects of the stress related to a cancer diagnosis. I am not alone in this experience.

Research from major institutions around like Johns Hopkins, UCLA, has shown psilocybin to be a promising clinical treatment tool for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. As a result, psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin their Breakthrough Therapy designation for treatment-resistant depression.

The relationship between stress and cancer is clear; we know that stress in the body prevents it from healing. So, as someone who needs to heal, reducing my stress around my diagnosis has been instrumental in my maintaining my health and healing. Not all patients have the means to access legal psilocybin. Regulations in place in the United States require that if you want to seek access to it you either participate in a limited clinical trial or you travel abroad to places where you can access this medicine legally. Traveling abroad can complicate the patient's experience

because not all legal access is in a clinical setting, something the research shows us is critical for impact.

As a trained political scientist, I can also confirm that Hawaii is a part of a national movement for expanding safe legal access to psilocybin. Oregon has just launched its Oregon Psilocybin Services with the State's Oregon Health Authority, which licenses & regulates psilocybin for therapeutic use. And Colorado voters just voted to approve the decriminalization and legal therapeutic use of psilocybin and other psychedelics. Many expect California, Vermont, Washington and New York to follow suit. [Decriminalization of psilocybin](#) and other psychedelics has already been approved in at least 15 counties across 5 states, including California, Massachusetts, Michigan, Washington, and Washington D.C.

We also know that Federal re-listing of psilocybin is coming in the next 3 years, particularly due to its efficacy in treating treatment-resistant depression. Given this reality, as a State, we need to be prepared to create supportive frameworks for practitioners to be able to provide these medicines to patients like myself. This taskforce enables that to happen. Let's be the leaders and support our communities and their mental health. Everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from this transformative medical break-through. I co-founded Clarity Project because we believe Hawai'i can be a safe, healing refuge for cancer patients like myself.

Thank you for taking the time to hear this important bill. I hope that you will pass this measure out of committee to continue this conversation.

Ashley Lukens, PhD  
Founder, Clarity Project  
Principal Consultant, Ashley Lukens Consulting Inc  
[bossy@ashleylukens.com](mailto:bossy@ashleylukens.com)

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 10:57:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
LeAnn Neilson	Testifying for Aloha Integrative Mental Health	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,**

**My name is LeAnn Neilson, I am a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner living on Big Island and providing mental health care to the residents of Hawaii through my company, Aloha Integrative Mental Health. I am writing in strong support SB1454, which will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group.**

**Recently we had two suicides in Hawaii that caught my attention and has increased my desire to find more ways to help end the suffering of others. I don't know if these individuals sought out mental health care prior to ending their lives, but I can tell you the issues I encounter when trying to provide care to people suffering from mental illness.**

**The treatment options I have available are limited, statistically take several medication trials, and come with multiple side effects that are difficult to navigate and live with. There are no medications currently able to be prescribed that can claim the healing and permanent improvement that the research of psychedelic treatment currently shows.**

**I can understand the caution taken when considering expanding access to psilocybin, MDMA or other psychedelic therapy. What I want to convey to you is that I and many of my counterparts who would be on the front lines of treatment will engage in safe, therapeutic delivery of care. We will participate in research, follow guidelines, and seek fervently to improve the mental health of those we treat. The opportunity to bring psychedelic therapy into practice with those patients who do not respond to traditional medication management is one I believe will save lives. Psychedelic therapy has the potential to bring a level of healing that I have not been able to offer through traditional methods and mean the difference between surviving misery and living an engaged life with**

**purpose. The effects of which will positively impact all of our lives, our neighborhoods, and our families.**

**Researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring plant-based medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses.**

**Major research and academic institutions around the world has shown psilocybin to be a promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatment for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety, especially when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin their Breakthrough Therapy designation twice for treatment-resistant depression.**

**Citing this research, initiatives in favor of therapeutic psilocybin are occurring nationwide, including Oregon's new therapeutic psilocybin program, which just launched this year, along with Colorado recently decriminalizing and partially legalizing psilocybin, in addition to counties across the nation decriminalizing psilocybin and other similar psychedelics.**

**With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to therapeutic psilocybin. Please support this measure.**

**Mahalo,**

**LeAnn Neilsonxz**



*Psychiatry, Mental Health and Wellness  
1401 S. Beretania St. Suite 450  
Honolulu, HI, 96814*

2-20-2023

I am a board certified psychiatrist in Honolulu, testifying in support of:

**SB1531 re. Beneficial Treatments Advisory Council  
SB1454 Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group**

My expertise is in suicide risk, the additivity of substances, and in the treatment of mental health disorders. I treat suicidal or depressed people who have failed medications.

They clamor for official info on psychedelics, after they read the news that they work better than medications.

I cannot refer these patients to anywhere to try these substances, as they are federally illegal. Even though it could save their life. It pains me not to be able to help them in that way.

There is a great unmet need for Hawaii's legislature and DOH to inform patients accurately, and not leave them in the dark.

Psilocybin was found to have great success in reducing suicide thoughts and in curing depression. The FDA has declared it a "breakthrough therapy." Likewise, MDMA has been proven superior to all known treatments for post traumatic stress disorder. Other indigenous treatments such as ayahuasca, are effective and legal already, however there are no therapeutic treatments centers that Hawaii's DOH can officially recognize as safe places for people to get treatment.

Physicians cannot recommend these substances since they are still Schedule I, which means "no medical use", which the FDA has now admitted is false.

*ph (808) 457-1082  
fax (808) 356-1649*

*[www.beyondmentalhealth.com](http://www.beyondmentalhealth.com)*



Patients have committed suicide while they wait for the long, slow research to be finished.

Most standard antidepressants can increase the risk of suicide. They can cause an array of other problems, such as an increased risk of glaucoma, Parkinsonism, or risk of stroke in the elderly due to thinning of the blood.

Struggling patients here in Hawaii need our legislators to advocate for them, to get ahead of outdated federal laws forbidding their use.

Cordially,

Thomas Cook, M.D.

*ph (808) 457-1082  
fax (808) 356-1649*

*[www.beyondmentalhealth.com](http://www.beyondmentalhealth.com)*



# Hawai'i Psychological Association

*For a Healthy Hawai'i*

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COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert S. C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

February 22, 2023 9:30 A.M. - VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE – ROOM 211

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB1454 SD1, RELATED TO PSILOCYBIN

The Hawaii Psychological Association supports SB1454 SD1, which will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group to examine the medicinal and therapeutic effects of psilocybin and related products.

Researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring safe medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses.

Major research at academic institutions around the world has shown psilocybin to be promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatments for a wide range of mental conditions including Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, depression, anxiety (including end-of-life anxiety), substance addiction, and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. Psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety when administered in clinical settings.

These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant both psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy designation to expedite research and potential approval. Both are expected to be rescheduled and approved for medical use in the next few years federally.

With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, most people know someone who stands to benefit from access to therapeutic psilocybin, MDMA, and more. Please support this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important bill, and for you for your commitment to Hawaii's mental health.

Sincerely,

Alex Lichton, Ph.D.  
Chair, HPA Legislative Action Committee

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 9:22:23 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Benjamin Lillibridge	Testifying for Malama Mushrooms	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Model Testimony for SB1454**

*You can copy and paste this into the testimony box or save it as a doc / pdf and upload it. Only use one option.*

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ben, I live in Holualoa on Hawai'i Island, and I am writing **in strong support of SB1454**, which will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group.

Researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring plant-based medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses.

Major research and academic institutions around the world has shown psilocybin to be a promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatment for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety, especially when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin their Breakthrough Therapy designation twice for treatment-resistant depression.

Citing this research, initiatives in favor of therapeutic psilocybin are occurring nationwide, including Oregon's new therapeutic psilocybin program, which just launched this year, along with Colorado recently decriminalizing and partially legalizing psilocybin, in addition to counties across the nation decriminalizing psilocybin and other similar psychedelics.

With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to therapeutic psilocybin. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,  
Ben Lillibridge, founder & CEO of Malama Mushrooms



**SB1454 SD1 Psilocybin Work Group to Study Medicinal Value**  
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Wednesday, Feb 22, 2023: 9:30: Room 211 Videoconference

**Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Comments SB1454 SD1 With Concerns**

*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.*

**FDA DENIES APPROVAL for use because of significant SAFETY CONCERNS, that is until those concerns have been resolved.**

However, the FDA is looking at two formulations of psilocybin as a medical treatment for depression and expects to approve it once a safe formulation is created. Moreover, psilocybin has shown efficacy to reduce heavy drinking and is being studied to reduce tobacco use.

**Government is spending millions and millions of dollars funding some of the top scientists in the world, racing ahead to find a safe formula.**

**FDA declares psilocybin is a “Breakthrough Therapy.” The therapy is intended for patients who are “treatment resistant to existing medications.** While intriguing, this form of psychedelic therapy is too soon to be used in standard medical practices because of safety concerns.

- Psilocybin, a classic hallucinogen, is the active agent in what has been called: magic mushrooms. It’s a chemical produced by more than 100 species of mushrooms worldwide.
- According to the studies, the evidence is that psilocybin may be effective in treating depression and anxiety.<sup>1</sup>



**U.S. government along with 9 other countries are working fervently to find a safe formulation utilizing top scientists in the world.**

**Phase 3 testing started Dec 2022. This is most encouraging yet alarming that a safe formula with defined protocols has yet to be developed for general distribution.**

<sup>1</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse; National Institutes of Health; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Goldberg SB, Pace BT, Nicholas CR, Raison CL, Hutson PR. The experimental effects of psilocybin on symptoms of anxiety and depression: A

- It's important because a large number of people do not respond well to current medications.

**Patent wars are happening right now between pharmaceuticals to see who can be the first to create a "SAFE" formulation that the FDA would approve.** Such a safe formulation has not been fully developed yet but is expected soon. Seems like there's a lot of investors interested enough because there's a lot of potential money to be made.

### **Effectiveness requires higher dosing, which has resulted in the safety concerns.**

- In a phase 2 trial involving participants with treatment-resistant depression, psilocybin at a **single dose of 25mg, but not 10mg, reduced depression scores significantly more than a 1-mg dose** over a period of 3 weeks but was associated with adverse effects. Larger and longer trials, including comparison with existing treatments, are required to determine the efficacy and safety of psilocybin for this disorder. (Funded by COMPASS Pathfinder; EudraCT number, **2017-003288-36**; ClinicalTrials.gov number)<sup>2</sup>
- **Phase 3 trial began December, 2022.** Soon, we will have safe protocols approved by the FDA.

**Science is doing its part to study illegal drugs and their medical use. Let's give them time to minimize risk to our community.**

### **The Benefits are Promising but Lower Doses are Suspect and High Doses are Dangerous.**

- **The benefits are that psychedelics quickly produce durable results** in people without existing side effects. Current treatment can take up to 6 weeks to even tell if the drug is working, and if it's not, the person has to taper off the drug and try a different SSRI. While that works for most people, there are also a lot of people who are on SSRIs and who are still suffering, not only from not seeing the full treatment response but also increased weight gain, lack of libido, and sleep problems.
- **About 30% of test subjects using high doses reported favorable results**, which seems like a low percentage but is actually a high number of people given the large number of people who are "treatment resistant" to current medications. At least for some, this is a possibly good indication.

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meta-analysis. *Psychiatry Research*. 2020;284:112749. doi:10.1016/j.psychres.2020.112749  
<https://nida.nih.gov/publications/drugfacts/hallucinogens>

<sup>2</sup> The New England Journal of Medicine: Single-Dose Psilocybin for a Treatment-Resistant Episode of Major Depression November 3, 2022 N Engl J Med 2022; 387:1637-1648 DOI: 10.1056/NEJMoa2206443  
<https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2206443>

- **But studies with low dose psychedelics don't necessarily show a clear therapeutic benefit** from the NIH's point of view, the rigor underlying those trials has not really been sufficient to justify that sort of conclusion.<sup>3</sup>
- **No one recommends that the public try to self-medicate** because without supervision because there can be **potential harmful effects including psychosis and hallucinations.** The **potential acute side effects are anxiety, fear states, and increases in heart rate and blood pressure. Strict protocols are needed** for the administration of psilocybin before the general population can access it.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and are available for questions.

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<sup>3</sup> Aidan Hampson, a senior adviser at the NIH's [National Institute on Drug Abuse](https://cen.acs.org/pharmaceuticals/drug-development/Drug-companies-investing-big-psychedelics/100/i9). <https://cen.acs.org/pharmaceuticals/drug-development/Drug-companies-investing-big-psychedelics/100/i9>

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2023 1:37:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joy Leilei Shih	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

The research from some of the top institutions in the world (UCSF, King's College, etc.) has shown that therapeutically administered psilocybin has tremendous benefits to those suffering from a large array of mental health and physical health issues. Psilocybin is not only extraordinarily safe in itself, but helps patients get off prescription and addictive nonprescription drugs. It eases the suffering of many medical patients, including cancer patients. Psilocybin is a safe and critical tool that we need to help address mental health in our community. I strongly support establishing the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group so that we can create a program in Hawaii to support and heal our communities. We will have the benefit of learning from Oregon's statewide program. Because of the growing awareness of the safety of and benefits of psilocybin, it has also already been decriminalized in Colorado and nearly two dozen municipalities in the US. I strongly urge you to pass SB1454 for the health and wellness of Hawaii. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!

Joy Leilei Shih, Ph.D



**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2023 3:22:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Ruta Jordans, I live in Wailua Homesteads on Kauai, and I am writing **in strong support of SB1454**, which will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group.

My daughter just received her PhD in psychology with her dissertation on the experience of veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) who had used ayathuasca. What I have learned from her studies is that current treatments for PTSD do not help the problem, but make it worse by getting the veterans addicted. However, the psychedelics they took actually helped them through their PTSD and helped them reorient. The Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group suggested in this bill would help Hawaii determine if if other therapies, such as psychedelics, would be helpful to people with mental health issues, such as these veterans with PTSD were experiencing.

Researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring safe medicines like psilocybin and MDMA above ground for therapeutic uses.

Major research and academic institutions around the world has shown psilocybin and MDMA to be promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatments for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety, especially when administered in clinical settings. MDMA is also considered one of the most effective treatments for PTSD, which affects 5% of the U.S. population.

These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant both psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy designation to expedite research and potentially approval. Both are expected to be rescheduled and approved for medical use in the next few years federally.

With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to therapeutic psilocybin, MDMA, and more. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,  
Ruta Jordans

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2023 3:24:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John Williamson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee,

My name is John Williamson, I live in Manoa near my alma mater the University of Hawaii. I am testifying in strong support of SB1454 SD1, Relating to Psilocybin. This measure will establish a psilocybin working group to evaluate the following:

1. Available data on clinical trials of psilocybin as a therapy for posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, and end-of-life psychological distress;
2. Evaluate the benefits realized in states where psilocybin has been approved as a treatment option for mental health conditions for which conventional therapies have proven ineffective;
3. 3. Consider the development of a long-term strategic plan to ensure the safe availability and accessibility of affordable, therapeutic psilocybin or psilocybin-based products for adults twenty- one years of age or older.

As someone who has battled depression for many years and taken a range of anti-depressants prescribed by psychiatrists, with little relief, I am hopeful the efforts of the working group will enable people like me to access the benefits of psilocybin therapy. Depression not only makes life miserable for those who suffer with it, depression also makes it difficult to live a healthy lifestyle, leading to poor health outcomes and illness. Moreover, depression reduces one’s ability to function effectively socially and in a work environment, affecting the ability to earn a living.

Hopefully, the Health and Human Services Committee, in evaluating this measure will consider the well-documented use of psilocybin in clinical trials at highly regarded medical facilities, including Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, to successfully treat a range of psychological conditions, including severe depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and anxiety related to terminal and life-threatening illnesses.

The Hawaii State Legislature has an enviable track record of making Hawaii a leader in many areas, including freedom of choice in abortion, legislation to fight climate change by making our state’s electric grid 100 percent renewable, and Hawaii Prepaid Health Care Act, expanding healthcare availability to the working people of our state.

Please continue this proud tradition by making it possible for Hawaii to also become a leader in the use of breakthrough treatments for mental health conditions that are currently robbing many residents of our state of the opportunity for health, happiness and prosperity.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify in support of this vital piece of legislation.

John Williamson

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2023 4:23:23 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary Marinaro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I live on Hawaii and have dealt with mental health issues for many years. I believe it is important to have more treatment options for all of us with problems such as PTSD, depression, anxiety, etc. It has been demonstrated that therapies such as Psilocybin are safe and effective for mental health. I personally have not been able to tolerate traditional pharmaceuticals so it would be extremely helpful to have other options available for my treatment.

As a veteran and senior citizen, I urge you to support this bill.

Mahalo

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Becca Moriconi. I am a graduate student at The University of Hawai'i Manoa studying Social Work. I currently live in the Puna district of the Big Island. I am writing to articulate my support of this measure, and highly encourage new therapeutic treatments for mental health such as psilocybin.

As a mental health professional I have had the privilege of working with a variety of different individuals on Big Island, Maui, and the Continent at large, and through this work I have seen, first hand the struggles individuals face with the traditional treatment options for mental health challenges, specifically depression. Depressive Disorder affects over 280 million adults worldwide, and over 30% of these individuals do not respond to the traditional treatment options. Due to this, I spent the first semester of my specialization year of graduate school diving deeper into alternative therapies for depression that is deemed *resistant to treatment*. Psilocybin is a **naturally** occurring substance in some mushroom species, which acts as a serotonin receptor agonist, meaning it has serotonin enhancing properties. From my 2022 research I found clear, safe, and optimistic results. Which articulated lasting positive effects for participants utilizing small doses of psilocybin as a treatment modality. Not only were the results promising, but the safety and efficacy of this treatment modality was praised, as participants received psilocybin no more than three times within a trial.

Over the past 20 years research has increased around the world, and the new scientific understanding of benefits of substances like psilocybin is sure to continue growing within the medical and psychological fields. Major institutions throughout the continental US are pointing to the promise of substances like MDMA and psilocybin, for not only depression, but also, anxiety, addictions, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

State and County lawmakers now have a crucial role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA, and other medicines. We can spearhead these groundbreaking initiatives in favor of these therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon and Initiative 81 in Washington, D.C.—are occurring at all levels of government, private and public research institutions, and throughout mainstream society.

With the mental health crisis increasing in intensity throughout Hawai'i, we cannot miss out on expanding healing modalities offered. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,  
Rebecca J Moriconi

Testimony in Support of the Psilocybin Working Group ([SB1454](#))

Committee Hearing | 2023 Legislative Session

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Tony Santini, I live in Honolulu, HI and I am writing in **strong support of this measure**, which will establish the therapeutic psilocybin working group to examine the therapeutic effects of psilocybin and develop a long-term strategic plan to ensure the availability of therapeutic psilocybin or psilocybin-based products that are safe, accessible, and affordable for adults 21 years of age or older.

There are three main topics in which I have used psychedelic modalities to change my life and positively impact the life of those around me. Research from major institutions around the world has shown psilocybin to be a promising clinical treatment tool for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

1. I was able to work through childhood trauma that caused me to experience unconscious dysfunction in all relational aspects of my life with family, friends, and romantic relationships. I was able to expose memories that had been suppressed and work through attachment issues that kept me in a state of suffering. These mental and emotional struggles are no more, and I have strong, healthy community and family relationships.
2. I have worked through addiction issues with psychedelic modalities that kept me emotionally and sometimes physically isolated. This isolation took me to the brink of suicide more than once. I spent from 15 to 45 years of age suffering from addictive behaviors that included everything from using alcohol, substances, food, work, sex, codependency, and emotional manipulation. Using psychedelics was the only way I could break the narrative of my life that kept me in addiction.
3. I have worked with my mother and sister with psychedelics to work through generational trauma. This state of consciousness allowed us to see for the first time how trauma that my mother experienced was affecting me and my sister. During this experience were able to see each other as people and not position one another in a role that designed by family dynamics from long ago. This experience took our relationships from critical and judgmental to accepting and supportive after one sitting. We received a gift that we may never have received in our lifetimes.

I know there are people in Hawaii that suffer like I have, especially with addiction and generational trauma. There are a lot of people that don't even know their suffering could have an end. It would be an incredible gift if you could open the door to a pathway for them to end it.

Please support this measure.

Mahalo,  
Tony Santini





**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2023 11:56:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Emilie Bierly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you, Ways and Means Committee for this opportunity to testify in support of bill SB 1454. My name is Emilie Bierly and I reside on Kauai. As we all know, mental health is a hugely under resourced area in our government and society. We hear many tragic stories and know loved ones who suffer with mental health but have limited capacity to navigate and manage their own treatment. It is costly to them and our society. Insurance hardly covers therapy with therapists. There is simply not enough. Psilocybin therapy that is supported by professionals who can follow these individuals and provide an alternative, deeply healing treatments versus pharmaceutical medications is a phenomenal opportunity for our society and those individuals who will benefit. Mental health limitations either it be mild and occasional or severe will greatly benefit from psilocybin. I have witnessed psilocybin's effects in small quantities to someone with anxiety and depression. The effect was a wonder. I wish this person could be able to openly go to a clinic and receive care and monitor progress by a professional. Mahalo for reading my testimony in support of this bill.

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 6:41:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Linda Sakamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Strongly support!**

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 8:21:27 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nicole Loria	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nicole, I live in Honolulu and I am writing in strong support of this measure, which will Permanently establish the Beneficial Treatments Advisory Council to review mental health treatment information and advise the state.

I'm diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder and was on antidepressants since I was 16. I attempted to wean off them several times unsuccessfully due to intense withdrawal symptoms and lack of medical support when it comes to weaning off medications. After 23 years on prozac I was able to successfully get off the meds thanks to microdosing psilocybin. I was consistently told by doctors that I should consider myself like a diabetic that needs medication every day. I now can take a small dose (.150mg) of psilocybin a few times a week and experience little to no anxiety, as well as greater clarity and focus. In addition, the unpleasant side effects from SSRI's such as low sexual drive, have disappeared, and I am significantly more satisfied in my romantic partnership than ever before.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring plant-based medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses.

Research from major institutions around the world has shown psilocybin to be a promising clinical treatment tool for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. As a result, psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety when administered in clinical settings. These

impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin their Breakthrough Therapy designation for treatment-resistant depression.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin. Citing this research, groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psilocybin—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon and Initiative 81 in Washington, D.C.—are occurring at all levels of government, private and public research institutions, and throughout mainstream society.

We do not want the citizens of Hawai‘i to miss out on this healing modality. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,

Nicole

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 11:43:13 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John Ward	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is John Ward and I am a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist as well as a Certified Psychedelic-Assisted Therapy Provider. I have a private practice in Honolulu and live in Kakaako.

I am fully in support of this bill and any bill that promotes this treatment. I have experienced both personally and with others its effectiveness. Few treatments have the potential to help as many people suffering from mental health issues as this.

As the media is producing more and more stories of the curative abilities of these treatments more of my clients are asking for information and options. So many people are eagerly awaiting this help.

Please support this effort.

Mahalo,

John Ward

## Testimony in Support of [SB1454](#)

Senate Ways and Means Committee [Hearing](#) | Wednesday, FEB 22, 2023 @ 9:30am  
Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Raymond Kemp I live in Ainaloa, in Puna on the island of Hawaii and I am writing **in strong support of SB1454**, which will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group.

As a Father and friend of many who have suffered the ravages of Depression, Anxiety, Grief, PTSD, Addiction and other debilitating conditions. I have witnessed these emotional states, the trauma and frustration, fear and breakdowns of these loved but ravaged souls attempting to navigate therapy and pharmaceutical efforts to find the right combination of medication just to maintain a semblance of a normal life. Oft times, the efforts at balancing these people are futile. It is gut wrenching and heartbreaking to be a person trying to provide support for those, in need only to watch them struggle so profoundly. One step forward and two steps back. Absolutely heartbreaking. I am asking you to pass **SB1454** and allow this treatment to be available and within reach of our loved ones, regardless of economic or social standing.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring plant-based medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses.

Research from major institutions around the world has shown psilocybin to be a promising clinical treatment tool for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. As a result, psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin their Breakthrough Therapy designation for treatment-resistant depression.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin. Citing this research, groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psilocybin—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon and Initiative 81 in Washington, D.C.—are occurring at all levels of government, private and public research institutions, and throughout mainstream society.

We do not want the citizens of Hawai'i to miss out on this healing modality. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin.

Please support SB1454

Mahalo,  
Raymond Kemp

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 12:14:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bryce Healy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Brye Healy, I live in Mountain View on the Big Island, and I am writing **in strong support of SB1531**, which will establish the Beneficial Treatments Advisory Council. I am also a working and licensed Naturopathic Doctor doing work as the medical director of a drug and alcohol rehab facility.

I have personally experienced profound healing and insight using these medicines. A profound shift happened when I was able to gain insight to some of my behavioral patterns with anger and these medicines gave me the opportunity to release that old way of being and shift into a current improved state of mind and emotionally regulated way of being. I have also had the opportunity to see profound changes in the people that use these medicine with good conscious attitudes, focusing on specific areas of their lives that they need healing in.

Researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring safe medicines like psilocybin and MDMA above ground for therapeutic uses.

Major research and academic institutions around the world has shown psilocybin and MDMA to be promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatments for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety, especially when administered in clinical settings. MDMA is also considered one of the most effective treatments for PTSD, which affects 5% of the U.S. population.

These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant both psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy designation to expedite research and potentially approval. Both are expected to be rescheduled and approved for medical use in the next few years federally.

With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to therapeutic psilocybin. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,

Bryce Healy



**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 2:04:24 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Syryssa Sacca	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Syryssa Sacca, I live in Hakalau, Hawaii and I am writing in strong support of this measure, which will Permanently establish the Beneficial Treatments Advisory Council to review mental health treatment information and advise the state.

As an herbalist and student of many indigenous cultures from around the world, I have worked closely with tribes and families who use these sacred psychedelic medicines for generations. I have seen it not only change my life for the better, but countless others as well through the years who were suffering from a myriad of ailments. We, as a western society, are just starting to come back around to realizing that we must live as one with Nature and that she provides what we need. These medicines help rewire the neuro pathways in our brains and as placeholders we can help create a safe environment and integration that is conducive to sustainable healing. The reality is that people are seeking these methods whether they are legal or not, so let us create systems that help us move forward in a safe way.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring plant-based medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses.

Research from major institutions around the world has shown psilocybin to be a promising clinical treatment tool for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. As a result, psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin their Breakthrough Therapy designation for treatment-resistant depression.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin. Citing this research, groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psilocybin—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon and Initiative 81 in Washington, D.C.—are occurring at all levels of government, private and public research institutions, and throughout mainstream society.

We do not want the citizens of Hawai‘i to miss out on this healing modality. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,

Syrisa Sacca

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 4:30:15 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paulina Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Paulina Smith, I am a resident of Hawaii County, and I am writing in strong support of SB1454, which will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Group.

As a licensed psychotherapist, I believe in supporting people to have legal access to all healing modalities that can support their overall wellness for mind, body, soul and spirit. Each individual that is able to experience peace, wholeness, and joy has the potential to be an active, empathic, and positive citizen within our own Hawaii community, which also has the potential to ripple out into the world to produce healthy engagements with self and others.

The use of our natural world and plant allies have been tools for healing that have long preceded our current existence. It is time to be the wayshowers and bridges from ancient wisdom into modern life. Major research and academic institutions around the world have shown psilocybin and MDMA to be promising and even ground-breaking clinical treatments for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses.

The Scientific American reported: A Johns Hopkins [2006 double-blind study](#) (meaning neither trial participants nor researchers knew if a subject was receiving psilocybin or placebo), published in the journal *Psychopharmacology*, demonstrated that psilocybin could give healthy volunteers “experiences having substantial and sustained personal meaning.” “What is different about psilocybin, compared to other mood-altering drugs or pharmaceuticals, is the enduring meaning and belief changes that can occur. People feel ‘reorganized’ in a way they don’t with other drugs,” says Johns Hopkins neuropharmacologist Roland Griffiths, lead author of the initial 2006 study as well as the latest one on depression. “It’s almost like reprogramming the operating system of a computer.” Griffiths now leads the new, \$17 million-funded [Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research at Johns Hopkins Medicine](#). Also, Johns Hopkins University researchers published results in *JAMA Psychiatry*, found 71 percent of patients experienced a “clinically significant response” (an improvement that lasted at least four weeks after treatment). And 54 percent met the criteria for total “remission of depression.”

Hawaii has the opportunity to be a positive pioneer of embracing individual and community wholeness in world that is ready for grounded, aware, and centered people to pull forward what we all know to be true- a world centered around connection and empathy, and not separation and fear. That all begins within each individual. As within, so without. Embracing, loving,

and accepting oneself is how we can create the change needed within our community that is riddled with addiction, PTSD, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, low motivation, and a lack of meaning or purpose. When people are in a constant state of trauma response flight, fight or freeze, they aren't able to access their core functioning, which inevitably leads them to experience a myriad of the above mentioned symptomologies. This also leads to strain on the community systems within schools, prisons, local businesses, housing when there are people within them that aren't able to function in their best or even highest potential. We are in gratitude of the systems that have needed to be created to help people to the best of their ability, and it is also just simply not enough with increasing rates of suicide and dysfunction within society. That is why we are here having this conversation today. Having healthy, loving, stable parents and community members, leads to healthy, loving stable children within our communities- our future leaders as police chiefs, lawmakers, doctors, store managers, etc.

As a psychotherapist here to be in service to our communities, it is my professional and personal mission to provide the best care for clients utilizing integrative and ground-breaking evidence-based treatment that is personally tailored to suit each individual's therapeutic needs. As it is being shown in research studies, it is through utilizing holistic and natural psychedelic therapies to break through debilitating trauma that has kept people functioning at subpar. More and more people are ready to release multigenerational trauma and are seeking their empowerment, wellbeing, and self-acceptance. Released from their trauma response, people can be better equipped and more engaged to lead and direct their lives. This has the amazing potential to result in a positive impact on the community's direction into the improved and empowered individual health and wellness needed to create lasting change throughout humanity.

Please support this measure SB1454 for therapeutic psilocybin.

Thank you kindly for your time and energy put towards this matter.

Mahalo,

Paulina Smith, LMFT

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 4:35:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Appelusa, I live in Koloa, Kauai and I am writing in strong support of SB1454, which will establish the therapeutic psilocybin working group.

In 2020 I was diagnosed with an environmental illness while living in California with my husband who was born and raised on Kauai. It took many years to diagnose this mysterious and relatively unknown systemic chronic illness. A neuroquant MRI brain scan showed moderate brain inflammation. After several years of suffering from chronic fatigue, hair loss, nail issues, gut issues, POTS, mast cell activation, and edema, I became quite depressed. I found a support team of doctors and functional medicine professionals who specialize in environmental illness. I changed my diet, lifestyle, living situation, and treated the toxicity for two years. During this time my nervous system had become dysfunctional. Re-wiring one's brain and nervous system takes dedication in healthy lifestyle choices such as meditation, breathwork, and mindfulness. While all of this was helpful in my progress, the depression and nervous system disfunction persisted. It wasn't until I tried microdosing psilocybin that I began to notice changes in the way I felt and perceived the world around me, and my healing process. My depression faded and I was able to finish healing more rapidly. With this personal experience of the benefits of psilocybin on the re-wiring of the brain and nervous system, I have decided to attend grad school in mental health counseling so that I may help others who may be going through similar situations.

Researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring plant-based medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses.

Major research and academic institutions around the world has shown psilocybin to be a promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatment for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety, especially when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin their Breakthrough Therapy designation twice for treatment-resistant depression.

Citing this research, initiatives in favor of therapeutic psilocybin are occurring nationwide, including Oregon's new therapeutic psilocybin program, which just launched this year, along with Colorado recently decriminalizing and partially legalizing psilocybin, in addition to counties across the nation decriminalizing psilocybin and other similar psychedelics.

With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to therapeutic psilocybin. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,  
Appelusa

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 6:52:21 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kathy Southard	Testifying for Honolulu Psychotherapy	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kathy Southard LCSW, a psychotherapist in private practice in Honolulu, a former psychiatric social worker at Queens Medical Center, and a former clinician of a Harvard Medical School's psychiatry department. I live in the Ala Moana neighborhood of Honolulu, and I am writing in strong support of SB1454, which establishes the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group.

I first became interested in the use of psychedelics in Psychiatry while working with Harvard psychiatrists back in 2015 where I attended the conference at Harvard organized by a colleague of mine, in which Rick Doblin, the head of MAPS was invited as a keynote speaker. Since then I've become a MAPS (Multidisciplinary Association of Psychedelic Studies) trainee therapist and hopefully in the future, as these technologies become legal, I will be one of the first therapists able to use these medicines in the work I do, supporting people to heal from PTSD, depression, and anxiety. I have over 20 years experience as a clinical social worker in psychiatry and seeing the new developments that are transforming psychiatry, I know they are transformative and lead to lasting healing that traditional SSRIs just are not able to accomplish.

Many research institutions at this time are publishing scientific evidence of the efficacy and benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body. The FDA calls Psychedelic Psilocybin a "Breakthrough Therapy" for severe depression. Many institutions including Johns Hopkins, Yale, Harvard, and NYU are publishing much research demonstrating the efficacy of these psychedelic medicines to treat depression, anxiety, and PTSD. I hope the state of Hawaii, would agree and allow a working group to look into these medicines.

Sincerely,

Kathy Southard LCSW

Honolulu Psychotherapy

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 7:50:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michal C Cohen	Testifying for Michal Cohen, LCSW	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Michal Cohen and I live in Kaka'ako, and I am writing **in strong support of SB1454**, which will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group.

I am a psychotherapist who specializes in PTSD and trauma. I see first hand every day how people struggle to fully participate in their lives due to the impact of trauma. We now have ample evidence that shows how psychedelic medicine can help people heal trauma. Trauma creates a disconnection from the self. Psychedelic medicine helps people connect to their true essence and realize they are not their trauma.

Researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring plant-based medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses.

Major research and academic institutions around the world has shown psilocybin to be a promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatment for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety, especially when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin their Breakthrough Therapy designation twice for treatment-resistant depression.

Citing this research, initiatives in favor of therapeutic psilocybin are occurring nationwide, including Oregon's new therapeutic psilocybin program, which just launched this year, along with Colorado recently decriminalizing and partially legalizing psilocybin, in addition to counties across the nation decriminalizing psilocybin and other similar psychedelics.

With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to therapeutic psilocybin. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,  
Michal Cohen, LCSW





**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 8:52:07 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
celia tapp	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of psychedelic therapy. Thank you.

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 9:21:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doora Shin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Testimony in Support of SB1454**

Senate WAM Committee | Wednesday February 22, 2023 at 9:30am

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the WAM Committee,

My name is Doora Shin, and I am testifying in strong support of SB1454. I am a resident of Kaimuki / Mō‘ili‘ili, and I also serve as the Project Manager of Clarity Project, which advocates for legal access to therapeutic psilocybin and other psychedelic therapies in Hawai‘i. This measure will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group.

Federally, the FDA has twice granted psilocybin its [Breakthrough Therapy Designation](#) (in 2018 and 2019) for its efficacy in treating severe depression. This FDA designation expedites research of a substance and indicates that psilocybin offers substantial improvements over existing treatments. Given that 1 in 5 people in the U.S. suffer from a mental illness and that existing treatments are unreliable and often fail to provide relief, new therapeutic modalities must be explored.

Psilocybin is one example of a safe, natural, non-addictive, and effective way to treat depression and other mental illnesses. The best estimates give psilocybin another 3 years or so before it is rescheduled federally and allowed to be prescribed by medical professionals for treating depression and other disorders. Below are facts and research around psilocybin as a therapeutic treatment.

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**Psilocybin Overview:**

- Natural Fungi - Psilocybin is a naturally occurring compound found in more than 200 species of mushrooms which collectively can be [found on all continents](#) in varying potencies. In clinical studies and psychedelic-assisted therapies, the synthetic version of pure psilocybin is administered to control dosing standards, not the mushroom in its natural or dried form.

- Not Addictive - [Psilocybin does not lead to physical dependence](#), and studies have found that adolescent use of hallucinogenic drugs, including psilocybin, [does not increase the risk of drug dependence](#) in adulthood (unlike cannabis, cocaine, inhalants, stimulants - all of which were associated with “an excess risk of developing clinical features associated with drug dependence.”)
  - Safe - [The toxicity of psilocybin is very low](#). A person would have to eat nearly one-third of his/her weight in psilocybin mushrooms to reach a lethal dose. This amount is approximately 1.5 times that of caffeine. Psilocybin is most effective when administered and overseen by a trained healthcare professional who can [guide the patient, understand drug interactions, and screen for known risks such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or other pre-existing mental health diagnoses](#).
- 

## **The Science of Psilocybin**

Below are key findings from just a few of the many landmark research studies that demonstrate the efficacy of psilocybin treatment.

### **Psilocybin Decreases End-of-life Anxiety in Terminal Cancer Patients**

Griffiths, Roland R et al. “Psilocybin produces substantial and sustained decreases in depression and anxiety in patients with life-threatening cancer: A randomized double-blind trial.” *Journal of Psychopharmacology* (Oxford, England) vol. 30,12 (2016): 1181-1197.  
doi:10.1177/0269881116675513

- The effects of psilocybin were studied in 51 cancer patients with life-threatening diagnoses and symptoms of depression and/or anxiety. The study found that when administered under psychologically supportive, double-blind conditions, a single dose of psilocybin produced substantial and enduring decreases in depressed mood and anxiety along with increases in quality of life and decreases in death anxiety in patients with a life-threatening cancer diagnosis.

### **Psilocybin Helps Treat Major Depressive Disorder**

Carhart-Harris, R L et al. “Psilocybin with psychological support for treatment-resistant depression: six-month follow-up.” *Psychopharmacology* vol. 235,2 (2018): 399-408.  
doi:10.1007/s00213-017-4771-x

- In this study, Twenty patients (six females) with (mostly) severe, unipolar, treatment-resistant major depression received two oral doses of psilocybin (10 and 25 mg, 7 days

apart) in a supportive setting. Treatment was generally well-tolerated. Overall results suggest that psilocybin represents a promising paradigm for unresponsive depression.

### Psilocybin Decreases Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder Symptoms

Moreno FA, Wiegand CB, Taitano EK, Delgado PL. Safety, tolerability, and efficacy of psilocybin in 9 patients with obsessive-compulsive disorder. *J Clin Psychiatry*. 2006; 67 11: 1735- 40. PubMed PMID: 17196053

- In a controlled clinical environment and modified double-blind study, psilocybin was safely used in subjects with OCD and was associated with acute reductions in core OCD symptoms. Nine subjects with OCD were administered a total of 29 psilocybin doses. Marked decreases in OCD symptoms of variable degrees were observed in all subjects during 1 or more testing sessions.

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### Academic & Medical Institutions

In addition to the facts and research showing the safety and efficacy of psilocybin in treating some of the most common mental illnesses, we also see a large number of academic institutions and medical hospitals opening up psychedelic research and healing centers. These include but are not limited to:

1. Yale Program for Psychedelic Science
2. The Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research
3. University of California: Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics
4. Massachusetts General Hospital: Center for the Neuroscience of Psychedelics
5. The Center for Psychedelic Medicine at New York University's Department of Psychiatry
6. The Centre for Psychedelic Research at Imperial College in London
7. The Center for Psychedelic Research and Therapy at The University of Texas at Austin's Dell Medical School
8. Mount Sinai Icahn School of Medicine: Center for Psychedelic Psychotherapy and Trauma Research
9. Treatment & Research In Psychedelics (TRIP) program at Pacific Neuroscience Institute
10. University of Wisconsin: Transdisciplinary Center for Research in Psychoactive Substances

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### Conclusion

As you can see, the movement to legalize and create safe, therapeutic access to psilocybin and other psychedelic therapies is one that is growing across cities, states, at a federal level, and within academic and medical institutions. The passage of SB1454 would allow for our community members who are in need to have access to this therapeutic option and find relief. We all know someone who stands to benefit from effective therapies to depression, addiction, PTSD, anxiety, and more. That's why we support this bill, and we ask that you pass this bill so we can adequately prepare Hawai'i to offer safe access to these therapeutic options for those who need it.

Mahalo for your consideration of this testimony in strong support of SB1454. I can be available for questions.

Doora Shin

Community Member and Project Manager of Clarity Project

team@clarityproject.org

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 10:02:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
shayne pung	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hi I fully support mental health and using psilocybin in Hawaii for mental health.

February 20, 2023

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Blaine Williams and I am a board certified emergency physician practicing in Honolulu. I am writing in **strong support of SB1454**, which will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group.

There is a growing body of scientific literature demonstrating that many substances classified broadly as “psychedelics,” notably psilocybin, have incredible potential to help people heal from PTSD, chronic pain, addiction, depression, various anxiety disorders, and existential suffering related to terminal illnesses. Much of this research is being published in reputable journals, performed by well-respected scientists and physicians, and conducted at top universities and medical schools, such as Johns Hopkins, Yale, NYU, Duke, the University of Alabama, UCLA, UC Berkeley, University of Washington, Imperial College London, and many others.

Oregon and Colorado are already moving to allow safe, legal use of psilocybin and similar psychedelics. Approximately 20 states now have proposed measures or legislative working groups to change their state laws regarding psilocybin and related substances. Additionally, many municipalities in the U.S. have declared possession of psilocybin and other psychedelics a “low priority” for law enforcement, including Seattle Washington, Berkeley and Oakland California, Ann Arbor and Detroit Michigan, and even Washington D.C. The Canadian government has essentially decriminalized psilocybin and areas of the country are working to allow legal therapeutic use. Earlier this month, the Australian government declared that Australian physicians will be able to legally prescribe MDMA and psilocybin as medicines later this year.

Although I am not a psychiatrist, in the last 13 years, I have treated thousands of patients with substance abuse problems and acute psychiatric conditions who end up in the ER. This includes overdoses and withdrawal from alcohol or other drugs. As well as various anxiety disorders such as people who have panic attacks, people acutely depressed who are often suicidal, bipolar mania, schizophrenia and other mental health conditions. Substance abuse and mental anguish commonly go hand in hand.

Additionally, patients with advanced cancer, and other terminal illnesses, often end up coming to the ER repeatedly out of desperation, usually focusing on physical symptoms, such as pain, which is why so many of them end up addicted to opiates in their final days. On average, I see 1-2 patients with advanced cancer on any given shift.



I know that for many of these people, the real problem is that they are suffering from an existential crisis, traumatized, anxious and depressed by their diagnosis and impending death. Unfortunately, the current mainstream medical model does not address existential suffering and we usually just numb these people into complacency with opiates (such as oxycodone) and benzodiazepines (such as Valium).

Most current medical treatments for mental illnesses and addiction are inadequate, at best, with large percentages of people remaining “treatment resistant.” Typical psychiatric drugs currently being used essentially just numb people and don't produce insight or significant lasting change. Psychedelic therapy is a completely different approach that gives people a chance to actually heal by journeying inward and helping individuals to address the root causes of why they are depressed, anxious, traumatized, addicted, etc.—why they are wounded in the first place.

Research demonstrates that psilocybin provides rapid, substantial, and sustained relief from debilitating anxiety and depression in individuals with terminal illnesses. Psilocybin-assisted therapy usually results in improved mood and optimism, a greater sense of meaning, purpose, and well being, improved quality of life, and acceptance of one's own mortality. These effects last for months, if not years. A well-known study performed at Johns Hopkins, published in 2016, documented these benefits extending at least 6 months following psilocybin treatment in advanced cancer patients. All without any significant safety concerns when administered responsibly.

Psilocybin and other related medicines have incredible potential to help people heal psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually. These medicines are incredibly safe, especially when taken under the supervision of experienced professionals. Many scientific studies have already demonstrated impressive results for treating a range of conditions. Too many Hawai'i citizens are needlessly suffering and would benefit from safe, affordable, and legal access to these medicines, notably psilocybin.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Blaine Williams', written in a cursive style.

A. Blaine Williams, M.D.

[ablainewilliams@gmail.com](mailto:ablainewilliams@gmail.com)

808.798.1176

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 10:26:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amelia Morgan-Rothschild	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Amelia Morgan-Rothschild and I live in Haiku on Maui and I am writing **in strong support of SB1454**, which will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group.

As a psychedelic-assisted psychotherapist, I am deeply passionate about bringing this medicine to the community in a safe and ethical way.

Researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring plant-based medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses.

Major research and academic institutions around the world has shown psilocybin to be a promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatment for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety, especially when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin their Breakthrough Therapy designation twice for treatment-resistant depression.

Citing this research, initiatives in favor of therapeutic psilocybin are occurring nationwide, including Oregon's new therapeutic psilocybin program, which just launched this year, along with Colorado recently decriminalizing and partially legalizing psilocybin, in addition to counties across the nation decriminalizing psilocybin and other similar psychedelics.

With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to therapeutic psilocybin. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,  
Amelia Morgan-Rothschild

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 11:09:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robin Martin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,**

**My name is Dr. Robin Martin, I am a psychiatrist who trained and now practice in Honolulu, and am also assistant clinical faculty with the Department of Psychiatry at UH, and I am in strong support of SB1454 which will establish the therapeutic psilocybin working group.**

In my profession I see on a daily basis the significant mental health challenges our state is facing, and the limitations in our current treatment paradigms. Major depression is becoming the leading cause of disability worldwide, and with only 1-2 thirds of these folks getting significant benefit from typical medication and therapy approaches. PTSD impacts 5% of the population with many whom are not helped with standard therapies. We are in desperate need of new approaches.

More and more clinical trials are being run in major research institutions and published in top tier medical journals, showing psilocybin assisted therapy to be a promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatment for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and PTSD. These treatments are typically done in supervised clinical settings combined with psychotherapy

The FDA has granted psilocybin breakthrough therapy designation , which is designated for a **drug that treats a serious or life-threatening condition** and preliminary clinical evidence indicates that the drug may demonstrate substantial improvement on a clinically significant endpoint(s) over available therapies.

Many municipalities around the country and around the world are moving forward with making these treatments available to the patients who need it most. Hawaii should not fall behind in

bringing innovative and effective treatments to its people. This bill is an important step in that direction.

Please support this measure.

Mahalo,

Dr. Robin Martin

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 11:12:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mariah Moncada	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mariah Moncada, I currently live in Portland, Oregon but from 2013-2017 I lived in Waimanalo, Manoa, and Kahalu’u on Oahu. **I am writing in strong support of SB1454**, which will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group.

After years of experiencing how psychedelics can be beneficial to others in my community and also myself, I have been inspired to hold space professionally for others to similarly have opportunities for profound healing and transformational experiences. After Oregon’s passing of Measure 109 in 2020, and the implementation in early 2023, I am now enrolled in a Psilocybin Service Facilitator training program so that I may dedicate my time to holding safe space for others to have meaningful experiences and opportunities to heal ailments that might not benefit from other healing modalities alone. Current mental health treatment options certainly have a role to play in helping people heal, but often talk therapy or pharmaceuticals have encountered road blocks in how far they can take a patient and also how quickly. Psychedelics have often served as a catalyst for processing mental health conditions in a series of sessions instead of years and years of talk therapy and adjustments of pharmaceutical cocktails to find just the right match. Time is an especially potent topic to take into consideration in making mental health care accessible and equitable. There will be individuals who may not have the luxury of time to be able to dedicate weekly or monthly therapy sessions over a series of years to process their conditions. It is important to consider the people who may have intensive work schedules, or people who have families with young children where organizing the time to take away from the family can be challenging. Additionally, if those parents or caretakers were able to address their conditions early on there is potential for their family members to benefit from their caretakers ability to work through their anxiety, depression, traumas, and so on and so forth. This leads to more opportunities over the duration of the relationship for positive ways of relating. This is impactful for the individual, the family, and also the general community at large. In Oregon's measure we are not limited to psilocybin usage for strictly therapeutic or medicinal purposes, but it is undeniable the role psilocybin will play in helping people process their conditions and come out on the other side of the session with new perspectives and understandings of their mental health and personal empowerment. Having access to psilocybin could be some people’s most promising tool to help find mental peace, clarity, wellbeing, and self actualization.

Researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring plant-based medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses.

Major research and academic institutions around the world has shown psilocybin to be a promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatment for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety, especially when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin their Breakthrough Therapy designation twice for treatment-resistant depression.

Citing this research, initiatives in favor of therapeutic psilocybin are occurring nationwide, including Oregon's new therapeutic psilocybin program, which just launched this year, along with Colorado recently decriminalizing and partially legalizing psilocybin, in addition to counties across the nation decriminalizing psilocybin and other similar psychedelics.

With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to therapeutic psilocybin. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,

Mariah Moncada

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 11:24:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erica Yamauchi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Erica Yamauchi, I live in Honolulu, and I am writing **in strong support of SB1454**, which will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group.

Researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring plant-based medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses.

Major research and academic institutions around the world has shown psilocybin to be a promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatment for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety, especially when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin their Breakthrough Therapy designation twice for treatment-resistant depression.

Citing this research, initiatives in favor of therapeutic psilocybin are occurring nationwide, including Oregon’s new therapeutic psilocybin program, which just launched this year, along with Colorado recently decriminalizing and partially legalizing psilocybin, in addition to counties across the nation decriminalizing psilocybin and other similar psychedelics.

With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to therapeutic psilocybin. Please support this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Erica Yamauchi (Kaimukī/Wilhelmina Rise)

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 6:14:09 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chloe Groom	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou: Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Chloe Groom, I live in Kaneohe, and I am writing **in solid support of this measure**. This measure will establish the therapeutic psilocybin working group to examine the therapeutic effects of psilocybin and develop a long-term strategic plan to ensure the availability of therapeutic psilocybin or psilocybin-based products that are safe, accessible, and affordable for adults 21 years of age or older.

I am a professional practitioner of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Western Herbalism. Over the past decade, I have held consultations with dozens of clients who suffer from PTSD, cognitive decline, depression, suicidal ideation, and crippling social anxiety. Herbal & naturopathic medicine do show immense success for managing these conditions. However, the benefits of psychedelic medicine therapy in conjunction with herbal medicine, nutrition education, and lifestyle changes are truly promising. Research from major institutions as well as indigenous knowledge show that psilocybin is a safe treatment for breaking through cycles of addiction, depression, and anxiety. Allow me to explain “cycles.” People who experience depression and post-traumatic stress disorder are often locked in periods of excessive self-consciousness and self-criticism including comparing themselves to others, or other ideologies of what is desirable and worthy. Often a sense of inadequacy is present due to various social factors in the media and Academia. This cycle can spiral downwards towards deeper depression, feelings of worthlessness and suicidal thoughts. Brain imaging data from 2021 suggests that psilocybin could break such vicious cycles by impacting connectivity in the default mode network. This 2021 study conducted by neuroscientist Alex Kwan and his colleagues at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, showed how psilocybin could **facilitate the remodeling of neuronal circuits!**

This is just one pathway we can look at the benefits of psilocybin-assisted treatment. Personally, I have been afflicted by immense trauma that locked down my capacity to express and cry. With the help of psilocybin mushrooms and ceremony in Chiapas in Mexico, I was able to access my



heart and release years of sorrow through therapeutic crying and dancing. A sense of wonder came through me that helped me to feel valuable, worthy, whole and connected to nature. Since then, I have deeply researched how psilocybin could help loved ones dealing with end-of-life anxiety, social anxiety, and feelings of worthlessness. I believe this medicine is safe, effective, sustainable, and has the potential to be affordable. I would like the ability to gain access to legally integrating therapeutic psilocybin into my holistic health consultations with working class people and veterans from Hawai‘i and mainland.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring plant-based medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin their Breakthrough Therapy designation for treatment-resistant depression.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin. Citing this research, groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psilocybin—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon and Initiative 81 in Washington, D.C.—are occurring at all levels of government, private and public research institutions, and throughout mainstream society.

We do not want the citizens of Hawai‘i to miss out on this healing modality. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,

Chloe Groom

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 7:57:06 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John James Lester	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee,

I strongly support SB1454.

As a 6-year active duty disabled veteran, I have seen too many of my brothers and sisters who have paid the price during service to our Country be overwhelmed with drug addiction and mental challenges.

I urge you to look at the volumes of data and studies regarding psilocybin worldwide. The opioid crisis has been a huge burden on our society, and this modality holds very high possibility to help alleviate much suffering and cost to our society. And unlike marijuana and other drugs it does not have the addictive or long term side affects – quite amazing and cost affective – as it has the capacity in a short term treatment and with psychotherapy to be able to actually break the addiction cycle.

Please allow our local professionals to have the opportunity to study and utilize this directly so they can report to this body with their findings.

**SEAN LESTER**

**KIHEI MAUI HAWAII**

**The association of psychedelic use and opioid use disorders among illicit users in the United States**

Show all authors

[Vincent D Pisano](#), [Nathaniel P Putnam](#), [Hannah M Kramer](#), ... First Published February 14, 2017  
Research Article [Find in PubMed](#)

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0269881117691453>

Preliminary studies show psychedelic compounds administered with psychotherapy are potentially effective and durable substance misuse interventions. However, little is known about the association between psychedelic use and substance misuse in the general population. This

study investigated the association between psychedelic use and past year opioid use disorders within illicit opioid users.

#### Methods:

While controlling for socio-demographic covariates and the use of other substances, the relationship between classic psychedelic use and past year opioid use disorders was analyzed within 44,000 illicit opioid users who completed the National Survey on Drug Use and Health from 2008 to 2013.

#### Results:

Among respondents with a history of illicit opioid use, psychedelic drug use is associated with 27% reduced risk of past year opioid dependence (weighted risk ratio = 0.73 (0.60–0.89)  $p = 0.002$ ) and 40% reduced risk of past year opioid abuse (weighted risk ratio = 0.60 (0.41–0.86)  $p = 0.006$ ). Other than marijuana use, which was associated with 55% reduced risk of past year opioid abuse (weighted risk ratio = 0.45 (0.30–0.66)  $p < 0.001$ ), no other illicit drug was associated with a reduced risk of past year opioid dependence or abuse.

#### Conclusion:

Experience with psychedelic drugs is associated with decreased risk of opioid abuse and dependence. Conversely, other illicit drug use history is largely associated with increased risk of opioid abuse and dependence. These findings suggest that psychedelics are associated with positive psychological characteristics and are consistent with prior reports suggesting efficacy in treatment of substance use disorders.

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 8:53:22 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Travis Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Travis Smith, I live in Waimanalo, Oahu, and I am writing **in strong support of SB1454**, which will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group.

Researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring plant-based medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses.

Major research and academic institutions around the world has shown psilocybin to be a promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatment for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety, especially when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin their Breakthrough Therapy designation twice for treatment-resistant depression.

Citing this research, initiatives in favor of therapeutic psilocybin are occurring nationwide, including Oregon’s new therapeutic psilocybin program, which just launched this year, along with Colorado recently decriminalizing and partially legalizing psilocybin, in addition to counties across the nation decriminalizing psilocybin and other similar psychedelics.

With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to therapeutic psilocybin. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,

Travis Smith

# Gerald S. Clay

## Attorney at Law

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Honolulu, HI 96813

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Email: [gclay@paclawteam.com](mailto:gclay@paclawteam.com)

**LATE**

February 21, 2023

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

I am a 50-year resident of Oahu living in Nuuanu. I am a practicing attorney where I have witnessed a growth in personal mental problems particularly of folks involved in person-to-person disputes. I predict this trend will grow unless better medical treatments are discovered, determined, and actually used.


I have researched medicines including medical investigations of psilocybin, I believe psilocybin holds a positive key to recovering from Anxiety, Depression, ADD, Bi-polar afflictions, Chronic Pain, and Street Drug Addiction.

However, I believe we must go slow. I believe we must allow Hawaii's medical community to use present psilocybin research and knowledge to find new paths to better Hawaii's mental health problems.

I support bill no SB1454 as the starting point to better our Hawaiian society. The states of Oregon and Colorado have already determined this is a good starting point for their states afflicted residence.

Remember, this is just a starting point and not a state sanctioned free-for-all to use psychedelics. I believe it is in Hawaii's best interest to be the next state to begin **medical** study of psilocybin, and I believe SB 1454 is a good and safe starting point.

Thank you.



Gerald S. Clay.

**LATE**

Aloha mai kakou e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Oriana Filiaci, I live in the ahupua'a of Honolulu on the island of O'ahu and I am writing **in strong support of SB1454**, which will establish the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group.

I am Director of Admissions & Cultural Programming at SoundMind Institute, an organization providing training, treatment, research, and humanitarian work in the realm of psychedelic medicine. I am also studying to earn my medical degree (MD) and practice la'au lapa'au (traditional Hawaiian herbal healing). I am trained in and have personally benefited from psychedelic-assisted therapy. I have had the privilege of witnessing many individuals and families benefit from the responsible and intentional use of these medicines, including psilocybin and MDMA, for deep healing.

Researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring plant-based medicines like psilocybin above ground for therapeutic uses.

Major research and academic institutions around the world have shown psilocybin to be a promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatment for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant psilocybin a Breakthrough Therapy designation twice for treatment-resistant depression.

Citing this research, initiatives in favor of therapeutic psilocybin are occurring nationwide, including Oregon's new therapeutic psilocybin program, which just launched in 2023, along with Colorado recently decriminalizing and partially legalizing psilocybin, in addition to counties across the nation decriminalizing psilocybin and other similar psychedelics.

With mental health becoming a more pressing issue in our communities, we all know someone who stands to benefit from access to therapeutic psilocybin. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,

Oriana Filiaci, MA  
*Director of Admissions & Cultural Programming*

**soundmind**

**LATE**

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 11:18:33 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tane Datta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill. We need all available tools for mental health and to reduce destructive behaviors

**LATE**

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 2:00:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Melissa Sanchez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of SB 1454. I believe in the many benefits of psilocybin assisted therapies and I strongly believe that the establishment of the Therapeutic Psilocybin Working Group to examine the medicinal and therapeutic effects of psilocybin is a progressive and great direction to move forward with. I think that the citizens of the State of Hawai'i deserve access to the best quality of life and I strongly believe that psilocybin services should be accessible for our population in the State. Psilocybin has been proven to help with a myriad of mental health ailments that our people suffer from in the USA like depression, anxiety and PTSD. A Working Group would benefit the people of Hawai'i greatly and should be adopted.



**LATE**

**SB-1454-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 2:19:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stefano Quarta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Stefano, I live in Pahoā, Hawai'i Island, and I am writing **in strong support of SB1454**, which will establish the Beneficial Treatments Advisory Council.

I've experienced a number of people, specifically parents of friends, that have stopped their addictive habits related to smoking and alcohol. Addictions that have plagued them for decades, stopped within a mere month over the course of psychological dialogues and professionally mediated psychedelic therapy(ies). I have seen firsthand the radical change and the profound effect of hope rise within my friends from their parent's triumph. Psychedelic therapy can be a method for to break multi-generational inherited addictions and create a brighter future.

Researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic medicine on the brain and body, so it is with growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring safe medicines like psilocybin and MDMA above ground for therapeutic uses.

Major research and academic institutions around the world has shown psilocybin and MDMA to be promising and even groundbreaking clinical treatments for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses including anxiety, addiction, depression, end-of-life anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psilocybin is increasingly considered one of the most natural, effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for depression and anxiety, especially when administered in clinical settings. MDMA is also considered one of the most effective treatments for PTSD, which affects 5% of the U.S. population.

These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration to grant both psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy designation to expedite research and potentially approval. Both are expected to be rescheduled and approved for medical use in the next few years federally.

With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to therapeutic psilocybin. Please support this measure.

Mahalo,  
Stefano Quarta