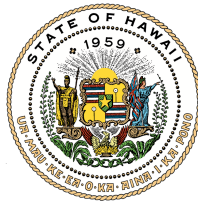


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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KE KIA'ĀINA



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Administration

JARED K. REDULLA
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Law Enforcement

SYLVIA LUKE
LT GOVERNOR
KE KE'ENA

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Ka 'Oihana Ho'okō Kānāwai

715 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2630
RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

Before the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs and Committee on
Health and Homelessness

Tuesday, February 6, 2024; 2:00 p.m.

State Capitol Conference Room 325, Via Videoconference

Testifiers: Jared Redulla

Chairs Tarnas and Belatti, Vice Chairs Takenouchi and Takayama, and members of the
Committees:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) recognizes the new scientific data which tends to show a high potential for psychedelics, including psilocybin, to be useful in mental health treatment. However, the DLE opposes House Bill (HB) 2630 because this bill is premature and lacks appropriate safeguards for diversion.

First, the DLE believes that HB 2630 is premature and would create a difficult system of existence if it were to pass into law. Psilocybin, and other psychedelics, are all currently listed as schedule I controlled substances under both federal and state law. HB 2630 attempts to create a legalized system for therapeutic use of psilocybin in Hawaii, all while federal law currently continues to list psilocybin as having the highest level of dangerousness and no accepted medical use. Under the Supremacy Clause of the United States Constitution, federal law would preempt Hawaii from enacting HB 2630 effectively. This is currently the same situation that currently exists with medical cannabis in Hawaii. Federal law interferes with smooth function of the medical cannabis laws. As the legislature is aware, medical cannabis businesses have a difficult time conducting banking and other business transactions because cannabis is still illegal under federal law. Even medical cannabis business owners have been

personally affected by this problem, with some reporting that their personal banking accounts were also affected.

The legalized psilocybin treatment program proposed in HB 2630 is no different. If HB 2630 were to pass into law, then all the participants in the proposed psilocybin system, including the licensed healthcare professionals who certify patients, and the “facilitators” who work with them can expect similar problems with banking and potentially other issues as they try to navigate the unclear system that would be created.

As well, it is also important to note that although complicated, medical cannabis legalized systems exist both in Hawaii, and across the United States, despite the difference in federal and state laws, they exist in large part, because of federal law guidance to agencies about how medical cannabis laws are enforced. One well-known federal guidance document on medical cannabis was the “Cole Memo” which was an early attempt to guide the federal government in its approach on marijuana over the states that had legalized medical cannabis programs. One principle in the Cole Memo was that the states had to implement a system adequate to address public safety, public health, and law enforcement interests by the creation of a robust system of strong and effective laws. In theory then, the states that had such a strong and effective regulatory and enforcement system would be left alone. The DLE is not aware of any federal law enforcement guidance to the states over the creation of state legalized psilocybin treatment systems. Consequently, until psilocybin is: 1) legalized at the federal level, 2) re-scheduled at the federal level, or 3) included in federal enforcement guidance describing how the government will approach legalized psilocybin programs, then DLE is opposed to the creation of a state legalized psilocybin program in Hawaii.

Second, the DLE believes that this bill lacks important safeguards necessary to create a strong and effective regulatory and enforcement system that is necessary to prevent diversion. If HB 2630 were to pass into law, DLE believes that it can be improved by the addition of sections of law that are necessary to strengthen the psilocybin treatment program envisioned by HB 2630.

This bill lacks an important registration requirement for all participants. In the United States, and in Hawaii, “registration” is the primary way that all legal controlled substances systems are regulated. This includes the Hawaii Medical Use of Cannabis System. Registration is the way the State that the many states standardize qualifications for participants, tracks, and records participants, and importantly, subjects participants to important obligations that are necessary to have a strong and effective system of regulation and enforcement of laws. Moreover, registration requires participants to create and maintain records, to conduct inventories, to use controlled substances (in this case psilocybin) within the normal course of practice and for a legitimate medical purpose, to submit to inspections, and to report instances of diversion.

In addition, the bill also lacks requirements to: 1) create and maintain records, conduct inventories, use psilocybin within the normal course of practice and for a legitimate purpose, to submit to inspections, prohibitions, and penalties for criminal behavior, and to mandatory reporting for instances of diversion.

As such, the DLE recommends that the following sections of law be added to HB 2630 to improve the proposal:

§329- Registration requirements

(a) Every person who:

(1) Certifies a patient to use psilocybin;

(2) Proposes to engage in the certification of patients, distribution, or the dispensing or administration of psilocybin within this State;

shall obtain a registration issued by _____ in accordance with the department's rules. A licensed or registered health care professional who acts as the authorized agent of a practitioner and who administers controlled substances at the direction of the practitioner shall not be required to obtain a registration.

(b) Persons registered by the department of _____ under this chapter to administer, dispense, or distribute psilocybin may administer or dispense, or distribute psilocybin to the extent authorized by their registration and in conformity with this part.

(c) Except as otherwise provided by law, the following persons shall not be required to register and may lawfully possess controlled substances under this chapter:

- (1) An agent or employee of any registered manufacturer, distributor, or dispenser of any psilocybin, if the agent or employee is acting in the usual course of the agent's or employee's business or employment;
- (2) A common or contract carrier or warehouse, or an employee thereof, whose possession of any psilocybin is in the usual course of the person's business or employment; and
- (3) An ultimate user or a person in possession of any psilocybin pursuant to a lawful order of a practitioner.

(d) The department of _____ may waive the registration or filing requirement for certain distributors, or dispensers by rule if:

- (1) It is consistent with the public health and safety; and
- (2) The department of _____ states the specific reasons for the waiver and the time period for which the waiver is to be valid.

(e) A separate registration shall be required at each principal place of business or professional practice where the applicant distributes, dispenses, or administers psilocybin.

(f) The department of _____ may inspect the establishment of a registrant or applicant for registration in accordance with the department's rule.

(g) The department of _____ may require a registrant to submit documents or written statements of fact relevant to a registration that the department deems necessary to determine whether the registration should be granted or denied. The failure of the registrant to provide the documents or statements within a reasonable time after being requested to do so shall be deemed to be a waiver by the registrant of the opportunity to present the documents or statements for consideration by the department in granting or denying the registration.

(h) The failure to renew the registration on a timely basis or to pay the applicable fees or payment with a check that is dishonored upon first deposit shall cause the registration to be automatically forfeited.

§329- Registration (a) The department of _____ shall register an applicant to certify a patient to use psilocybin, or who proposes to dispense, administer, or distribute psilocybin unless it determines that the issuance of that registration would be inconsistent with the public interest. In determining the public interest, the department of _____ shall consider the following factors:

- (1) Maintenance of effective controls against diversion of controlled substances into other than legitimate medical, scientific, or industrial channels;
- (2) Compliance with applicable state and local law;
- (3) Any convictions of the applicant under any federal and state laws relating to any controlled substance;
- (4) Past experience in the manufacture or distribution of controlled substances, and the existence in the applicant's establishment of effective controls against diversion;
- (5) Furnishing by the applicant of false or fraudulent material in any application filed under this chapter;
- (6) Suspension, revocation, or surrender of the applicant's federal registration to manufacture, distribute, prescribe, or dispense controlled substances as authorized by federal law; and
- (7) Any other factor relevant to and consistent with the public health and safety.

(b) Registration under subsection (a) does not entitle a registrant to manufacture, dispense, prescribe, and distribute controlled substances other than those specified in the registration.

(c) Practitioners shall be registered to dispense or administer psilocybin conduct research with psilocybin if they are authorized to dispense or administer psilocybin under the law of this State. Practitioners registered under federal law to conduct research with psilocybin may conduct research with psilocybin within this State upon furnishing the department of _____ of that federal registration.

(d) Compliance by manufacturers and distributors with the provisions of the federal law respecting registration (excluding fees) entitles them to be registered under this chapter.

§329- Revocation and suspension of registration. (a) A registration under section 329-_____ to, distribute, dispense, or administer psilocybin may be suspended or revoked by the department of _____ upon a finding that the registrant:

(1) Has furnished false or fraudulent material information in any application filed under this chapter;

(2) Has been convicted of a felony or has been granted a motion for the deferral of acceptance of a guilty plea or a nolo contendere plea to a felony, pursuant to chapter 853 and under any state or federal law relating to any controlled substance;

(3) Has had the registrant's federal registration suspended or revoked to manufacture, distribute, prescribe, dispense, or conduct reverse distribution with controlled substances; or

(4) Has had the registrant's state license to practice the registrant's profession suspended or revoked by the applicable governing state board.

(b) The department of _____ may limit revocation or suspension of a registration to the particular controlled substance with respect to which grounds for revocation or suspension exist.

(c) If the department of _____ suspends or revokes a registration, all controlled substances owned or possessed by the registrant at the time of suspension or the effective date of the revocation order may be placed under seal. No disposition may be made of substances under seal until the time for taking an appeal has elapsed or until all appeals have been concluded unless a court, upon application therefor, orders the sale of perishable substances and the deposit of the proceeds of the sale with the court. Upon a revocation order becoming final, all controlled substances may be forfeited to the State.

(d) The department of _____ shall promptly notify the Bureau of all orders suspending or revoking registration and all forfeitures of controlled substances

§329- Order to show cause. (a) If, upon examination of the application for registration from any applicant and other information gathered by the department regarding the applicant, the administrator is unable to make the determinations required by the applicable provisions of sections 329- and 329- and applicable rules to register the applicant, the department of _____ shall serve upon the applicant an order to show cause why the registration should not be denied.

(b) If, upon information gathered by the department regarding any registrant, the administrator determines that the registration of a registrant warrants suspension or revocation pursuant to section 329- or applicable rules, the department shall serve upon the registrant an order to show cause why the registration should not be revoked or suspended.

(c) The order to show cause shall call upon the applicant or registrant to:

(1) Appear before the department at a time and place stated in the order, which shall not be less than thirty days after the date of receipt of the order, to admit to the allegations in the order to show cause; or

(2) Request a hearing as provided in subsection (d).

The order to show cause shall also contain a statement of the legal basis for such hearing and the reasons that support the department of _____'s intent to deny the application, or the revocation or suspension of registration, and a summary of the matters of fact and law asserted.

(d) Upon receipt of an order to show cause, the applicant or registrant, if the registrant or applicant desires a hearing, shall file a request for a hearing with the department within thirty days after service of the order to show cause. Failure to request a hearing shall result in the automatic termination of the registrant's registration and in the case of a new application or renewal the unprocessed application shall be returned to the applicant.

(e) Notwithstanding subsections (a) to (d), [the] department of _____ may suspend any registration simultaneously with the institution of proceedings under section 329-, or where renewal of registration is refused, if it finds

that there is an imminent danger to the public health or safety which warrants this action. The suspension shall continue in effect until the conclusion of the proceedings, including judicial review thereof, unless sooner withdrawn by the department of law enforcement or dissolved by a court of competent jurisdiction.

(f) The department of _____ may subpoena and examine witnesses under oath upon all such charges as may be referred before it.

329- Records of registrants. Persons registered to certify patients, distribute, dispense, or administer psilocybin under this chapter shall keep records and maintain inventories in conformance with the recordkeeping and inventory requirements of federal law and with any additional rules the department of _____ issues.

§329- Filing requirements. All persons registered to certify patients, distribute, administer, or dispense controlled substances and all persons who transport, warehouse, or otherwise handle psilocybin, shall file with the department of _____ on forms and within the time and manner prescribed by the department of _____ copies of order, receipt and distribution of psilocybin, showing the amounts of such psilocybin, received, distributed, transported, warehoused, or otherwise handled.

§329- Mandatory reporting. (a) Notwithstanding any other law concerning confidentiality to the contrary, the holder of a registration issued under section 329- who, in the holder's professional or official capacity, has reason to believe that psilocybin in the holder's inventory has been stolen, embezzled, or otherwise obtained by fraud or diversion, shall immediately report the matter verbally to the department of _____.

(b) The holder of a registration shall submit a written report to the administrator as soon as practicable following the verbal report. The written report shall contain:

(1) The name and address of the suspected perpetrator, if known;

(2) The nature and extent of the theft, embezzlement, fraud, or diversion; and
(3) Any other information that the reporter believes might be helpful or relevant to the investigation of the theft, embezzlement, fraud, or diversion.

(c) Any person subject to subsection (a), upon demand of the department of _____, shall provide all information related to the alleged incident of theft, embezzlement, fraud, or diversion, including but not limited to records, reports, and any image, film, video, or other electronic medium, that was not included in the written report submitted pursuant to subsection (b).

(d) This section shall not be construed to provide a basis for a cause of action against the department.

(e) Any person subject to this section who knowingly prevents another person from reporting, or who knowingly fails to provide information as required by this section, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

§329- Prohibited acts B--penalties. (a) It is unlawful for any person:

(1) Who is subject to part ____ to certify a patient or to distribute, administer, or dispense psilocybin in violation of section 329- or rules authorized under section 329- ;

(2) Who is a registrant to distribute, administer, or dispense any psilocybin not authorized by the registrant's registration to another registrant or another authorized person;

(3) To refuse or fail to make available, keep, or furnish any record, notification, order form, prescription, statement, invoice, or information in patient charts relating to the administration, dispensing, or certification of patients to use psilocybin;

(4) To refuse any lawful entry into any premises for any inspection authorized by this chapter;

(5) Knowingly to keep or maintain any store, shop, warehouse, dwelling, building, vehicle, boat, aircraft, or other structure or place for the purpose of using psilocybin or which is used for keeping or selling them in violation of this chapter or chapter 712, part IV;

(6) Who is a licensed mental health professional to facilitate the issuance of a certification for use of psilocybin when not physically in the State.

(7) It shall be unlawful for any licensed mental health professional to issue a certification to use psilocybin without a genuine therapeutic relationship.

(c) Any person who violates this section is guilty of a class C felony.

§329-42 Prohibited acts C--penalties. (a) It is unlawful for any person knowingly or intentionally:

(1) To use in the course of the certifying a patient, or the distribution, administration, or dispensing of psilocybin a registration number that is fictitious, revoked, suspended, expired, or issued to another person;

(3) To obtain or attempt to obtain any psilocybin or procure or attempt to procure the administration of any psilocybin:

(A) By fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, embezzlement, theft;

(B) By the forgery or alteration of a prescription or of any written order;

(C) By furnishing fraudulent medical information or the concealment of a material fact;

(D) By the use of a false name, patient identification number, or the giving of false address;

(E) By the alteration of a prescription by the addition of future refills;

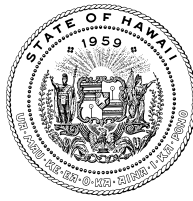
(4) To furnish false or fraudulent material information in, or omit any material information from, any application, report, or other document required to be kept or filed under this chapter, or any record required to be kept by this chapter;

(6) To misapply or divert to the person's own use or other unauthorized or illegal use or to take, make away with, or secrete, with intent to misapply or divert to the person's own use or other unauthorized or illegal use, any psilocybin that shall have come into the person's possession or under the person's care as a registrant or as an employee of a registrant who is authorized to possess controlled substances or has access to controlled substances by virtue of the person's employment; or

(7) To make, distribute, possess, or sell any certification form, whether blank, faxed, computer generated, photocopied, electronically transmitted, or reproduced in any other manner without the authorization of the licensed mental health professional.

(b) Any person who violates this section is guilty of a class C felony.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition of this bill.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

**House Committees on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs and
Health and Homelessness**

Tuesday, February 6, 2023

2:00 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

In Support of

H.B. No. 2630, Relating to Mental Health Treatment

Aloha Chairs Tarnas and Belatti, Vice Chairs Takayama and Takenouchi and members of the Committees:

The Office of Wellness and Resilience (OWR) in the Governor's Office **SUPPORTS** H.B. No. 2630, Relating to Mental Health Treatment.

Established through Act 291 (Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022) the overall aim of the OWR is to make Hawai'i a trauma-informed state. One of the activities we use—to break down barriers that impact the physical, social and emotional well-being of Hawai'i's people—is by assessing multifarious treatments, interventions, and therapies known to address trauma.

In 2023, the OWR convened a task force—comprised of Hawai'i-based mental health professionals, government agency representatives, legislators, physicians, therapists, and other community members—with the objective of exploring current research and national movements regarding expanding access to psilocybin. We found research continues to provide significant data on psilocybin, yielding unprecedented efficacy and positive outcomes in clinical treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), addiction, end-of-life anxiety in terminal patients, eating disorders, treatment-resistant depression and more.

The OWR is honored to play a role in the bill and for the opportunity to support this program. We anticipate participating in future discussions as more dialog is warranted for implementation to be effective and efficient. Trauma-informed care (TIC) is an approach to understanding and responding to the widespread impact of trauma. One of the pillars of TIC is "voice and choice". This bill provides access to another option for healing. As such, the OWR supports the purpose of H.B. 2630, to establish psilocybin as a form of mental health treatment.

Mahalo

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



Testimony in Support of [HB2630](#)

[Joint Hearing: House Committees on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs and Health & Homelessness](#)

Tuesday February 6, 2024 @ 2:00pm

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

My name is Ashley Lukens. For the past 18 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 HB 2630, a bill which is the continuation of a now 4 year legislative conversation around therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawaii.

As the Founder and Director of Clarity Project, my colleagues and I spent the Fall working closely with the Office of Wellness and Resilience to convene a task force to help understand the current national landscape of psychedelic access programs, how they are similar to the cannabis program in Hawaii, and what a psilocybin access program might look like. This task force included medical professionals from across the mental health space, Department of Health, Department of Public Safety, along with the leading national experts on psychedelic access. This bill is the result of these conversations.

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 and MDMA are proving 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, MDMA, and other medicines. Citing this research, groundbreaking initiatives in favor of these therapies are occurring at all levels of government, private and public research institutions, and throughout mainstream society. Oregon launched its Oregon Psilocybin Services with the State's Oregon Health Authority, which licenses & regulates psilocybin for therapeutic use. And Colorado voters approved 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.

In the psilocybin access program proposed in this bill attempts to balance the various stakeholder interests currently engaged in psychedelic access, identify appropriate roles for the administration, and minimize the overhead costs of the program to help secure successful passage. It removed criminal penalties for potential beneficiaries and their medical and therapeutic providers should they recommend and/or psilocybin for mental health treatment. While not perfect, it gives us a strawman to work from.

We do not want the citizens of Hawai'i to miss out on these healing modalities. 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 by advancing it through this committee today.

Thank you,

Ashley Lukens, PhD
Founder, Director - Clarity Project

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 8:28:52 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Southard	Honolulu Psychotherapy	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Kathy Southard LCSW, I live in the Ala Moana neighborhood of Honolulu, am owner of Honolulu Psychotherapy, I am an an NASW Hawaii chapter board member, a member of the Hawaii Psychological Association, a former psychiatric social worker from The Cambridge Hospital, a Harvard Medical School teaching hospital where I first learned of the use of psychedelics in treating mental illness, a former Queens Hospital social worker, and I am currently in training to learn how to use these substances as a therapist to help people overcome PTSD and treatment resistant depression. I am writing **in strong support of HB2630**, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—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 these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo,

Kathy Southard LCSW

<https://www.honolulu-psychotherapy.com/>

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 1:04:03 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christina Braddock, APRN	Mana Warrior Collective, Hale'iwa, Hawaii a Trauma Regenerative Medical Center	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Tina Braddock, I live in Hale'iwa, HI and I am writing in strong support of HB2630, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

As a 7.5 year active duty combat Army trauma medical officer/nurse 2012-2019 and now full time caregiver to spouse who sustained a severe traumatic brain injury in 2019, I can say I am a "subject matter expert" on Post Traumatic Stress. In addition, I study trauma regenerative medicine for recovery for these individuals as we are seriously in grave danger of lack of support of these populations- trauma population specifically- first responders, front line workers, military, trauma survivors, and cancer/ end-of-life suffering, we fail in this state and nation as a whole. After getting out of the military, taking care of my wheelchair bound husband, and during covid, I saw how the whole world went into hysteria over Covid and the ongoing war. Mental health and chronic disease has increased dramatically, and our healthcare workers are burnt out and sick as well if not leaving the profession entirely and/or protesting/begging for help as they are overwhelmed and unsupported. In addition to being a certified emergency nurse I went back to school to become an integrative medicine nurse practitioner and just graduated DEC 2023 so I can practice trauma regenerative care as a provider and really help make a difference in our trauma population. In 2021, I got certified in psychedelic therapy and research as it was profound in my own healing journey. I went to Peru with a group of veterans, Heroic Hearts Project, to safely sit with shamans who have practiced with plant medicine for a very long time. It was life-changing. I watched my brothers and sisters in arms go from suicidal one day to loving life and ready to change the world the next. I have remained sober since that experience, and have only improved my life greatly since that journey. I am here to say that plant medicine saved my life, an I am hoping it will save my husbands, and many veterans and first responders who I know personally that need it NOW. I have lost too many brothers and sisters in and out of arms to overdoses, suicides, and other preventable deaths due to lack of care/support mentally. We are failing our community by not sharing the safe and effective benefits of psilocybin with our friends and family who need it most. With many veterans' mental health issues, it is very likely that they become homeless. A majority of our homeless population is veterans. This is unacceptable and both VA and State are failing our military. I live in Haleiwa like I mentioned and we have more and more homeless sleeping outside on the streets every night. We are seeing

more TRUE psychiatric illness on our streets, scaring our children, and causing safety issues for traffic, shop owners, and pedestrians. Plant medicine CAN and WILL help bridge a gap in this major issue of homelessness and mental health epidemic here on Oahu. Gov Josh Green claims to be help abolish homelessness by 2030 on his website (at least it was on there at one point), and I am very intrigued how he plans to do this without targeting root cause issues and supporting them from inside out. This is a mental health issue, not a homelessness issue. They are lacking basic needs, and I know that to be true because often when I sit and engage with our homeless, they usually just want to have a conversation and be HEARD for once in their life. Their story matters. They are human and it can happen to ANY one of us. With therapeutic use of psilocybin and plant medicine use in Hawaii we will be able to support our 5 branches of the military located here, end the mental health crisis on our streets, and help to eliminate homelessness, I would think within 3-5 years with the right means maybe before Gov Green plan of 2030. I am in the advanced regenerative medicine space and understand that it takes more than just a pill or just a sandwich to do the trick to someone, it takes HARD WORK, SUPPORT, and TIME. Something I understand, politicians do not want to give new projects. Well your team is here, we have trained therapeutic licensed medical providers and shaman right here on the island to help safely roll out strategies to implement therapeutic use of plant medicine in Hawaii. If you want to be a true CHANGE LEADER, you will support this bill. This is the ONLY way at this point. We have gotten to the point our systems are so broken and failing that YES I do believe plant medicine is the ONLY way to help us out of this seriously large mess. 2 weeks after the fires on Lahaina I brought 5 hyperbaric chambers over there to help support first responders. I received a phone call from a police officer saying the Lahaina first responders are struggling to breathe. After volunteering there on my own time and dime since August, I have seen more than enough to better understand the screwed up systems in place. Maui is the epitome of failure by our state and federal support systems. We need to use Maui fires as an example to improve and support our people, not abandon and forget! We can help them. We are seeing serious Post Traumatic Stress including symptoms of Insomnia, Night Terrors, Anxiety, Restlessness, Alarm Fear and Fatigue, and so much more. These are our neighbors, our ohana, and they are ending up homeless, sick, and depressed! Right now in real time, we have the opportunity to intervene by supporting them with offering therapeutic plant medicine to help heal the ancestral and present day wounds. Plants can and WILL help heal Hawaii. Please support this bill! Thank you.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation. State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe,

legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—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 these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo,
Christina Braddock, RN, MSN, CEN, CPTR FNPc
Hawaii Hyperbarics LLC
Mana Warrior Collective, Hale‘iwa
808-212-9922
tina@hawaiihyperbarics.com

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Kristina Marie Rodriguez, RN-BSN, I live in Kihei, Maui, and I am writing **in strong support of HB2630**, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

Having experienced early childhood sexual trauma, I have lived my life as a seeker; a seeker of healing, understanding, forgiveness, meaning, and spirituality. Over the years, my healing journey led me to work with and study spiritual lineages from India, Peru, Brazil, Mexico, Hawai'i, and several indigenous tribal nations of North America. It was through these wisdom traditions and my own personal heritage (Aztec & Native American) that I discovered the healing power of sacred plant medicines, ceremony, prayer, and ritual. These lineages & traditions informed not only my own personal trauma healing, but also my life path as a nurse called to help facilitate the healing processes of others. It is my deep prayer that access to psilocybin, MDMA, and all sacred plant medicines be made available to the people of Hawai'i. If I can heal from trauma, so can others, and that gives me hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—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 these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

Kristina Marie Rodriguez, RN-BSN



Dedicated to safe, responsible, humane and effective drug policies since 1993

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2630

TO: Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, & JHA Committee Members
Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, & HLT Committee Members

FROM: Nikos Leverenz
DPFH Board President

DATE: February 6, 2024 (2:00 PM)

Drug Policy Forum of Hawai'i (DPFH) **strongly supports** HB 2630, which would authorize and establish a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use. I was happy to be invited to serve on the Breakthrough Therapies Task Force last year, which was facilitated by the Governor's [Office of Wellness & Resilience](#).

While this bill is not as far-reaching as policies enacted or under consideration in other states, one hopes that this calibrated approach will facilitate therapeutic use until the federal government removes psilocybin from the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). I recently provided some comments to *Marijuana Moment* on pending psilocybin legislation in Hawai'i noting that [the inclusion of psilocybin on Schedule I of the CSA was "misguided from the outset."](#)

In recent years [the FDA has designated psilocybin as a "breakthrough therapy" for treatment resistant depression and major depressive disorder](#). This bill will help create a climate that is conducive to allowing qualified medical professionals to use psilocybin as a therapeutic tool for those who could benefit from its supervised use.

[Psilocybin is the main ingredient found in several types of psychoactive mushrooms, which have been used for medicinal and ceremonial purposes in many parts of the world, including Europe and the Americas, for thousands of years.](#) A body of emerging clinical research in the 1950s and 1960s pointed to promising therapeutic uses of psilocybin for a range of ailments. Intensive clinical research was needlessly stymied when psilocybin was listed as a Schedule I substance under the federal Controlled Substances Act in 1970. Since then, the [Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies](#), the [Beckley Foundation](#), and other non-profits have

engaged in research that evinces further therapeutic potentialities. Other organizations are engaging in research supported by financing available through capital and equity markets.

The current scheduling and de facto prohibition of psilocybin has not resulted in the level of systemic and individual harms related to the scheduling of other substances, including cannabis. In Hawai'i [the prevailing punitive approach to drug use falls particularly hard on Native Hawaiians](#), who do not use drugs at a drastically different rates than other races and ethnicities but go to prison for drug offenses at a higher rate. Police practices, prosecutorial practices, and sentencing structures contribute to this ongoing disparity.

A punitive approach to drug use also includes an unduly large probation population with [the highest average term in the nation at almost five years](#), according a recent report from the Pew Charitable Trusts.

The American Public Health Association has observed that “substance use mistreatment is too often unavailable or unaffordable for people who want it. A criminal justice response, including requiring arrest to access health services, is ineffective and leads to other public health problems.” It instead recommends “ending the criminalization of drugs and drug consumers, prioritizing proven treatment and harm reduction strategies, and expanding (and removing barriers to) treatment and harm reduction services.” (Policy Statement, [“Defining and Implementing a Public Health Response to Drug Use and Misuse.”](#))

The Global Commission on Drug Policy (GCDP) issued a 2019 report noting the shortcomings of the current international drug scheduling system, which largely takes direction from the federal government of the United States and its Controlled Substances Act:

“The current system, governed by the 1961 Single Convention and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, has gradually brought more and more psychoactive substances under international control.... These international drug control conventions only recognize medical use, including relief from pain, as benefits from the use of psychoactive substances; other cultural, recreational or ceremonial uses are not taken into account, or rather are excluded....

“This de facto prohibition is arbitrary. The current distinction between legal and illegal substances is not unequivocally based on pharmacological research but in large part on historical and cultural precedents. It is also distorted by and feeds into morally charged perceptions about a presumed ‘good and evil’ distinction between legal and illegal drugs.” ([“Classification of Psychoactive Substances: When Science was Left Behind”](#) at p. 4.)

GCDP recommends an evidence-based scheduling system that “strikes a better balance between ensuring availability [for] legitimate uses and preventing problematic use.” (*Id.*, at p. 5.) It provides a compelling short list of the benefits of an evidence-based system:

“An evidence-based international scheduling system would allow reform-oriented countries more flexibility to design domestic schedules according to their needs, while improving control over potential illegal exports. It would also be far more effective at gradually steering the drugs market in a direction that causes far less harm. Finally, an evidence-based scheduling system would remove much of the stigma associated with drug use, thus helping people to make more responsible and less harmful choices.” (*Id.*)

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 5:36:11 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is LeAnn Neilson, I live in Mountain View, Big Island, and I am writing in strong support of HB2630, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

I am CEO of Aloha Integrative Mental Health, a mental health company focused on providing quality and successful mental health care to the people of Hawaii. As a current student of the Integrative Psychiatric Institute, involved with the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, and a practitioner of mental health, I am serious about providing treatment that works for patients. I am excited and hopeful for the opportunity to reduce medication load to zero, I am excited to be able to offer an option that has shown to completely derail suicidal thinking and behavior, reduce and eliminate addiction, greatly reduce PTSD scores and improve overall functioning and be able to provide the safe space for this level of healing. I want to assure you that those of us interested and involved in this movement are serious, conscientious, and do not go into this without preparation, experience and confidence in our skills.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—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 these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

LeAnn Neilson

CEO, Aloha Integrative Mental Health



Hawai'i Psychological Association

For a Healthy Hawai'i

P.O. Box 833
Honolulu, HI 96808

www.hawaiipsychology.org

Phone: (808) 521-8995

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

February 6, 2024 2:00 P.M. – Rm 325 and via VIDEO CONFERENCE

SB2630 RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH

The Hawai'i Psychological Association (HPA) appreciates the opportunity to offer the following **comments** on HB2630.

In a survey of our membership conducted in December 2023, when asked the question:

“Should HPA advocate for the legalization of psilocybin and MDMA assisted therapy?”

to which 114 responded, the results were as follows:

- 37 Strongly supported (32.46%)
- 21 Moderately supported (18.42%)
- 38 Neutral (33.33%)
- 11 Moderately opposed (9.65%)
- 7 Strongly opposed (6.14%)

Accordingly, the HPA Legislative Action Committee agreed that **more study is needed**.

We note, however, our support during the 2023 Legislative session of a proposal (HB1340 HD2) that would authorize the department of health to **establish a temporary Breakthrough Therapy Designation Advisory Council** within 3 months of a substance's designation as such by the United States Food and Drug Administration to review law, research, and guidelines.

Our reasons for supporting an Advisory Council was to highlight the promising research – globally – showing renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of therapeutic psychedelic modalities on the brain and body; and the growing certainty that scientists and medical professionals are now working with policymakers to bring psilocybin's safe administration above ground for therapeutic uses.

Major research and academic institutions around the world have shown psilocybin to be promising and even groundbreaking in clinical treatments for a wide range of mental and psychiatric diagnoses; and 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 Breakthrough Therapy designation to expedite research and potential approval. Psilocybin is expected to be rescheduled and approved for medical use in the next few years federally.

SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS:

AUTHORITY:

One concern we wish to draw your Committees' attention is the definition and authority given to the "mental health professionals" who may certify that a patient has a "debilitating mental health condition" and authorizing them to have/take psilocybin. See, p. 4 lines 18-20:

“Licensed mental health professional” includes physicians licensed pursuant to chapter 453, psychiatrists, therapists, nurse practitioners, or social workers.”

We are concerned that Psychologists are NOT included in that list of "mental health professionals."

This is important because under common law rules of statutory construction – namely “*Ejusdem generis*”¹; “*Generalia specialibus non derogant*”²; and “*Expressio Unius est exclusio alterius*”³; courts and government entities are likely to be confused in interpreting this definition as currently drafted, as it does not clearly state which licensed professionals are considered within its purview.

For example, those interpreting this law will be inclined to look at this definition and its **specific reference** to Psychiatrists and their licensing statute, HRS 453 - which regulates *all* Medical Doctors – as excluding all other MDs. Yet, the general reference to “nurse practitioners, therapists, and social workers” grants these other entities the ability to prescribe psilocybin, despite not being licensed as an MD - giving them greater authority than one’s primary care doctor to prescribe a federally controlled substance.

Furthermore, the very general reference to “**therapists**” – which has ordinary and commonplace meanings, as well as multiple professions with statutory regulations in their own right, may

¹ According to the **Black’s Law Dictionary**, the principle of ejusdem generis is where general words follow an enumeration of persons or thing by particular and specific words. Not only these general words are construed but also held as applying only to persons or things of the same general kind as those specifically enumerated.

² According to **WESTLAW - Thomson Reuters - Practical Law**, “[*Generalia specialibus non derogant*] is a common law principle for construing legislation which holds that a syntactical presumption may be made that where there is a conflict between a general and a specific provision, the specific provision will prevail.

³ According to **WESTLAW - Thomson Reuters - Practical Law**, *Expressio Unius est exclusio alterius* is a “Latin term literally meaning ‘the expression of one thing is the exclusion of the other’. This is a common law principle for construing legislation which holds that a syntactical presumption may be made that an express reference to one matter excludes other matters.

potentially be interpreted to include *physical therapists, massage therapists, occupational therapists, radiation therapists, respiratory therapists*, etc. A “massage therapist” may have the authority to diagnose someone as having a “**debilitating mental health condition**” and authorize them to use psilocybin.

Though it may be argued “therapists” would include “psychologists” – we believe if the intent is to include psychologists, this should be explicitly stated. Similarly, if this legislature wishes to limit other types of “therapists” – this bill should be amended accordingly.

Thus, we believe this bill should specifically delineate the scope of practice of the professions it seeks to empower with this authority. For example, reference to “social workers” does not designate which level of licensure is required – as only “*Licensed Clinical Social Workers*” may only the level with the requisite training and experience to do mental health diagnoses.

SANCTIONING:

Under the current draft, only MDs – due to specific reference – would seem to be subject to malpractice sanctioning; to the exclusion of “therapists, Nurse Practitioners [and] social workers.” We ask that language be added to clarify whether other licensed professions are to be similarly scrutinized.

CRIMINAL LIABILITY:

Finally, we respectfully request that it be made clear – either in a HD1 and/or in a committee report whether the “mental health professionals” within its ambit are insulated from criminal liability – on both state and federal levels, as psilocybin is still a controlled substance. This is very important so that practitioners are aware of the risks they are engaging in when authorizing psilocybin use.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important bill, and for your commitment to Hawaii’s mental health.

Sincerely,



Alex Lichton, Ph.D.

Chair, HPA Legislative Action Committee



Hawaii Medical Association

1360 South Beretania Street, Suite 200 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Phone: 808.536.7702 • Fax: 808.528.2376 • hawaiimedicalassociation.org

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair
Rep. Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Date: February 6, 2024
From: Hawaii Medical Association
Elizabeth England, MD
Chair, Public Policy Committee

RE HB2630, RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

Position: Oppose

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **opposition of HB2630**, relating to mental health treatment. HMA appreciates that the research for psilocybin shows promise. However, the safety and efficacy of psilocybin treatment for mental health conditions has not been established. As with any medical intervention, further studies and appropriate medical research are needed to determine safety and efficacy. Hawaii physicians continue to support cautious and scholarly research on psychedelic therapeutics and encourage the state to ensure that psilocybin goes through the same research process as any pharmacologic intervention. Thank you for allowing the Hawaii Medical Association to testify on this measure.

REFERENCES

"Researchers Urge Caution around Psilocybin Use". Hopkinsmedicine.org December 30, 2016.

Johnson, M.W., Griffiths, R.R. Potential Therapeutic Effects of Psilocybin. Neurotherapeutics 14, 734–740 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13311-017-0542-y>

Carbonaro TM, Bradstreet MP, Barrett FS, et al. Survey study of challenging experiences after ingesting psilocybin mushrooms: Acute and enduring positive and negative consequences. J of Psychopharmacology. 2016;30(12):1268-1278.

2024 Hawaii Medical Association Officers

Elizabeth Ann Ignacio, MD, President • Nadine Tenn-Salle, MD, President Elect • Angela Pratt, MD, Immediate Past President
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2024 Hawaii Medical Association Public Policy Coordination Team

Beth England, MD, Chair
Linda Rosehill, JD, Government Relations • Marc Alexander, Executive Director



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

Date: 2-5-24

I am a board certified psychiatrist in Honolulu, testifying in support of: **HB2630: Authorizes, and establishes a regulatory framework for, the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.**

My clinical expertise is in suicide risk and depression.

I very often treat suicidal, depressed people who have failed numerous medications.

Patients come to me clamoring for info on psychedelics. They hear that psychedelics are safer than antidepressants, and more effective. But they are federally illegal, even though they could literally save my patients' lives.

This has been verified by large studies: **psilocybin reduces suicide risk.** But, I cannot help them access these substances.

Patients have committed suicide while they wait for the psilocybin research to be completed federally. Most standard antidepressants are far riskier, and 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. There is an unmet need for Hawaii's health system to inform patients, and not leave them in the dark when their life is at stake.

Cordially,

Thomas Cook, M.D.

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

www.beyondmentalhealth.com

IN SUPPORT OF HB2630

My name is Amanda Lillibridge, I live in Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i and I am writing **in strong support of HB2630**, which will effectively expand access to psychedelics in Hawaii.

To speak to psilocybin, outside of the scientifically proven, transformative impact psilocybin has had on pressing mental health issues such as clinical depression, addiction, OCD, and beyond, Psilocybin has played a monumental role in my own personal health journey and trauma.

I can say without a doubt I would not have found the hope, perspective shift, or healing from debilitating adolescent trauma without having encountered this medicine. This medicine has offered me a fresh start. It is not a drug, it is a tool and an opportunity for growth and evolution. When offered safely and in therapeutic contexts, it can serve as an incredible catalyst for change in what has been proven to be a broken mental health system.

I believe everyone deserves to explore better mental health solutions. Please move forward with this initiative and empower the citizens of Hawai'i by offering them a safe and equitable spaces to heal.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration - Please support **HB2630**. With aloha,

Amanda Lillibridge

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:13:37 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley Yamashita	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha, Chairs, Vice Chairs, and members of the Committee.

My name is Ashley Yamashita, I live in Kailua here on Oahu. I am testifying as an individual in strong SUPPORT of HB2630, authorizing and establishing regulatory framework for the therapeutic use of psilocybin.

This is my first time testifying so please excuse me if I seem nervous.

I am a Certified Nurse Assistant, Mental Health Technician, and Physicians Practice Assistant currently working at Queen's University Health Systems here at Punchbowl.

With my experience working within our community, I see, every day, the need for alternative mental health treatments and therapies.

Also, as someone who struggles with PTSD, Treatment Resistant Depression with comorbid Anxiety Disorder and OCD, I cannot express the impact something like this treatment would have on my life. I have taken many, many SSRI's and NDRI's, experienced their side effects, and had to discontinue use for a range of side effects, in one case, an experience with the BLACK BOX Warning most SSRIs are accompanied with.

Psilocybin not only is documented in studies as safer than SSRIs but also has the potential to rewire the brain and create new neural pathways, neuroplasticity, and spines in the brain network. The growth of these pathways creates a way to break free from the Treatment Resistant Depression. Effects are long-lasting and can create new ways of thinking, outlook on life, and sense of self.

I know personally how impactful access to this therapeutic modality would be on my life and the lives of many others who are not here today. Or could have been here today had this treatment been available to them.

I will be available after further questions.

Mahalo for your time.

Ashley Yamashita

February 5, 2024

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, 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 HB2630** to authorize and establish a regulatory framework for the administration of therapeutic psilocybin in Hawai'i.

There is a growing body of scientific literature demonstrating that psilocybin has incredible potential to help people heal from addiction, depression, various anxiety disorders, and existential suffering related to terminal illnesses, such as cancer. 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.

Psilocybin has been granted "breakthrough therapy" status by the FDA, although it is somehow still illegal and classified as "Schedule 1" under the DEA. Psilocybin seems especially promising for the treatment of severe depression, anxiety disorders, some addictions, as well as depression and anxiety specifically related to having a terminal illness. Psilocybin may even help patients with chronic pain conditions, PTSD, and traumatic brain injuries.

Oregon and Colorado have already enacted laws to allow safe, legal use of psilocybin and similar psychedelics. At least 20 states 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 regions within Canada are working to allow legal therapeutic use. Last year, the Australian government declared that Australian physicians could start using psilocybin legally as a medicine.

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. 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 disorders. 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 adequately address existential suffering and we usually just numb these people into complacency with opiates (such as oxycodone) and benzodiazepines (such as Valium). It is tragic, and it strikes me as dishonest to say we live in a free society when our government denies citizens sovereignty over their own minds and would thwart an individual's self-determined drive to heal emotionally and spiritually in their final days.

Current treatments for addiction and mental illnesses are inadequate with large percentages of people remaining "treatment resistant." Psilocybin is a medicine that has incredible potential to help people heal psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually. It is safe and many studies have already demonstrated impressive results for treating a range of conditions. Too many Hawai'i citizens are needlessly suffering and would likely benefit from safe and legal access to psilocybin in a therapeutic context. HB2630 would be instrumental to help ensure the state remains progressive in our approach to treating mental illness and addiction. Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Blaine Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "W".

A. Blaine Williams, M.D.

ablainewilliams@gmail.com

808.798.1176

Testimony in Support of HB2630

House Committees on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs and Health & Homelessness

Hearing: Tuesday February 6, 2024 at 2:00pm

Aloha Chairs Tarnas and Belatti and Vice Chairs Takayama and Takenouchi and Members of the Committees,

My name is Doorae Shin, and I am testifying in **strong support of HB2630**. I 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 authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for therapeutic psilocybin

Federally, the FDA has twice granted psilocybin its [Breakthrough Therapy Designation](#) (in 2018 and 2019) for its efficacy in treating treatment-resistant 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 options 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 2 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.

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 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 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 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.*
-

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

Conclusion

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. Following the steps of both Oregon and Colorado and under guidance from those who helped to design and implement those State programs, the passage of HB2630 would allow for our community members who are in need to have access to this therapeutic option and find the relief they need. 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 HB2630**. I can be available for any questions.

Doorae Shin



Community Member and Project Manager of Clarity Project
team@clarityproject.org

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

To: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice-Chair
Members of the Health & Homelessness Committee

Fr: TY Cheng, Individual Citizen

Re: Testimony **In SUPPORT** of **House Bill (HB) 2630**

Relating to Mental Health Treatment.

Authorizes, and establishes a regulatory framework for, the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

Dear Chairs, Vice-Chairs, and Members of the Joint Committee:

I am testifying as an individual citizen who **SUPPORTS HB 2630** as this bill will improve the life of patients who may benefit from alternative mental health treatments.

As a leader in Hawaii's medical cannabis industry, I have seen firsthand how the remarkable cannabis plant has provided relief and benefit for patients despite decades of misinformation and stigma. Psilocybin has also been misunderstood until recently. New research shows the benefits of psychedelic therapies on the brain and body. This bill provides the first steps for allowing physicians and facilitators to work with patients like psilocybin and MDMA above ground for therapeutic uses. We do not want the citizens of Hawaii to miss out on these healing modalities that are becoming available in other states.

As with cannabis, it is unreasonable to continue the prohibition of beneficial and natural medicines. Lawmakers have an opportunity to provide safe, legal and lab tested products for patient use instead of allowing the illicit market to profit.

Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am available in person for any questions.

Aloha,

TY Cheng

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 1:10:43 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Patterson	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Robert Patterson, I live in Diamond Area, Oahu, and I am writing in strong support of HB2630, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

I'm writing as someone who as personally benefited from the use of this tool. I have VET friends with severe OCD and other mental health issues who are keen to use and source these tools legally in a medical setting in Hawai'i .

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—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 these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,
Robert Patterson

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Jayson Guo, and I was born and raised in Honolulu, where my family still resides. I am writing **in strong support of HB2630**, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

Though I still call Hawai'i home, I'm currently a junior studying neuroscience at Stanford University, and I'm working on an honors thesis concerning the molecular mechanisms of psychedelic-induced neuroplasticity. I became a proponent of psychedelic-derived therapeutics during the summer of 2022, mostly persuaded by the blend of anecdotal and empirical evidence available online (which I'm sure you've encountered as well!).

I took my interests to new heights this past fall by completing a semester-long research internship in psychedelic neuroscience at the Copenhagen University Hospital's Neurobiology Research Unit (NRU). The NRU is recognized globally as a pioneer of psychedelic research and is currently spearheading Scandinavia's first LSD neuroimaging trials in 50+ years. Alongside this research position, I took classes in psychopharmacology and the neuroscience of religiosity. Both these courses included significant modules on psychedelics as modalities of healing.

While most psychedelics are still illegal in Denmark, I found myself surrounded by individuals who were much more receptive to the potential benefits of these substances than my peers in the US. Europe thus became a uniquely fruitful environment for me to have conversations about psychedelics and otherwise explore my fascination with them. I'd like to share three anecdotes from my time there that I hope will convey the overwhelming promise of these substances:

First, it is perhaps unsurprising that I had many coworkers and classmates with positive psychedelic experiences. The most compelling of them was perhaps the most adventurous yet sensible "psychonaut" I've ever met. Equipped with a PhD in Psychopharmacology, he was well-versed in the current literature and was committed to taking every possible safety measure when experimenting with psychedelics. His perspective underscored that the potential benefits of psychedelic use far outweigh the risks, especially with ample precautionary measures and thorough integration. Formerly plagued with chronic boredom and an ADHD diagnosis, he found that psilocybin helped quiet his mind and made the mundane profoundly interesting. He also attested that, in conjunction with couples' therapy, MDMA and MDMA/psilocybin blends proved highly beneficial to his relationship with his girlfriend. These substances enabled them to see their problems in a new light and increased their motivation to work them out. Matters that

typically elicited defensiveness suddenly became safe to talk about, and they discovered a heightened sense of empathy previously unexplored.

My next story comes from someone who lived in the same building as me in Copenhagen. She never gave me the full rundown on her mental health diagnoses, but she experienced some combination of anxious and depressive symptoms. She had undergone therapy and some medical prescriptions, but she was far from cured. She would self-medicate with cigarettes, and it wasn't uncommon for her to smoke a whole pack in a day. In fact, our interactions often unfolded while she was smoking on the balcony, where we'd talk about our life struggles and pursuits of peace. A big turning point came as she found solace in psychedelic experiences while traveling, particularly with psilocybin and ketamine. She described it as "magic," declaring it was "the first time her mind had ever felt so quiet." This newfound serenity persisted, leading to a noticeable enhancement in her overall happiness in the weeks that followed. She would excitedly report that she went days in a row without even feeling the urge to smoke. We admittedly grew apart as the semester went on, but maybe that's because I seldom spotted her on the balcony anymore.

My last story is my own. I have no diagnosed psychiatric illnesses, so I wasn't seeking a cure. Yet I strongly believed that a personal psychedelic experience would enhance my empathy for those who benefit from these substances and empower me to advocate more effectively for their therapeutic use. Thus, I traveled to the Netherlands, where I could legally obtain psilocybin truffles. Replicating clinical conditions as closely as possible (blindfolded, in a peaceful space, listening to a "psilocybin playlist" designed by Johns Hopkins researchers), I self-administered the equivalent of roughly 25 mg of psilocybin. I will not claim to have undergone any drastic transformation. However, I did discover aspects of my consciousness that I truly believe I could not have accessed on my own. After much reflection and integration, I could articulate habitual patterns of thought, underlying anxieties, and existential breakthroughs that have shaped how I think about myself today. I could speak at length about this, but I will restrain myself for now so as not to draw attention away from other cases that are more clinically relevant. The last thing I will say here is that at this fairly high dose, I noticed no adverse effects.

I aspire to attend medical school and pursue psychiatry in Hawai'i, and it deeply concerns me that mental health professionals may be deprived of the transformative potential of psychedelic medicine. I urge you to maintain an open-minded perspective on these tools, recognizing their potential for profound positive impact. I would like to conclude my personal testimonial with a quote that I adore; it comes from a research participant who underwent an intense psilocybin session where I interned:

“The light of love brings clarity to everything. I get a deep feeling of purity and feel that everything is beautiful, and that love is what makes up the world and the universe and connects everything like a network of roots.”

I recognize this may not be the most persuasive statement for this context—but it is certainly beautiful.

* * *

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—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 these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui,
Jayson Guo

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 12:31:49 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Sanchez	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of HB2630. I work in Oregon on the program we've recently established and can testify to the great public benefit derived for citizens in Oregon from access to Psilocybin. I wish Hawaii residents also to have this opportunity of bettering their health and wellbeing with a natural treatment option.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

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We do not want the citizens of Hawai'i to miss out on these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

Melissa Sanchez

HB2630 Testimony – Dr. Joshua Potocko, MD/MPH, CDR, USN (Ret)

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Josh Potocko, I live in Waimanalo on Oahu and I am writing **in strong support of HB2630**, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

I recently retired after 28 years active service in the U.S. Navy. I have witnessed the toll of depression, PTSD, and substance abuse as a Naval Flight Officer in a combat support role, and as a Navy physician caring for Marines. My partner is a practicing psychiatrist, and a graduate of the Hawaii Psychiatry Residency program. We have both lost friends, colleagues, and patients to substance abuse and suicide. Enough is enough. We as a community must invest heavily in every useful mental health resource at our disposal, in order to prevent further suffering.

Psilocybin is a naturally occurring compound found in mushrooms all over the globe. Indigenous communities have partnered with these sacred plants for healing and spiritual growth for millennia. Scientists have been studying psilocybin for several decades, often confirming what indigenous communities already knew. This is an extremely safe, non-addictive, plant medicine that has incredible potential to improve countless lives.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin. We do not want the citizens of Hawai'i to miss out on these healing modalities. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

Dr. Joshua Potocko, MD/MPH, CDR, USN (Ret)

Currently enrolled, through May 2024:

Psychedelic Facilitation

Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics

<https://psychedelics.berkeley.edu/>

Testimony in Support of [HB2630](#)

[Joint Hearing: House Committees on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs and Health & Homelessness](#)

Tuesday February 6, 2024 @ 2:00pm

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Nicole Bell, I live in Kailua-Kona, and I am writing **in strong support of HB2630**, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

Psilocybin, microdosing in particular has been the single most supportive treatment for my anorexia recovery.

I have struggled with a restrictive eating disorder for almost 15 years. I have tried everything out there; in-patient treatment, all types of therapy, EMDR, prescription medications for depression and anxiety, Neurofeedback, the list goes on. Nothing has ever gotten me to the point of recovery that I am in physically and mentally than psilocybin has. My physical hunger cues returns after not feeling them for years. The rewiring of my neuropathways by practicing feeding myself adequately have stuck. As time goes on, I am more easily able to identify and connect with what my body needs and wants. One of the biggest issues with restrictive eating disorders is the disconnection from emotions as well as your physical body. Psilocybin has allowed me to connect again. I would have never thought that I would have made it to this peace that I feel now in my body and mind. The growth as transcended the eating disorder recovery and begun to flow into other ways and perspectives of looking and living my life fully. I am scared for where I would have been if I didn't find myself with this life changing plant medicine.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—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 these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

Nicole Bell

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 6:13:18 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Neenz Faleafine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Neenz Faleafine, I live in Mililani, Oahu, and I am writing **in strong support of HB2630**, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

Mahalo.

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 12:16:38 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chelsea Rorer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Chelsea Rorer, I live in Waialua on Oahu, and I am writing in strong support of HB2630, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

I am a dually board certified nurse practitioner in psychiatric and acute care medicine. With over 12 years of practice in emergency medicine, I have seen the unfortunate effects of untreated and treatment resistant mental illness. Oregon is making a massive positive impact on this client population with their use of psilocybin. MAPS has provided encouraging research on the use of MDMA and PTSD. Please allow these tools to be used by our providers in controlled settings so we can help people in need and thus improve our community as a whole.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies-like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)-are occurring at all levels of government, private and public research institutions, and throughout mainstream society.

We do not want the citizens of Hawaii to miss out on these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies.

Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Chelsea Rorer, MSN, PMHNP-BC, AGACNP-BC

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 1:50:55 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Quentin Kealoha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Chairman and members of the Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs (JHA) and Health & Homelessness (HLT) committees,

I am writing in writing in strong support of SB2314, relating to mental health treatment and the authorization and establishment of a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use. This bill marks a significant step in improving access to a now scientifically validated, natural allopathic and therapeutic medicine with extreme positive potential in addressing an ever-growing epidemic of mental health issues within Hawai'i. As a Kanaka Maoli and U.S. Army Veteran with 11 years of research and education in the field entheogenic/psychedelic-based medicines, my passion and advocacy for these substances is not only rooted in the potential that such substances contribute towards improving our ever-evolving healthcare system, but also in the potential for such substances to impart positive impacts on the lives of countless individuals from all walks of life and especially amongst the aforementioned demographics of which I belong to, the most predominant of these substances being psilocybin.

Having researched and reviewed hundreds of peer-reviewed scientific papers and countless testimonies directly related to the efficacy of psilocybin as a form of mental health treatment over the years, as well as directly observing the significant improvement in the quality of life in those most severely impacted members of our society, which in Hawai'i, unfortunately, is overwhelmingly represented by Kanaka Maoli and U.S. Military Veterans, it is my expert opinion that the integration and the facilitation for use of psilocybin in Hawai'i's as a therapeutic supportive will drastically improve our current mental healthcare efforts by providing a holistic, safe, effective and more accessible treatment option, one which can assist in overcoming the most significant barriers prevalent amongst contemporary treatment offerings and paradigms that prevent countless citizens from obtaining the help and relief that they so desperately need.

Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Chairman and members of the JHA and HLT committees, it is my hope that you take these words into consideration and vote yes in the passage of this bill. While there is no doubt that more work is needed to address additional concerns related to the proper and complete integration of psilocybin and other entheogenic/psychedelic-based medicines into our healthcare systems and amongst our communities, this bill serves as the first major step towards significantly improving existing healthcare models, which will only be of significant benefit and value to the People of Hawai'i.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 8:34:11 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lois Crozer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this bill. I wholeheartedly support.

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 11:03:23 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Nanea Lo, I live in Mō‘ili‘ili on O‘ahu, and I am writing in strong support of HB2630, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

I have benefited very greatly in utilizing psilocybin for therapeutic use for the past year and half. I have become a better community member, sister, daughter, and contributor to society as a whole.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—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 these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai‘i.

me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 3:20:08 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Appelusa McGlynn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Appelusa, I live in Koloa, Kauai, and I am writing **in strong support of HB2630**, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

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.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered

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Appelusa McGlynn

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 2:09:40 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Bush, APRN	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a psychiatric and addictions nurse practitioner who has served the Big Island for 25 years, I welcome the introduction of properly prescribed and monitored psychedelic medicines for PTSD and addictions treatment.

I have proactively completed extensive formal training to prepare for the upcoming changes in mental health care delivery.

Please help me help others. I remain in your service.

Elizabeth Bush, MSN, APRN, CARN-AP, CSAC, CCDP-D
Board Certified Psychiatric Advanced Practice Nurse (NP and CNS)
Certified Addiction Registered Nurse, Advanced Practice
Certified Substance Abuse Counselor
Certified Co-Occurring Disorder Professional-Diplomate (retired)

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 9:49:58 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Heaney	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Mary Heaney, I live in Waialua, Oahu, and I am writing **in strong support of HB2630**, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—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 these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

Mary Heaney APRN

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 10:38:34 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melanie Lozano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Melanie Lozano, and I live on Maui in Lahaina.

I am writing in strong support of HB 2630, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

My personal connection to psychedelic research began in 2010. I discovered research from the 60's and a resurgence of current breakthrough clinical studies taking place worldwide. Watching my family and friends suffer to their deaths from terminal illnesses, stage 4 cancers, lupus, mental health disorders, and addictions was heart-breaking. Had they been able to access psychedelic therapy, much of their suffering could have been minimal instead of a painful, unbearable end of life. For this reason, I am an advocate, enthusiast, and supporter of natural, plant, and psychedelic therapy.

John Hopkins is a leading psychedelic therapy research institution in the US. Their research investigates the therapeutic effects on individuals suffering from a range of challenging conditions. These include addiction, smoking, alcohol, drugs of abuse, existential distress caused by life-threatening diseases, major depressive disorders, anorexia, Lyme disease, depression, Alzheimer's, and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. Clinical studies and neurophysiological testing have shown positive effects and are aimed at optimizing therapeutic outcomes. Many benefits are observed even after only a single dose of psilocybin.

Psilocybin, when administered properly in a clinical setting with a therapist, has shown remarkable breakthrough therapy results. The promising observations and research conducted by institutions like John Hopkins clinical studies demonstrates the potential for positive changes. It is clear that our community in Lahaina, and the wider population of Hawai'i, can benefit greatly from these healing practices. With the increased levels of PTSD, stress, depression, and anxiety in our community, it is evident that traditional approaches are not providing the relief and healing that is needed. The rise in alcohol consumption, particularly among Native Hawaiians and other local citizens, is a concerning trend that only perpetuates the cycle of harm. Unlike alcohol and other prescription drugs, psilocybin offers substantial therapeutic benefits without the addictive properties or detrimental health effects. By expanding access to psilocybin and embracing psychedelic therapies, we can provide our community with a safer and more effective means of addressing mental health issues and addictions.

It is essential that we recognize the benefits set by other states, such as Oregon, Colorado, Texas, and California, which are actively studying and passing legislation to explore psilocybin therapy and psychedelic medicines. By doing so, we demonstrate our commitment to the well-being of our residents and our dedication to uplifting our community.

State and County lawmakers now have the ability to allow safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passing of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022).

MDMA shows groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, MDMA and psilocybin are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

In conclusion, supporting HB 2630 and expanding access to psilocybin for therapeutic use is not only a logical step based on the research and positive outcomes observed worldwide, but it is also a compassionate choice for our community. Let us allow this opportunity to provide healing relief from the ‘āina that we in Lahaina and across Hawai’i desperately need.

Mahalo,
Melanie Lozano

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 12:09:38 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pamela Menter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Pamela Menter. I live in Waimanalo on Oahu, and I am writing in strong support of HB2630, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

I have been a psychotherapist for 35+ years, and currently studying with the Integrative Psychiatry Institute for certification in psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—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 these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo,
Pamela Menter

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 7:24:57 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Dettweiler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support HB2630 which establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

As a retired nurse practitioner, I have witnessed the frustration and hopelessness of individuals suffering from a variety of mental health conditions that have not responded to our current options for treatment.

Research from major and well respected institutions 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 more.

Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawaii.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Dettweiler, APRN

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:11:38 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tia-Amanda Carrasco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB2630

Joint Hearing: House Committees on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs and Health & Homelessness

Tuesday February 6, 2024 @ 2:00pm

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Tia-Amanda Carrasco, I live in Kailua-Kona and I am writing in strong support of HB2630, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

My personal experience as a caregiver having been a member of many hospice teams for over a decade is why expanding access to psilocybin is important to me. Studies showing psilocybins effectiveness in relieving anxiety without negative side effects like the traditional medications used for the dying is a breakthrough in medicine. This being the case it is only ethical to allow access to psilocybin for clinical therapeutic use.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—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 these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo,

Tia-Amanda Carrasco

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 9:01:40 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and members of the Committee,

My name is Anna Camacho, I live in District 19 / Kaimuki and I am writing **in strong support of HB2630**, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

It's so important that people who need it can safely access one of the most natural, effective, and non-addictive treatment options for depression and anxiety.

The emerging literature shows that psilocybin and other psychedelics are powerful tools to remedy mental health issues like anxiety, depression, and PTSD.

Personally, psilocybin has helped me overcome alcohol addiction, manage my anxiety, and bouts of high functioning depression.

With Hawai'i ranked at the bottom of states for access to care among mentally ill adults, it is a public disservice to ignore the cutting edge research about breakthrough psychedelic therapy coming out of major research institutions like John Hopkins University, New York University, UCLA, and Imperial College of London.

Instead, we can choose join other US cities and states in trusting these ancient healing modalities.

With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who can potentially benefit from access to psilocybin. This is our chance to do better for our public's mental health. We must do better... and passing HB2630 is a great step forward.

Mahalo piha,

Anna Camacho

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Michael Mohr. I live in Hawaii Kai on Oahu, and I am writing **in strong support of HB2630**, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

I have lost a loved one because psilocybin therapy was not available.

Mainstream pharmaceuticals can be like trying to water a garden with a fire hose. They are helpful and necessary in acute cases of mental illness but can be too strong and mind hollowing in other cases. Psilocybin therapy can gently provide sufferers with a break from their dark perceptions long enough to inspire hope that their dark perception may not be the only reality.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—are occurring at all levels of government, private and public research institutions, and throughout mainstream society.

It is important to be cautious but remember **people are suffering and dying now because you are not enabling access to these therapies.**

Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

-Mike Mohr

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 11:19:19 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robyn Petterson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject: Urgent Support for HB2630

Dear Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I am writing to urgently support HB2630 and advocate for a regulatory framework enabling therapeutic psilocybin use.

Alarming, Hawaii is witnessing a rapid rise in mental health cases and suicides. Recent data underscores the pressing need for innovative solutions to address our community's mental health crisis.

Scientific advancements highlight psilocybin's therapeutic benefits, with global research supporting its efficacy. Notably, the FDA recognizes psilocybin's breakthrough status for treating various mental health conditions.

Psilocybin and MDMA have shown promise in treating conditions such as anxiety, addiction, depression, and PTSD. These substances offer non-addictive and safe alternatives, as acknowledged by the FDA's Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

Inspired by pioneering initiatives in Oregon and Colorado, it is crucial for Hawaii to join the movement toward legal access to psychedelic therapies. Mental health challenges are affecting our communities, making therapeutic psilocybin, MDMA, and other psychedelics invaluable. Support HB2630 to establish a legal pathway for therapeutic access in Hawaii, addressing the escalating mental health crisis in Hawaii.

With aloha,

Robyn Petterson

(808) 635-8554

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 11:45:14 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John K. Pascual	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha chairpersons and members of the committee

My name is John Pascual, I live in Mountain View on the Big Island, I am writing in very strong support of HB2630, which would establish a framework and regulations as well as authorize administration to qualifying patients by certified mental health care physicians the therapeutic use of psilocybin as a legitimate medicine for mental health conditions.

I had been suffering from severe depression, crippling anxiety and suicidal ideation the greater part of my adult life, I am 39 years old now. Six months ago I had suffered a work injury event with carbon monoxide poisoning which has led to a TBI or traumatic brain injury. I have been since and am still undergoing treatment for my injury. Some of my physical injuries post injury are ataxia(impaired balance and coordination), loss of some cognitive function(mostly in speech, short term memory, cognitive initiation). Some of my emotional injuries have resulted in major depressive disorder and PTSD. These injuries, all of which have been confirmed by medical professionals have severely altered my life personally and professionally. I have since turned to the therapeutic use of psilocybin to help repair, restore and promote the neural plasticity in my brain. As well, I have been using psilocybin towards the treatment of my mental health. I have found that psilocybin has had PROFOUND effects towards my recovery and over well being! Through self administered and self guided sessions of psilocybin at home accommodated with weekly psychotherapy and cognitive/speech therapy with my doctors I have been making leaps and bounds in progress of my recovery. The couple few caviats to this is that In fear my dr's opinions on the legality of psilocybin, I've chosen to not inform of my usage. Which brings me to why I support this bill, I am afraid that yes I am breaking the law in obtaining and administering this medicine. Which is almost a counter productive because of the onset of fear and anxiety of in the process of obtaining. I feel with a regulatory bill and proper framework for qualified patients through medical professionals, making for safe and legal therapeutic access is the right step forward for patients such as myself that have saw nothing but benefits through responsible use of this natural safe medicine.

Over probably the last few decades, accredited institutions of sciences and higher learning all around the world have studied, tested and found that there is in fact various benefits through the use of psilocybin for mental health. Please consider forward movement of this bill for the patients of Hawaii that have not found relief in "traditional "pharmaceutical SSRI's in efforts to treat their mental health ailments.

Thank you

John Pascual

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 12:27:26 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Jaffe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Michael Jaffe, I live in Haiku, Maui and I am writing **in strong support of HB2630**, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—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 these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,
Maiki

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 1:02:17 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mariko Schmidtauer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Mariko Schmidtauer, I live in Hawai'i Kai on Oahu, and I am writing **in strong support of HB2630**, which authorizes and establishes a regulatory framework for the administration of psilocybin for therapeutic use.

I have been trained in a psychotherapeutic approach called Compassionate Inquiry. Within that framework I was introduced to therapy supported psychedelics. My research has taught me of many positive results of using psilocybin in therapy. This information encouraged me to try this process for myself. I had to travel out of state to have this experience. It was tremendously helpful in my own healing process. I see a huge benefit for others to have similar experiences here within our state and therefore strongly support HB2630.

Over the past two decades, researchers around the world have renewed scientific understanding of the benefits of psychedelic therapies 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.

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 more. Similarly, MDMA is showing groundbreaking efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result, psilocybin and MDMA are increasingly considered some of the most effective, non-addictive, and safe treatment options for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD respectively, when administered in clinical settings. These impressive results have led the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to grant psilocybin and MDMA their Breakthrough Therapy Designation.

State and County lawmakers now have an essential role to play in the movement toward safe, legal, therapeutic access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Groundbreaking initiatives in favor of psychedelic therapies—like the passage of Measure 109 in Oregon (2020) and Natural Medicine Health Act in Colorado (2022)—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 these healing modalities. With mental health becoming a more present issue in our communities, everyone knows someone who stands to benefit from access to psilocybin, MDMA and other psychedelic therapies. Please support this measure, which provides a legal pathway for therapeutic access to psilocybin in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo,

Mariko Schmidtauer

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 1:54:34 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Star Zen Wave	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Joint House Committees on Health & Homelessness and Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs:

Aloha and mahalo for providing me and many other advocates with the opportunity to share our personal testimonies in strong support of HB2630, which will gratefully and effectively expand the much-needed access to the medicinal support that psilocybin, psilocin and their responsible practitioners provide.

As a substance-free survivor of 10 out of 10 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) resulting in Complex PTSD—along with a debilitating chronic illness that left me bedridden for over five years—I first approached plant medicine in 2018 with the utmost respect—and admittedly some incredulity—only to discover its amazing healing potential.

This came following decades of numerous traditional (and often traumatic, invasive and expensive) allopathic treatments along with alternative / complementary modalities and extensive psychotherapy to little or no avail.

After exhausting all of my perceived options and resources, I decided to venture far outside my comfort zone to experiment with plant medicine during a month-long retreat in Central America in 2018.

The trip there was grueling; in constant intractable pain and extremely atrophied, I required a wheelchair to and from each plane, yet was determined to discover for myself the truth of plant medicine’s promise to heal even the deepest of wounds—or at the very least aid in one’s understanding and acceptance of them.

During this time, I worked with renowned physicians, practitioners, scientists and ethnobotanists to create a safe and effective space for unraveling years of visceral traumatic layers that my body and mind had subconsciously been holding and hiding since birth in an effort to survive horrors no human should ever have to face.

To my amazement, by the end of the plant medicine program, I was hiking, swimming and dancing on my own—and *without* pain—ready to live my life to its fullest potential! This was by far the greatest empirical evidence of effective treatment I had experienced to date, and very unlikely to be simply a placebo as I had put my heart and soul into all the other treatments I had tried before it.

Much of this time revealed events which I had no conscious memory of, making it incredibly difficult or even impossible to heal and integrate in years cognitive behavioral therapy, EMDR sessions, various psychiatric pharmaceuticals and many other methods used to treat PTSD.

And although I felt strong enough to overcome the past enough in order to function in society—often feeling empowered to utilize my traumatic experiences to help others face theirs—the residual and often devastating sensations from childhood continued to linger.

Festering deep inside my psyche, they eventually manifested into incredibly intense and debilitating physical, mental and emotional symptoms, all of which I my best efforts could not relieve for any effective length of time.

At 35, my entire existence essentially collapsed; I went from owning and operating a successful business, volunteering in my community and taking care of family members to facing homelessness from the mounting medical bills due to a serious and mysterious nervous system disease that left doctors stumped and me in a wheelchair, frequently unable to walk, speak nor even feed myself.

I had searched high and low for remedies and relief for over 25 of my 45 years as the illness exponentially progressed, diligently researching scientific journals and desperately doing whatever the doctors suggested I could do to help myself, often using my body as a scientific experiment.

Surprisingly, plant medicine became the key to the lock I had been seeking for a lifetime. I was even able to regain my health and wellness to the point of being able to make my dream move to Kaua'i to continue my healing journey and help support others in their healing journeys as well.

This process of responsibility using plant medicine and continuing to work with my practitioners to integrate the experience has even made it possible for me to successfully work with Veterans suffering from PTSD, along with other survivors of traumatic experiences including childhood sexual abuse, domestic violence, addiction as well as chronic and terminal illness.

As psychiatrist, researcher and educator Dr. Bessel van der Kolk of Boston University School of Medicine teaches in his book, *The Body Keeps the Score*, trauma literally damages the brain—not unlike encephalopathy—much to the point where current medications and treatments become ineffective, often creating more damage themselves.

And yet plant medicine—psilocybin in particular—has been a proven method of effective and lasting healing—all without without harmful nor undesirable side effects, especially when done with capability, care and compassion in safe and structured environments.

As you well know, dozens of research studies show these data repeatedly, including those at the Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research, University of Berkley's Center for the Science of Psychedelics, as well as the Psychedelic Research Programs at New York University's Langone Health and Grossman School of Medicine, respectively.

It truly is remarkable what returning to our 'āina for our health and happiness can help us achieve!

Integrating all I have learned from the experience of using plant medicine to heal has taught me many important lessons in life—one of which means opening up the possibilities of plants and Nature's gift of the Psilocybe species to help us heal—all while making them readily available for use and research in a responsible and respectful way.

Mahalo again for holding space for all of us to share our testimonies; please continue to support HB2630 in passing swiftly so that others suffering may receive the option to receive this healing support from the responsible and respectful use of Psilocybin and its practitioners. Aloha.

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 7:43:13 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Gonce	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong Support

HB-2630

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 9:18:50 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/6/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kai Luke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

RE: SB2630 ; Hearing Tuesday February 6, 2024

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

I appreciate the opportunity to testify for SB2617.

I am in support of this bill as it will help to set up a structure and framework to move forward just as many other states have done with plant therapeutics.

Without this bill the people of Hawai'i will continue to struggle finding natural options to assist with mental health.

Please consider working with the Clarity Project Hawai'i as they have done extensive research on this topic.

Thank you,

Kai Luke

Pilot Who Disrupted Flight Said He Had Taken Psychedelic Mushrooms, Complaint Says

In an interview with the police, the off-duty Alaska Airlines pilot also said he thought he was having a nervous breakdown and had not slept for more than 40 hours, according to a criminal complaint.

By Michael Levenson

Oct. 24, 2023

An off-duty Alaska Airlines pilot who tried to shut off the engines during a flight on Sunday told investigators that he had been sleepless and dehydrated since he consumed psychedelic mushrooms about 48 hours before boarding and that he had been depressed for a long time, state and federal court documents said.

The pilot, Joseph D. Emerson, 44, also told the police in an interview after he was taken into custody that he believed he was having a “nervous breakdown,” according to federal court documents. He said he had struggled with depression for about six years and that a friend had recently died.

An officer and Mr. Emerson “talked about the use of psychedelic mushrooms, and Emerson said it was his first time taking mushrooms,” the federal documents said. The documents did not elaborate on the quantity of psilocybin from mushrooms that he said he had consumed, and it was not known if the authorities had given him a drug test.

In the interview, Mr. Emerson also gave his version of what happened when he was riding inside the cockpit in a jump seat, a common practice for off-duty pilots shuttling to and from work.

“I didn’t feel OK,” he told the police, according to the federal complaint. “It seemed like the pilots weren’t paying attention to what was going on.”

He also told the police, according to the complaint, “I pulled both emergency shut off handles because I thought I was dreaming and I just wanna wake up.”

Mr. Emerson, of Pleasant Hill, Calif., was charged in federal court on Tuesday with one count of interfering with flight crew members and attendants, prosecutors said.

He was also charged in Multnomah County Circuit Court in Portland, Ore., with 83 counts of attempted murder and one count of endangering an aircraft, court records show. During a brief appearance in court on Tuesday, a lawyer entered not-guilty pleas on his behalf.

“Joseph Emerson is a caring father, a loving husband, and a skilled aviator who is supported and loved by a vast network of friends, family, and colleagues,” his lawyer, Noah Horst, said in an email. “He would never intentionally hurt another person. Joe was not under the influence of any intoxicants when he boarded that flight.”

Mr. Emerson has been an airline pilot for more than two decades. Throughout his career, he has completed his required Federal Aviation Administration medical certifications, and his certifications have been never denied, suspended or revoked, Alaska Airlines said. Multnomah County court records indicate he does not have a criminal record.

On Sunday, Mr. Emerson was riding in the jump seat of the jet, an Embraer 175, the authorities said. Flight 2059, operated by Horizon Air, a regional subsidiary of Alaska Airlines, left Everett, Wash., about 5:23 p.m. bound for San Francisco, with four crew members and 80 passengers onboard.

At first, there was no indication that there was anything wrong with Mr. Emerson, as he chatted with the two pilots about the weather and different types of aircraft, the court documents said.

But when the plane was about halfway between Astoria, Ore., and Portland, one of the pilots saw Mr. Emerson throw his headset across the cockpit and announce, “I’m not OK,” the complaint states. The pilot then saw Mr. Emerson try to grab two red handles that cut off fuel to the engines, the complaint states.

After a brief physical struggle with the pilots, Mr. Emerson “quickly settled down” and left the cockpit, the complaint states.

Alaska Airlines said in a statement on Monday that, because “some residual fuel” remained in the line, “the quick reaction of our crew to reset the handles restored fuel flow and prevented fuel starvation.”

If Mr. Emerson had successfully pulled the engine shut-off handles down all the way, “then it would have shut down the hydraulics and the fuel to the engines, turning the aircraft into a glider within seconds,” the complaint states.

While walking to the back of the plane after he left the cockpit, Mr. Emerson said to a flight attendant, “You need to cuff me right now or it’s going to be bad,” according to the complaint. After Mr. Emerson was restrained in the back of the plane, he tried to grab the handle of an emergency exit door, but was stopped by a flight attendant, federal prosecutors said.

Another flight attendant heard Mr. Emerson “make statements such as, ‘I messed everything up’ and that ‘he tried to kill everybody;’” the complaint states.

The crew diverted the plane to Portland International Airport, where it landed safely at about 6:30 p.m.

After he was escorted off the plane, a passenger, Aubrey Gavello, told ABC News: “The flight attendant got back on the speaker and said, plain and simple: ‘He had a mental breakdown. We needed to get him off the plane immediately.’”

Mr. Emerson joined Horizon Air as a first officer in August 2001, Alaska Airlines said. In June 2012, he joined Virgin America as a pilot. When Alaska Airlines acquired Virgin in 2016, Mr. Emerson rejoined the company as a first officer for Alaska Airlines. In 2019, he became a captain, the company said.

The pilot’s claim that he had used psilocybin mushrooms before boarding comes as psychedelics have been gaining medical and legal acceptance, propelled by a growing body of research suggesting that they can be used to treat mental disorders.

But experts were skeptical that Mr. Emerson was still under the influence in the cockpit.

Juliana Mercer, a Marine Corps veteran in San Diego who has helped connect former service members to psychedelic therapies, said that, in her experience, the effects of psychedelic mushrooms last no longer than seven or eight hours and completely leave a person’s system within a day.

“There’s a potential for paranoia,” Ms. Mercer added, “but not 48 hours post-consumption, unless there’s an underlying mental health condition.”

Bob Jesse, an adviser to the U.C. Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics and the Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic & Consciousness Research, said that psilocybin would be long gone from the body by then.

“But a strong transient mental experience, drug or non-drug, could further destabilize someone who’s already unstable or fragile,” Mr. Jesse said.

On Jan. 1, Oregon became the first state to legalize the adult use of psilocybin mushrooms. And voters in Colorado approved a measure last year to decriminalize them, setting the state on the path to a legal therapeutic market.

In other states, including Texas, lawmakers have authorized studies for treating ailments such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

The federal Food and Drug Administration has granted psilocybin “breakthrough therapy” status for research.

Michael Levenson joined The Times in December 2019. He was previously a reporter at The Boston Globe, where he covered local, state and national politics and news. More about Michael Levenson

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