



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

Testimony in SUPPORT of H.B. 2553 H.D. 2
RELATING TO PHARMACISTS

REPRESENTATIVE DAVID A. TARNAS, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

1 Hearing Date, Time and Room Number: 2/28/24, 2:00 PM, ROOM 325

2 **Fiscal Implications:** No fiscal implications determined for the Department of Health.

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

4 **Department Testimony:** The Disease Outbreak Control Division (DOCD) provides the following
5 testimony on behalf of the Department.

6 According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, vaccination coverage
7 among Hawaii Kindergarteners for routinely recommended childhood vaccines (e.g., measles,
8 mumps, and rubella; diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis; polio; etc.) has declined by nearly ten
9 percentage points between the period of 2017 – 2022 and remains below the U.S. national
10 average. In the effort to ensure continued expanded access to immunizations in settings such
11 as pharmacies, HDOH/DOCD supports incorporation of federal PREP Act authorizations in
12 Hawaii statute. As demonstrated during the COVID-19 public health emergency, pharmacies'
13 ability to conduct mobile/off-site vaccination clinics for seasonal vaccines such as influenza and
14 COVID-19 also ensure continued options for school-located vaccination clinics.

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



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Bonnie Irwin, Chancellor

and

Rae Matsumoto, Dean

Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy

University of Hawai'i at Hilo

HB 2553 HD2 – RELATING TO PHARMACISTS

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2553 HD2. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) supports HB 2553 HD2, which authorizes pharmacists to administer vaccines to persons three years of age or older; pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen; and pharmacists to order vaccines for administration to persons between the ages of three and seventeen.

HB 2553 HD2 essentially extends the vaccination services already permitted in the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which is set to expire at the end of 2024. Passage of HB 2553 HD2 will ensure that the vaccination services provided by pharmacists, along with pharmacy interns and technicians under their supervision, can continue in Hawai'i after the federal emergency authorization ends. It is important to note that even when working under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist, the pharmacy interns and technicians have been and will continue to be required to have specialized training to administer the vaccinations. Moreover, as different types of vaccines become available and recommended for use in children by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, they will also be covered through this legislation.

The ability to leverage the accessible vaccination services of pharmacists, pharmacy interns and technicians for children is significant. It has been reported that more than 90% of Americans live within 2 miles of a community pharmacy, and annually, Americans visit their pharmacy 35 times, as compared to 4 visits to their primary care provider. Since the pandemic, members of the public and other health care providers have come to depend on pharmacists, pharmacy interns and technicians to provide their vaccinations. This accessibility is important because childhood vaccination rates

have been decreasing, eliciting public health concerns as children and communities have become more vulnerable to outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases.

In summary, passage of HB 2553 HD2 will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians to continue to provide vaccination services for children, which families and communities across Hawai'i need and have come to expect. Please allow us to continue to serve and protect the wellbeing of the people of Hawai'i by passing this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2553 HD2.



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

1010 Richards Street, Room 118 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V) • TTY (808) 586-8162 • Fax (808) 586-8129

February 28, 2024

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

House Bill 2553 HD2 – Relating to Pharmacists

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports House Bill 2553 HD2 – Relating to Pharmacists.

The bill authorizes pharmacists to administer vaccines to persons three years of age or older. Authorizes pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen, if certain requirements are met. Authorizes pharmacists to order vaccines for administration to persons between the ages of three and seventeen.

Vaccines have proven to be a valuable tool in preventing various types of diseases and associated disabilities. Access to an authorized physician or nurse can be challenging, especially in certain rural communities. This bill would help to provide convenient options for parents and guardians wishing to vaccinate their children.

Thank you for considering our position.

Respectfully submitted,

KIRBY L. SHAW
Executive Director

Representative David Tarnas, Chair
Representative Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair
House Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee

February 28, 2024; 2:00 p.m
Conference room 325

RE: HB 2553 HD2 - Relating to Pharmacists – In Support

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama and Members of the Committee:

CVS Health is writing in support of HB 2553 HD2, which authorizes pharmacists to administer vaccines to persons three years of age or older; authorizes pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen, if certain requirements are met; and authorizes pharmacists to order vaccines for administration to persons between the ages of three and seventeen.

This bill is a positive step in providing increased and equitable access to vaccinations approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to pediatric patients. The increased access to vaccinations at pharmacies will support the patients of Hawaii by providing critical disease prevention.

Pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians should be allowed to administer all vaccines that can be administered by a pharmacist, while under the supervision of a pharmacist. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) expanded authority to pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians. They have demonstrated their clinical ability to safely administer vaccinations. HB 2553 HD2 will codify this allowance in State law and address the December 2024 expiration of the PREP Act by similarly allowing pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to continue to administer vaccinations to those three years old and above.

On behalf of CVS Health, I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and ask for your favorable consideration in passing HB 2553 HD2 to ensure expanded and equitable access to immunizations.

Respectfully,

Carla Saporta Cheng
Senior Director of State Government Affairs
CVS Health

Testimony of the Board of Pharmacy

**Before the
House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Wednesday, February 28, 2024
2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 325 and Videoconference**

**On the following measure:
H. B. 2553, H.D. 2, RELATING TO PHARMACISTS**

Chair Tamas and Members of the Committee:

My name is James Skizewski, and I am the Executive Officer of the Board of Pharmacy (Board). The Board supports this bill.

The purposes of this bill are to authorize: (1) licensed pharmacists to administer vaccines to persons three years of age or older; (2) pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen, if certain requirements are met; and (3) pharmacists to order vaccines for administration to persons between the ages of three and seventeen.

The Board would like to emphasize the challenges the State currently faces regarding the shortage of healthcare providers, especially in rural areas and the neighbor islands. Pharmacies are geographically dispersed throughout the community with extended hours of operation, making access to health care provided through pharmacies readily available for patients in each locality. Patients have established relationships of trust with and recognize pharmacists as healthcare professionals. This measure will aid in the development of access to quality health care across the State, most importantly, in underserved rural areas of Hawaii.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) expanded authority to pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians. Pharmacists and properly trained staff aided in administering COVID-19 tests and vaccines in pharmacies across the State, safely expanding patient access to health care. This bill will address the upcoming expiration of the PREP Act (December 2024) by similarly allowing pharmacists, properly trained pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians to continue to administer vaccines to

those age three (3) and older. The measure will guarantee that pharmacies and staff can continue to provide the public with access to quality health services in a manner which has proven fruitful in recent years. Furthermore, the allowance for pharmacists to order vaccinations for those age three (3) and above will aid the State in meeting the rising demand for immunizations.

The Board acknowledges and appreciates the inclusion of a minimum of two credit hours in immunization-related continuing education courses during each licensing biennium. This requirement will ensure vaccines are properly administered even as new techniques and methods are developed. Additionally, the included required certificate of basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and patient vaccination history review will further safeguard the public from possible adverse effects.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



Testimony presented before the
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
February 28, 2024

Corrie L. Sanders on behalf of
The Hawai'i Pharmacists Association (HPhA)

To the honorable Chair Tarnas and members of the Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee,

I am writing to emphasize the critical importance of HB2553 and to offer the unwavering support of the Hawaii Pharmacists Association (HPhA).

HPhA acknowledges the pressing need for this measure, particularly in addressing the ongoing provider shortage in our state, specifically in remote and medically underserved areas. We would like to underscore that providers and patients alike have become increasingly dependent on the accessibility and expertise of community pharmacies in delivering essential vaccination services.

Since enactment of the PREP Act, the success of community pharmacy led vaccination efforts has become evident with positive outcomes contributing to public health. It is essential to recognize that this has not only improved access but has also become an integral component of Hawaii's public health infrastructure.

Points for consideration specifically surrounding documentation and training:

- All vaccinations administered in a community pharmacy must be reported to the Hawaii State Immunization Registry (HIR) within 5 business days. **All providers can gain access to HIR to prevent gaps in communication and vaccination duplication.**
- Though the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) does not currently regulate pharmacy technicians, the responsibility of vaccine immunization ultimately falls underneath the pharmacist, not the DCCA. There would be no additional workload required by the DCCA. **This is similar to medical assistants, also not regulated by the DCCA, that are vaccinating in other settings underneath the direct supervision of a licensed healthcare provider.**
- Pharmacy technicians and interns are currently required to become nationally certified in immunization administration prior to vaccinating patients. This is also mandated in HB2553.
- There is a shortage of pharmacy technicians across the state, and vaccination authorities provide opportunities for increased salaries and professional growth that currently are lacking.
- Vaccination administration allows for community pharmacies to have an additional revenue stream outside of medication dispensing, which is significantly impactful for our independent community pharmacies in remote locations.
- There is literature from the Pacific Research Institute that supports shifting vaccinations to pharmacies significantly reduces costs to both health systems and patients. ¹

1. Wingarden W. Promoting Access and Lowering Costs in Healthcare: The Case of Empowering Pharmacists to Increase Adult Vaccination Rates; 2018. Accessed Jan 28, 2024. Accessed from: https://www.pacificresearch.org/wpcontent/uploads/2018/04/AdultVaccination_F_web.pdf

Pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns have proven themselves capable, providing a reliable and accessible avenue for vaccination services in Hawai'i for nearly four years. Discontinuation would create a void in healthcare delivery, leading to potential delays in immunization and exacerbating existing healthcare disparities. **It would be a public health concern to abruptly remove these provisions from the healthcare teams, including pharmacy interns and technicians, that have already established proof of concept in their ability to provide vaccinations to our communities.**

We look forward to working towards a solution that leverages the community pharmacy workforce to continue this necessary initiative for years to come.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Corrie L. Sanders". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Corrie L. Sanders, PharmD., BCACP, CPGx
President, Hawai'i Pharmacists Association



MOLOKA'I DRUGS, INC.
EST. 1935

February 27, 2024

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2553, HD2 – RELATING TO PHARMACISTS – Vaccination Administration

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs:

As a rural healthcare provider, access to comprehensive, high-quality health care services is our mission at Moloka'i Drugs. On behalf of our employees and patients, I am testifying in favor of HB2553, which will allow our professional staff to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. We are currently immunizing children from 14-17 years old with signed permission from a parent or guardian. We also support HB2553 as it ensures our pharmacists and our professional staff will be able to continue administering vaccines after the temporary federal authority to administer expires.

This bill will also help our island's residents with six-days-a-week access. Moloka'i Drugs is open Monday to Saturday and services all customers needing vaccines. Currently, only two facilities -- Moloka'i General Hospital's Outpatient Clinic and Moloka'i Community Health Center -- vaccinate children under 14; you need to make an appointment in advance and registered as a patient of either medical facility. Both are open only Monday to Friday and closed on all major holidays.

At Moloka'i Drugs, all of our vaccinations are completed in a private, immunization room we specifically built in 2021. All of our vaccines are available via walk-in and no appointment is necessary.

We are asked by parents if we can give flu or other shots to their children. Pre-COVID-19, Moloka'i public school students were able to garner flu shots at their schools. Post-COVID-19, this is not an option.

Moloka'i is a medically underserved area and it is critical that we have access to serving our children. Moloka'i Drugs is here to serve our children. Therefore, we ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns to immunize from age three and vote in support of HB2553. It is critical that we increase access to comprehensive, high-quality healthcare services on all islands.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Mikami Svetin /s/

Kimberly Mikami Svetin
President
Moloka'i Drugs, Inc.
P.O. Box 558
Kaunakakai, HI 96748
Work 808-553-5790



SanHi

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

DATE: February 28, 2024

TO: Representative David Tarnas
Chair, House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Tiffany Yajima / Mihoko Ito

RE: **H.B. 2553, H.D.2 – Relating to Pharmacists**
Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room: 325

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs:

We submit this testimony on behalf of Walgreen Co. (“Walgreens”). Walgreens operates stores at more than 8,200 locations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. In Hawaii, Walgreens now has 19 stores on the islands of Oahu, Maui, and Hawaii.

Walgreens submits this testimony in **support** of H.B. 2553, H.D. 2 which authorizes pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen, if certain requirements are met, and authorizes licensed pharmacists to order and administer vaccines to persons between the ages of three and seventeen.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government issued the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) in 2020. Pursuant to the PREP Act, pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns have been safely administering these vaccinations in the pharmacy setting. When the PREP Act expires at the end of 2024, this important health care service will no longer be available to persons ages three through ten. As a result, this limitation will have an impact on youth access to vaccinations, particularly in rural communities where pharmacies serve as crucial access points for health care.

It is for these reasons that we are in support of this measure and ask the committee to pass the bill for further discussion.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

February 28, 2024

The Honorable David Tarnas, Chair
The Honorable Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair
House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 2553 – PHARMACISTS VACCINATION AUTHORITIES

Chairperson Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and members of the committee:

We thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on **HOUSE BILL 2553**, a bill that allows licensed pharmacists to independently order and administer vaccines to individuals 3 years and older. We **SUPPORT** this bill as it ensures pharmacists will be able to continue administering vaccines after their temporary federal authority to administer expires.

NCPA represents the interest of America's community pharmacists, including owners of more than 19,400 independent community pharmacies across the United States and 44 independent pharmacies in Hawaii. These Hawaii pharmacies filled over 3 million prescriptions last year, impacting the lives of thousands of patients in your state. Over 90% of Americans live within five miles of a community pharmacy,¹ and more than any other segment of the pharmacy industry, independent community pharmacies are often located in underserved rural and urban areas. These pharmacies are frequently the most accessible healthcare providers in many Hawaii communities and are vital in the provision of immunizations, testing, and other services. This bill will not only allow pharmacies to expand their vaccination capacity but could also be an opportunity for patients without a medical home or primary care provider to be plugged in to the healthcare system and to access other services they might not otherwise receive.

With over 900 pharmacists practicing within Hawaii, approval of this legislation will allow pharmacists, pharmacy personnel, and pharmacies to meet the demand for health care services and continue to be a gateway for patients to access quality care. Hawaii pharmacists have been administering vaccines since October 2020, when the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued guidance related to the HHS Declaration Under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19.

This federal guidance also authorized qualified pharmacy technicians, acting under the supervision of a qualified pharmacist, to administer Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-authorized or FDA-licensed COVID-19 vaccines to persons ages three or older and to administer FDA-authorized or FDA-licensed ACIP-recommended vaccines to persons ages three through 18 according to Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP's) standard

¹ NCPDP Pharmacy File, ArcGIS Census Tract File, NACDS Economics Department.

immunization schedule.² In August 2021, this temporary federal authority was expanded to authorize qualified pharmacy technicians to administer seasonal influenza vaccines, under the supervision of a qualified pharmacist, to persons ages 19 and older consistent with ACIP recommendations.³

As beneficial as this temporary federal authority has been in expanding access to care and relieving some of the burden on an overstressed healthcare system, it is set to expire in **December 2024**. Approval of this bill will make this temporary federal authority permanent under state scope of practice, and it expands the authority to cover adult immunizations beyond influenza and COVID-19 as well.

NCPA strongly supports the Hawaii Pharmacists Association in their advocacy to make the federal PREP ACT authorities permanent for Hawaii pharmacists to order and administer vaccinations. We appreciate the committee's attention to this important public health, and we urge approval from its members.

Sincerely,



Belawoe Akwakoku
Associate Director, State Government Affairs
National Community Pharmacists Association

² Guidance for PREP Act Coverage for Qualified Pharmacy Technicians and State-Authorized Pharmacy Interns for Childhood Vaccines, COVID-19 Vaccines, and COVID-19 Testing (October 20, 2020), <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/prep-act-guidance.pdf>

³ Eighth Amendment to Declaration Under the PREP Act for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19 (August 4, 2021), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-08-04/pdf/2021-16681.pdf>



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION
Hearing on Thursday, February 28, 2024 2:00PM
Testimony in Support for HB2553

To the honorable Chair Tarnas and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

I am writing this letter to express my wholehearted support for Bill HB2553, which aims to adopt the provisions of the PREP Act to empower pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to administer routinely recommended vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and older. I believe that this step is crucial in enhancing access to vaccinations, particularly in areas or populations with limited access to pediatricians and primary-care providers.

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians play a pivotal role in healthcare, and their contribution to public health has been evident, especially during the recent COVID19 pandemic when they administered the COVID19 vaccine to nearly a third of all adults receiving the vaccine. The convenience and extended hours offered by pharmacies make them a valuable resource for vaccination services. Additionally, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are trusted healthcare professionals with established relationships with their patients, ensuring a level of comfort and familiarity that is essential in healthcare practices.

The adoption of the PREP Act provisions allowing pharmacists to administer vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and above, as well as expanding the role of trained and Nationally Certified Pharmacy Technicians, is a logical and necessary step. In Hawaii, our community has relied on pharmacies, especially during the past three years of the pandemic, to provide essential vaccination services without the need for a prescription. With the discontinuation of flu vaccinations for school-aged children at their schools, community pharmacies are uniquely positioned to fill this void and ensure that every child receives the necessary vaccinations.

Continuing to empower pharmacies to administer vaccines to individuals aged 3 and above will not only sustain access but also optimize the healthcare community's potential to keep our community healthy. This is particularly crucial in areas where there are shortages of healthcare providers or where access to medical services is limited.

I urge you to consider the importance of Bill HB2553 and its potential positive impact on public health in Hawaii. By supporting this bill, we can enhance the reach of vaccination services and contribute to the overall well-being of our community. I appreciate your dedication to public health and your consideration of this matter.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Megan Arbles".

Megan Arbles, Pharm D.
Director of Pharmacy Operations
KTA Super Stores

You're Someone Special Every Day at KTA!



February 27, 2024

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair
Rep. Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Re: HB 2553
Wednesday, February 28, 2024
2:00pm
Room 325
Position: Support

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

I am writing to express my support for HB2553, which proposes the adoption of provisions from the PREP Act to authorize pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to administer routine vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and older. This measure holds significant importance in bolstering vaccination access, especially in areas or demographics facing limited access to primary healthcare providers.

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians serve as integral pillars in our healthcare system, a fact underscored by their invaluable contributions, notably evident during the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Their pivotal role in administering vaccines, with nearly one-third of all adult COVID-19 vaccinations being administered through pharmacies, highlights their crucial position in public health efforts. Moreover, the convenience and extended operational hours of pharmacies render them essential hubs for vaccination services. These professionals, trusted and respected within their communities, foster a sense of familiarity and comfort vital for effective healthcare provision.

The incorporation of PREP Act provisions to authorize pharmacists in vaccinating individuals aged 3 and above, alongside expanding the responsibilities of trained and Nationally Certified Pharmacy Technicians, represents a logical and essential progression. In Hawaii, pharmacies have been indispensable during the pandemic, providing vital vaccination services without the need for a prescription. As traditional avenues for childhood vaccinations, such as school-based programs, diminish, community pharmacies emerge as crucial facilitators in ensuring universal vaccination coverage for children.

Continued empowerment of pharmacies in administering vaccines to individuals aged 3 and above not only sustains accessibility but also maximizes the healthcare sector's capacity to safeguard community health. This is particularly pivotal in regions facing healthcare provider shortages or limited medical service accessibility.

I urge you to recognize the significance of HB2553 and its potential to positively influence public health in Hawaii. Through your support for this bill, we can expand vaccination service reach and bolster community well-being. Your dedication to public health is deeply appreciated, and I thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Toby B. Taniguchi", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Toby B. Taniguchi
President

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Hearing on Wednesday, February 28, 2024 2:00PM

Testimony in Support for HB2553

To the honorable Chair Tarnas and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

I am writing this letter to express my wholehearted support for HB2553, which aims to adopt the provisions of the PREP Act to empower pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to administer routinely recommended vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and older. I believe that this step is crucial in enhancing access to vaccinations, particularly in areas or populations with limited access to pediatricians and primary-care providers.

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians play a pivotal role in healthcare, and their contribution to public health has been evident, especially during the recent COVID19 pandemic when they administered the COVID19 vaccine to nearly a third of all adults receiving the vaccine. The convenience and extended hours offered by pharmacies make them a valuable resource for vaccination services. Additionally, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are trusted healthcare professionals with established relationships with their patients, ensuring a level of comfort and familiarity that is essential in healthcare practices.

The adoption of the PREP Act provisions allowing pharmacists to administer vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and above, as well as expanding the role of trained and Nationally Certified Pharmacy Technicians, is a logical and necessary step. In Hawaii, our community has relied on pharmacies, especially during the past three years of the pandemic, to provide essential vaccination services without the need for a prescription. With the discontinuation of flu vaccinations for school-aged children at their schools, community pharmacies are uniquely positioned to fill this void and ensure that every child receives the necessary vaccinations.

Continuing to empower pharmacies to administer vaccines to individuals aged 3 and above will not only sustain access but also optimize the healthcare community's potential to keep our community healthy. This is particularly crucial in areas where there are shortages of healthcare providers or where access to medical services is limited.

I urge you to consider the importance of HB2553 and its potential positive impact on public health in Hawaii. By supporting this bill, we can enhance the reach of vaccination services and contribute to the overall well-being of our community. I appreciate your dedication to public health and your consideration of this matter.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Dayna Wong-Otis, PharmD, CDCES



HIPHI Board

Misty Pacheco, DrPH
Chair
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

Titiimaewa Ta'ase, JD
Secretary
State of Hawai'i, Deputy Public Defender

Carissa Holley, MEd
Treasurer
Hale Makua Health Services

Keshia Adolpho, LCSW
Na'au Healing Center

Debbie Erskine
ARCH-MEPS Consulting LLC, Owner

Camonia Graham - Tutt, PhD
University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu

Jennifer José Lo, MD
Hawai'i Health Partners

May Okihiro, MD, MS
John A. Burns School of Medicine,
Department of Pediatrics

Kathleen Roche, MS, RN, CENP
Kaiser Permanente

Dina Shek, JD
Medical-Legal Partnership
For Children in Hawai'i

Garret Sugai
HMSA

JoAnn Tsark, MPH
John A. Burns School of Medicine,
Native Hawaiian Research Office

HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community-Based Research &
Evaluation

Community Health
Worker Initiatives

COVID-19 Response

Environmental Health

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol-Free
Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Hui

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective/Healthy Aging
& Community Living

Public Health Workforce
Development

Date: February 27, 2024

To: Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair
Representative Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Re: Support HB2553 HD2 Relating to Pharmacists

Hrg: Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 2:00 PM

Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI)ⁱ is offering testimony in **Support of HB2553 HD2**, which would permit the allowances for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, who meet specific requirements to administer vaccines, which were part of the PREP Act, to continue beyond the slated end date of December 31, 2024.

The impact of healthcare provider shortages is apparent across the state, particularly in rural areas and neighbor islands. To increase access to care, it is vital to implement a variety of policies that can help address the issue. Allowing pharmacists to continue to provide vaccinations to patients is part of a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of the community.

The rates of vaccination for Hawai'i's school aged children has been steadily declining. That is the result of a number of factors including the decrease in primary care providers practicing in the state. Pharmacies are located in nearly every community statewide, and have the ability to help to vaccinate those communities, especially in rural areas and on neighbor islands. A vital piece of vaccinating outside of one's primary care provider (PCP) is to ensure the information reaches one's health home. Therefore, we support requiring the communication of information to PCPs either by removing the term "good faith effort" on page 13, line 10; or providing clarity that populating the Hawai'i Immunization Registry is required.

The steady decline in vaccinations is a public health crisis. This policy is part of a comprehensive approach to ensure healthy communities. Thank you for considering our testimony in support of HB2553 HD2.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Peggy Mierzwa'.

Peggy Mierzwa
Director of Policy & Advocacy
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

ⁱ Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.

HB-2553-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 9:52:24 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/28/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lara Gomez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Honorable Chair Tarnas & Vice Chair Takayama and members of the Committee of Judicial & Hawaiian Affairs

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

The pandemic proved that pharmacists and other community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

The ability of pharmacy interns to vaccinate is essential for their professional development and future employment. Most pharmacies in the US expect contemporary pharmacy graduates to be able to vaccinate from their first day of employment, thereby making the ability to master this expertise as a pharmacy intern essential for positioning our graduates for future employment. Pharmacy interns in Hawai'i and across the nation routinely perform vaccinations when they are on clinical rotations for their pharmacy practice experiences, and as part of community outreach activities. During the pandemic, pharmacy interns were integral to the effort to get the public vaccinated and the workflow for many pharmacies now depend on pharmacy interns to help vaccinate patients.

The role of the pharmacy technician expanded during the pandemic which played a critical role in pharmacy services. By having technicians complete the immunization training they are able to assist the pharmacist not only during healthcare crisis but during the everyday operations of the pharmacy. Improving workflow, improving efficiencies in operations all positively impact the services and healthcare of our patients in our communities.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawai'i by voting in favor of this bill.

HB-2553-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/27/2024 7:40:08 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/28/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wesley Sumida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024

COMMITTEE OF JUDICIAL & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Hearing on Wednesday, February 28th, 2024 2:00 PM

Testimony for HB2553 HD2

To the Honorable Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama and members of the Committee of Judicial & Hawaiian Affairs

I am testifying in **strong support** of **HB2553 HD2** which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

Please allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Thank you for your consideration,

Wesley Sumida

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION
Hearing on Thursday, February 28, 2024 2:00PM
Testimony in Support for HB2553

To the honorable Chair Tarnas and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacist at, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

Should my colleagues and I have the provisions of the PREP Act removed, our community would suffer. Pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians are valuable team members and are in engaged in dispensing and administering vaccinations to keep our communities safe and healthy.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Sincerely,

Lehua Kay, PharmD

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Hearing on Wednesday, February 28, 2024 2:00 PM
Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2553

To the honorable Chair Tarnas and members of the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacist, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to be involved in vaccine efforts that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

Should my colleagues and I have the provisions of the PREP Act removed, our community would suffer. Pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians are valuable team members and are engaged in dispensing and administering vaccinations to keep our communities safe and healthy.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Sincerely,

Mark Mierzwa, PharmD, BCPP

HB-2553-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/27/2024 7:56:22 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/28/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Honorable Chair Tarnas & Vice Chair Takayama and members of the Committee of Judicial & Hawaiian Affairs,

I am testifying in **strong support of HB2553** which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacist and faculty at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo, I was actively involved in the immunization efforts during the pandemic as the College of Pharmacy worked alongside the School of Medicine, School of Nursing, the DOH, and the Medical Reserve Corps to provide COVID-19 vaccination pods to quickly immunize and protect the Hawai‘i community. After completing the initial roll out of the COVID-19 vaccines, the need for vaccinations have not decreased. The PREP Act was put in place because of the decreased number of childhood vaccines seen in the years post-COVID-19 and the need to improve healthcare access to better protect our keiki and community. With the known physician shortage in Hawai‘i, it is imperative that we not reduce healthcare access.

Should the PREP Act be allowed to expire, we will likely see declining rates of childhood and other routine vaccinations, especially in rural areas. Continuing the terms of the PREP act, including the ability for certified pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations, will help to provide continued support and healthcare access to the remote and medically underserved. Continuing the eligibility of pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to children, the workflow in the community pharmacies will also be enhanced, as there are a growing number of routine vaccinations recommended each year. Additionally, the rate of vaccine preventable cancers will also decrease. HPV and Hepatitis B are known causes of cancer, and we are doing our community a disservice if we remove access to the prevention of infection and cancers.

I fully support this bill to allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawai‘i.

Nicole Young, PharmD

Associate Professor

Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, University of Hawai'i at Hilo

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION

Hearing on Thursday, February 28, 2024 2:00PM

Testimony in Support for HB2553

To the honorable Chair Tarnas and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will continue to allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a community based ambulatory care pharmacist, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. During the pandemic, my work days would often involve doing community based "home visits" to provide immunizations to home-bound patients. This service was greatly needed and appreciated by the community, and I truly cannot begin to imagine what many of these home-bound patients would have faced without this pharmacy support. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives. Should my colleagues and I have the provisions of the PREP Act removed, our community would have significant decreased access to preventative healthcare.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Thank you,

Lily Van, PharmD, BCACP, CDCES

HB-2553-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/27/2024 8:10:46 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/28/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kerri Okamura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB2553 HD2

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024
COMMITTEE on Judicial and Hawaiian Affairs
Hearing on Wednesday, February 28th at 2:00 pm
Testimony for HB2553 HD2

To the honorable Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and members of the Committee on Judicial & Hawaiian Affairs,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 HD2 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacist at the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. The reemergence of vaccine preventable diseases such as measles and mumps reminds us that infectious diseases are a shared public health problem. In the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives that we are adequately trained to provide.

Should my colleagues and I have the provisions of the PREP Act removed, it would put the most vulnerable segments of our population at risk. Our keiki and kūpuna will lose critical access to potentially life saving immunizations.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kūpuna and keiki, of Hawai'i by voting in favor of this bill.

Warmest Regards,

Chad Kawakami Pharm.D., BCPS

LATE *Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024 COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS

Hearing on Wednesday, February 28, 2024 2:00PM

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2553

To the honorable Chair Tarnas and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations, when certain requirements are met, that include national certification and hands on immunization training. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions since COVID, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacy technician at KTA Superstores on the Big Island, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. In order to be able to take the national immunization training for pharmacy technicians, you need to first be a Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT) through the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB). I received a national immunization certification that included hands on vaccination training. The pandemic proved that pharmacy technicians with proper training can provide the services described in this bill, under the direct supervision of a pharmacist. Providers and our communities have become dependent upon the increased services provided at pharmacies. This bill is critical to sustain the community pharmacy work force.

In the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to proactive population health initiatives. Pharmacy technicians are adequately trained to administer vaccinations and should be allowed to continue given the proof of concept established through the PREP Act authorities. MA's in doctor's office are allowed to do this, with no certifications or requirements.

Should myself and my technician colleagues no longer be allowed to vaccinate, our workflow would become even more burdensome on the pharmacist and the patients, delaying how many vaccinations can be done in a given time. There is data from the CDC showing low vaccination rates in many areas of Hawaii, why would we go backwards now to hinder the efforts of increased vaccination rates that are proven to prevent disease and lower healthcare cost in the long run.

Here on the Big Island, we serve very remote and rural communities. Everyone talks about increasing access on rural health. At KTA we are doing just that, going to the communities to provide these services, Pahala, Na'alehu, Miloli'i, Kealakekua, Captain Cook, Kona, Kohala, Waikoloa, Waimea, Honokaa, Paauilo, Laupahoehoe, Honomu, Pepeekeo, Papa'ikou, Hilo, Waiakea, Kaumana, Kea'au, HPP, Paho, Nanawale, Volcano. All of these places I have listed, we have gone to them, either an employer clinic, community health fair, or home-visit. A pharmacist and a CPhT who is able to vaccinate. We are making a difference.

Also, pharmacy technicians play a crucial role in a pharmacy, ask any community pharmacist if you don't believe me. With the huge demand placed on community pharmacies and burnout happening, maintaining and recruiting pharmacy technicians has been a challenge. By passing this bill, we can work on promotion pathways and long-term careers for individuals as a technician. I recently got a grant with HPhA and PTCB to work on this exact initiative. Let's pass this bill and move the needle forward on increased access to care for ALL. Pharmacist and pharmacy technicians are on the front lines every day and so easily accessible by the public.

Please allow pharmacy technicians to continue to serve and protect the wellbeing of the people through preventative measures, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of SB2553.

Thank you so much for your time!!

Christina Reguelman

Christina Method Reguelman

KTA Superstores Pharmacy – Big Island - CPhT

University of Hawaii at Hilo, The Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy – Experiential Office

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION
Hearing on Thursday, February 28, 2024 2:00PM
Testimony in Support for HB2553

To the honorable Chair Tarnas and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians continue to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

Removing pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns from the pool of trained vaccinators will put additional burden on the remaining healthcare professionals left to vaccinate and decrease the number of patients receiving vaccinations. The PREP Act proved that pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and interns from all workplace settings (community pharmacies, long-term care, hospital, etc..) can provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare personnel to contribute to population health initiatives versus minimizing our resources.

Continuing to allow my colleagues and me to practice under the provisions of the PREP Act will help serve our community which is important now with the resurgence of COVID hospitalizations and cases from new variants. Hawaii deserves to have those pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns, qualified to vaccinate, continue to utilize their skills to help those requesting to be vaccinated. This is not the time to be removing patient access to vaccinations being delivered by their neighborhood pharmacies and other clinics.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Sincerely,



Joy Matsuyama, PharmD, BCPS

Clinical Service Manager, Pharmacare Hawaii



**TESTIMONY OF TINA YAMAKI
PRESIDENT
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII
FEBURARY 8, 2024**

Re: HB 2553 HD2 RELATING TO RELATING TO PHARMACISTS.

Good afternoon, Chair Tarnas and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs. I am Tina Yamaki, President of the Retail Merchants of Hawaii and I appreciate this opportunity to testify.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii was founded in 1901, RMH is a statewide, not for profit trade organization committed to the growth and development of the retail industry in Hawaii. Our membership includes small mom & pop stores, large box stores, resellers, luxury retail, department stores, shopping malls, local, national, and international retailers, chains, and everyone in between.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii is in SUPPORT of HB 2553 HD2. This measure authorizes pharmacists to administer vaccines to persons three years of age or older; authorizes pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen, if certain requirements are met; authorizes pharmacists to order vaccines for administration to persons between the ages of three and seventeen; and is effective 7/1/3000.

Pharmacists are one of the most accessible healthcare providers and are a strongly trusted resource across our islands in many communities, especially those that are remote. This bill will extend the services already permitted in the federal emergency authorization Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act aka PREP Act, which is set to expire at the end of 2024.

We would like to see what the PREP Act has started is continued through this type of legislation to ensure that pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of a pharmacist are able to continue to **administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and older.**

The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees did provide the services described in this bill. It is our understanding that Pharmacy Interns do receive vaccination training and obtain an immunization certificate that is the same as the nationally recognized credential as a licensed pharmacist. With this knowledge and training, we saw many interns at the Covid Vaccine sites throughout the State who were actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic, including participating in the immunization of children under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist. During the pandemic pharmacy interns demonstrated that they could provide the services described in this bill. More importantly, **members of the public and other health care providers have come to depend on them to provide these services, especially now where Hawai'i is perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers.** We should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

We urge you to pass this measure. Mahalo again for this opportunity to testify.