

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

**Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 987**  
**RELATING TO HEALTH**

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

Hearing Date, Time and Room Number: Monday, February 13, 2023 at 1 p.m. in Rm. 225/VIDEO

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (“Department”) requests that this measure be  
2 considered as a vehicle to provide this needed funding so long as it does not supplant the  
3 priorities and requests outlined in the Governors executive budget request.

4 **Department Position:** The Department strongly supports this measure and offers comments.

5 **Department Testimony:** The Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD) provides the following  
6 testimony on behalf of the Department.

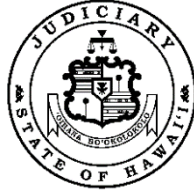
7 The Department is committed to addressing the needs of individuals who live with  
8 behavioral health challenges and need necessary treatment when it is in their best interest.  
9 Methods to establish authorization to treat are important to ensure the application of those  
10 services to those who would benefit from treatment over their objection. The Department  
11 supports the availability and effectiveness of court and administrative procedures to obtain  
12 authorization to treat over objection, including working with state agencies, the Judiciary, and  
13 community partners to improve access and implementation.

14 We recognize that existing policies are not fully implemented at this time. Successful  
15 implementation depends on an aligned understanding of laws and policies across professional  
16 disciplines.

1           We strongly support our role in the development and implementation of educational  
2 and training activities that will result in more effective implementation of emergency  
3 examination, emergency hospitalization and Assisted Community Treatment.

4   **Offered Amendments:** None.

5           Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



*The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i*

**Testimony to the Thirty-Second State Legislature  
2023 Regular Session**

**Senate Committee on Health and Human Services**  
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

Monday, February 13, 2023, 1:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 225 & Via Videoconference

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY**

by:

Brandon M. Kimura  
Deputy Administrative Director of the Courts

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**Bill No. and Title:** Senate Bill No. 987, Relating to Health.

**Purpose:** Appropriates funds to the department of health to develop and implement statewide media, education, and training activities for policies related to emergency examination and hospitalization and assisted community treatment for those in need of mental health intervention.

**Judiciary's Position:**

The Judiciary supports the intent of this measure—for the Department of Health to develop and implement statewide media, education, and training activities for policies related to emergency examination and hospitalization and assisted community treatment for those in need of mental health intervention.

Broad and deep understanding by stakeholders in this area is critical to the efficiency and effectiveness of the healthcare system and justice system, and to the larger community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**SB-987**

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 7:16:44 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/13/2023 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Louis Erteschik	Testifying for Hawaii Disability Rights Center	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We think ACT is a good program and this ought to help strengthen it.

**SB-987**

Submitted on: 2/11/2023 9:14:35 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/13/2023 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support this measure, please consider. I have heard of ACT but have had difficulty implementing it, especially on the Big Island.

Naomi Bikle, MD | Psychiatry | Kailua Kona, HI

**SB-987**

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 12:56:47 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/13/2023 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support this bill.

Since I've been involved with developing ACT over several years I've found out that often physicians, facilities and hospitals aren't using it because they are often not aware of this outpatient treatment alternative. Education and training is critical.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair  
Monday, February 13, 2023 1:00 PM  
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

**I am writing in strong support of SB677.**

My name is Marya Grambs and, while I am testifying as an individual, I was previously Executive Director of Mental Health America of Hawaii, and I am currently President of the Board of Partners in Care's nonprofit arm, and member of the Board of Directors of Waikiki Health.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) reports that 187,000 adults in Hawai'i suffer from a mental health condition and 41,000 of our citizens experience a serious mental illness. But most are unable to access psychiatric care in the community: **Hawaii is in the category of states having the greatest shortage of psychiatrists in the country**; we have less than 18% of psychiatrists needed for our mental health population. **This means that 80% of adults with mental health conditions (= 153,000 individuals) and 80% of adults with serious mental illness (= 33,000 individuals) cannot access psychiatric care.**

Sadly, almost 70 percent of Hawai'i's youth ages 6-17 who have depression did not receive any care in the past year.

The needs are especially acute in our rural areas.

So most people with mental health conditions who need medication in all likelihood obtain it from their **primary care providers (PCP) – who have no training in psychopharmacology at all – or they don't get it.**

Enabling Clinical Psychologists, who by definition have a Ph.D., obtain prescriptive authority will alleviate that gap.

One advantage of enabling specially trained Clinical Psychologists to prescribe is that they are often the treating clinician, providing ongoing mental health treatment, such as psychotherapy, to the patient, and thus far better acquainted with the patient's condition, compared to a psychiatrist who often conducts a 15-minute med-management appointment per month, having little knowledge of the patient outside of that time.

Prescriptive authority for these specially trained Clinical Psychologists (RxPs) is a safe and already utilized option in Louisiana, New Mexico, Illinois, Iowa and Idaho, in Federally Qualified Health Centers, in Native American Indian Health Centers, and in the Department of Defense; Colorado just became the sixth state to approve such a law. In New Mexico RxPs have increased access to care among Medicaid patients by 60%; in both New Mexico and Louisiana, after 20 years of practice, there have been no verdicts against RxPs.

One 2020 study of RxPs found that prescribing psychologists differ from psychiatrists and other health care practitioners in that

- they more often integrate prescribing medications with talk therapy.
- only 0.8% of RxP patients' sessions lasted 15 minutes or less, compared to psychiatrists, with whom 21.5% of visits were 15 minutes or less.

The two-year+ training is quite rigorous, based in part on the already proven training of the U.S. Dept of Defense's training program, and adhering to the American Psychological Association's Recommended Post-Doctoral Training in Psychopharmacology for Prescription Privileges.

Prescribing psychologists have provided care for more than twenty years elsewhere in the United States and could be making a difference today in Hawaii. I urge you to pass SB677.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.



**LATE**

**SB-987**

Submitted on: 2/13/2023 8:51:11 AM

Testimony for HHS on 2/13/2023 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ellen Godbey Carson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill, which will provide critical funds to DOH to providing training on procedures and supportive services for individuals needing emergency examination, hospitalization, and ACT orders. There is too much mis-information and misunderstanding about best practices and procedures to assist people experiencing severe mental illness.

We should be supporting the widespread education of not only mental health providers, case managers, and homeless services providers, but also the legal entities that participate in the filing and hearing of petitions to facilitate access to needed treatment for those with mental illness.

Training is also needed to expand the availability of guardians ad litem for ACT petitions.

So please approve this bill and appropriations for these worthy efforts.

Ellen Godbey Carson