



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

#### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Health & Homelessness  
Wednesday, January 31, 2024 at 10:15 a.m.

By

Lee Buenconsejo-Lum, Interim Dean  
John A. Burns School of Medicine

And

Michael Bruno, Provost  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

#### HB 2728 – RELATING TO HEALTHCARE

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of HB 2728 which establishes the Hui Ho'omana task force to develop a comprehensive plan to provide universal access to equitable and affordable high-quality healthcare for state residents. The purpose of the task force would be to make recommendations to achieve universal access and equity to quality healthcare at an affordable cost for our residents.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted and made worse preexisting challenges for some populations to achieve good health, in part due to inconsistent access to healthcare. Disparities in infection rates, hospitalizations and death by noted throughout Hawai'i and experienced by certain ethnicities more than others. Despite many efforts guided by community leaders to help with outreach and education, many health disparities continue today. Increasing healthcare insurance costs, low reimbursement rates to providers, healthcare workforce shortages combined with growing unaffordability for families and businesses are among the myriad reasons for poor access to care. Despite many efforts and partnerships among those in the health care sector and community leaders, coordinated efforts are needed to provide seamless access to care for all of Hawai'i's people, across community-based settings to clinics to inpatient, long-term, and home-based care settings.

The Hui Ho'omana task force would be an effective mechanism to outline processes and procedures that would move the state in the direction of achieving universal access to equitable and affordable high-quality healthcare. The John A. Burns School of Medicine appreciates and welcomes the opportunity to participate in the task force.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.



**STATE HEALTH PLANNING  
AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII  
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

**KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH**  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH  
KA LUNA HO'ŌKELE

**John C. (Jack) Lewin, M.D.**  
ADMINISTRATOR

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**House Committee on Health and Homelessness**

**H.B. 2728 Relating to Healthcare**

**Testimony of John C. (Jack) Lewin, M.D.**  
**SHPDA Administrator**

**Wednesday, January 31, 2024**  
**10:15 a.m.**

1 **Agency's Position: SUPPORT**

2 **Fiscal Implications: None**

3 **Purpose and Justification:** The purpose of HB 2728 is to convene a highly representative,  
4 diverse, and committed group of leading consumer, provider, and government stakeholders to  
5 convene as the Hui Ho'omana Task Force to envision on behalf of Hawai'i's citizens the best  
6 path to a future of universal access to high-quality, equitable, and affordable health care for  
7 ALL.

8 The volunteer Task Force is directed to advise the State Health Planning and  
9 Development Agency (SHPDA), the Legislature, the Governor, and the people of Hawai'i of its  
10 findings and recommendations before completing its deliberations by July of 2025. This kind  
11 of collaborative public planning effort has not been performed for longer than a decade to  
12 attempt to describe the most promising, culturally acceptable, and achievable future of health  
13 care in Hawai'i, which must also include long-term care. Clarity in these regards is sorely  
14 needed.

1           The nation is adrift in terms of effectively addressing numerous problems in health care.  
2           These include how to deal with the gaps in access to care for millions of Americans, the  
3           unacceptable variation in quality of care from state to state and within states, glaring inequities  
4           in care for too many, a failure to effectively prevent disease and its progression, and an  
5           alarming rate of rising costs from an estimated national annual health care expenditure of 4.6  
6           trillion dollars in 2023 to an estimated seven trillion dollars annually by 2030.

7           Hawai'i has a tradition of national leadership in health system innovation and reform,  
8           dating from the Monarchy's provision of health care to waves of immigrant agricultural workers,  
9           to the passage of the one-and-only state employer mandate guaranteeing health care for  
10          workers and their families in the Prepaid Health Care Act. We also have an advanced Med-  
11          Quest program, and many other innovations, dedicated providers, and community volunteers.  
12          That said, Hawai'i faces daunting workforce shortages; unacceptable gaps in access to  
13          primary and specialty care, particularly in rural areas and neighbor islands; inequities among  
14          our Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and low-income kupuna and keiki populations;  
15          unnecessary administrative complexity; and rapidly rising costs. All of that must be addressed  
16          expeditiously.

17          While a short-term Task Force cannot be expected to solve all those problems, it can  
18          describe the current experience, thinking, priorities, and vision of both those charged with  
19          providing care here and those who receive it. This can inform our policy makers and suggest  
20          means to seek consensus around potential solutions that reflect the diverse communities and  
21          cultural values of our state.

22          To accelerate the deliberations of the Hui Ho'omana, SHPDA has already formed 4 new  
23          Advisory Councils that have been gathering information and expert, community-based, and  
24          neighbor island inputs around Keiki Care, Kupuna Care (and the future of long-term care),

1 Health Data, and achieving Universal Access. The more than 50 diverse advisors of these  
2 councils formed in 2023 report to the Plan Development Committee of SHPDA's Statewide  
3 Health Coordinating Council to organize background material around priorities they are  
4 identifying for the Task Force and the state to consider. These councils were formed to help  
5 SHPDA prepare for its application with MedQuest for a huge federal grant due in March 2024.  
6 The Task Force will be asked to look at the big picture, but the results of the four councils'  
7 deliberations will give it a head start. Many national private sector, federal, and state health  
8 policy leaders have also expressed interest in offering virtual and in-kind assistance to the Hui  
9 Ho'omana process if desired.

10 We believe the Hui Ho'omana Task Force will offer the Governor, the Legislature, state  
11 agencies, and Hawaii's health sector valuable insights to accelerate our ability to realize the  
12 Governor's "Hawaii'i the Health State" vision, and so to become the first state to achieve  
13 universal access to high-quality, equitable, affordable health care for ALL.

14 Please also note that we have also received an enthusiastic request to be a participant  
15 on this Task Force by the UH-based Hawaii State Center for Nursing (HSCN), an organization  
16 already involved in thinking about health system reform needs here, and with the staff  
17 resources to contribute valuable perspectives. Note that the Senate companion bill to HB  
18 2728, SB 3129, was amended to have HSCN be the nursing representative on the Task Force.

19 Mahalo nui loa for opportunity to testify.



**Written Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Health & Homelessness  
Wednesday, January 31, 2024 at 10:15 A.M.  
Conference Room 329 and via Videoconference**

**By  
Laura Reichhardt, APRN, AGPCNP-BC  
Hawai'i State Center for Nursing  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

**Comments on H.B. 2728  
RELATING TO HEALTHCARE**

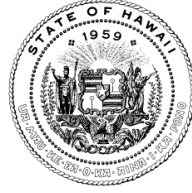
Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Healthcare & Homelessness, thank you for hearing this measure which will establish the Hui Hoomana task force. This task force, to be convened by the State Health Planning and Development Agency within the Department of Health, will identify actionable priorities and financial resources to offer the State's residents universal and equitable access to affordable, high-quality healthcare and health insurance.

The designated members of the task force represent a wide array of experts in state government, healthcare administration, healthcare professions, insurance, and patient advocacy. The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing commends the Legislature, the Department of Health, and SHPDA for identifying a broad and representative group.

The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing recognizes that the nursing workforce and healthcare access work hand-in-hand. As the state's nursing workforce center, it would be a privilege and honor to contribute to this important undertaking.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in recognition of this important effort, and to offer our willingness to engage in the process.

*The mission of the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing is to engage in nursing workforce research, promote best practices and disseminate knowledge, cultivate a diverse and well-prepared workforce, support healthy work environments, champion lifelong learning, and strategically plan for sound nursing workforce policy.*



**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I**  
**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR**  
**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

**NADINE Y. ANDO**  
DIRECTOR | KA LUNA HO'OKELE

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA  
**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

**DEAN I. HAZAMA**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR | KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

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**Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs**

**Before the**  
**House Committee on Health and Homelessness**  
**Wednesday, January 31, 2024**  
**10:15 a.m.**

**State Capitol, Conference Room 329 and via Video Conferencing**

**On the following measure:**  
**H.B. 2728, RELATING TO HEALTHCARE**

Chair Belatti and Members of the Committee:

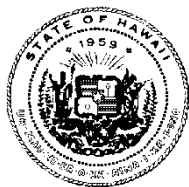
My name is Gordon Ito, Insurance Commissioner for the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Insurance Division. The Department supports the intent of this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to establish the Hui Hoomana task force to identify actionable priorities and financial resources to offer the State's residents universal access to affordable, high-quality healthcare and health insurance; require reports to the Legislature; and dissolve the task force on 7/1/2025.

The Department supports efforts to improve the quality and affordability of health care in order to bend the health care cost curve.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

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



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

TRISTA SPEER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

January 29, 2024

TO: The Honorable Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair  
House Committee on Health & Homelessness

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 2728 - RELATING TO HEALTHCARE.**

Hearing: January 31, 2024, 10:15 AM  
Conference Room 329 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the bill and defers to the State Health Planning and Development Agency (SHPDA) on implementation and resource needs.

**PURPOSE:** This measure establishes the Hui Ho'omana task force, convened by the State Health Planning and Development Agency (SHPDA), to develop recommendations for universal access to high quality healthcare at an affordable cost; and support planning actions, including identifying and prioritizing necessary actions, determining responsible parties and timelines for each action, and identifying resources required and funding opportunities. The final report of the task force is due before the conclusion of the 2025 legislative session, and the task force shall be dissolved on July 1, 2025. Effective upon approval.

DHS appreciates the Legislature's continued investment in and attention to universal access to high quality healthcare. DHS will gladly participate as a member of the task force.

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

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII  
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII



**CAROLINE CADIRAO**  
DIRECTOR  
Executive Office on Aging

**KENNETH FINK, MD, MGA, MPH**  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
**KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO**  
**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING**  
NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT  
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB2728**  
**RELATING TO HEALTHCARE**

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS  
REP. DELLA AU BELATTI, CHAIR  
REP. JENNA TAKENOUCI, VICE CHAIR

Testimony of Caroline Cadirao  
Director, Executive Office on Aging  
Attached Agency to the Department of Health

Hearing: Wednesday, January 31, 2024, 10:15 A.M. Conference Room 329

- 1 **EOA Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA), an attached agency to the Department of
- 2 Health (DOH) supports this measure.
- 3 **Fiscal Implications:** None.
- 4 **Purpose and Justification:** Establishes the Hui Hoomana task force to identify actionable
- 5 priorities and financial resources to offer the State's residents universal access to affordable,
- 6 high-quality healthcare and health insurance. EOA as a non-voting member of this task force,
- 7 supports this measure.
- 8 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.





**STATE OF HAWAII**  
STATE COUNCIL  
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543

January 31, 2024

The Honorable Representative Della Au Belatti Chair  
House Committee on Health and Homelessness  
The Thirty-Second Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawai'i  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Representative Della Au Belatti and Committee Members:

**SUBJECT: HB2728 RELATING TO HEALTHCARE**

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities **SUPPORTS HB2728**, which establishes the Hui Hoomana task force to identify actionable priorities and financial resources to offer the State's residents universal access to affordable, high-quality healthcare and health insurance. Requires reports to the Legislature. Dissolves the task force on 7/1/2025.

The purpose of the State Health Planning & Development Agency (SHPDA) is to "promote accessibility for all the people of the State to quality health care services at reasonable cost." We support legislation to upgrade SHPDA's healthcare oversight capability. We defer to SHPDA for comments and recommendations.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support of HB2728**.

Sincerely,

Daintry Bartoldus  
Executive Administrator

Senate Committee on Health and Homelessness

H.B. 2728 Relating to Health

Testimony of Tamia McKeague  
Chair, Hawai'i County Subarea Health Planning Council

Wednesday, January 31, 2024  
10:15 a.m.

On the following measure:  
**HB2728, RELATING TO HEALTH**

Chair Belatti and Members of the Committee,

I am Tamia McKeague, the current Chair of the Hawai'i County Subarea Health Planning Council, and I am honored to address you today in support of **HB2728**. Our committee wholeheartedly endorses the objectives outlined in this legislation.

The primary aim of **HB2728** is to establish the Hui Ho'omana task force within the State Health Planning and Development Agency. This task force will be instrumental in developing a comprehensive plan to ensure universal access to equitable, affordable, high-quality healthcare and health insurance for all state residents.

Our committee strongly believes that initiatives of this nature are crucial for fostering positive change in our healthcare system. By addressing these key elements, **HB2728** strives to create a more inclusive, affordable, and accessible healthcare environment for all residents of our state.

Furthermore, the Hawai'i County Subarea Health Planning Council fully supports endeavors to enhance the quality and affordability of healthcare services. We recognize the importance of aligning our efforts to improve our community's health and well-being.

I express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to testify on behalf of **HB2728**. The positive impact of this legislation has the potential to resonate deeply within our community, and we appreciate the commitment of this Committee to advancing the well-being of our residents.

Mahalo nui.

Sincerely,

Tamia McKeague  
Chair, Hawai'i County Subarea Health Planning Council



Wednesday, January 31, 2024 at 10:15 am  
Conference Room 329

**House Committee on Health and Homelessness**

To: Chair Della Au Belatti  
Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi

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

Re: **Submitting Comments**  
**HB 2728, Relating to Healthcare**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **comments** on this measure, which seeks to establish a task force known as the hui ho`omana to achieve universal access to quality, equitable care at an affordable cost for the state of Hawaii.

Hawaii has long been a leader in visionary healthcare policy making. As noted in the findings of this measure, we are marking the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of the *Prepaid Health Healthcare Act*, a landmark law that has made access to affordable care a reality for most residents in the state. We have also, for many years, had the distinction of holding one of the lowest uninsured rates in the nation. By many measures, Hawaii is one of the healthiest states in the country, with high quality care delivered at much lower costs.

We appreciate the opportunity to be included in any discussions on the future of healthcare in the state, especially as it relates to how we can best support providers and ensure continued access to care for all residents. Thank you for the opportunity for us to comment on this measure, and for your continued focus on building a sustainable healthcare system.



## THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEM

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To: The Honorable Della Au Belatti, Chair  
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair  
Members, House Committee on Health & Homelessness

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

Date: January 31, 2024

Re: Support for HB2728 - Relating to Health

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

Queen's appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB2728, establishing the Hui Ho'omano task force within the SHPDA (DOH) to develop a comprehensive plan to provide universal access to healthcare for residents of Hawai'i.

Hawai'i has been a leader in providing residents quality healthcare due in large part to the Prepaid Healthcare Act of 1974. While by no means perfect, our state remains one of the archetypes for providing broad healthcare services across a diverse social and cultural landscape. As evolving technology and new challenges to access confront our state, this task force presents an opportunity to have key public and private stakeholders align key strategies to confront ongoing and future barriers to access.

We view the proposed goals of the task force as being aligned with The Queen's Health System's mission to "fulfill the intent of Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV to provide in perpetuity quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i;" we welcome the opportunity to be a named member of this team and look forward to the work ahead.

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

**HB-2728**

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 10:57:48 AM

Testimony for HLT on 1/31/2024 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michael Golojuch Jr	Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

The Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i; Hawai‘i’s oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization fully supports HB 2728.

We hope you all will support this important piece of legislation.

Mahalo nui loa,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)  
Chair and SCC Representative  
Stonewall Caucus for the DPH



**Testimony to the House Committee on House and Homelessness  
Wednesday, January 31, 2024; 10:15 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 329  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 2728, RELATING TO HEALTHCARE.**

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takeuchi, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** House Bill No. 2728, RELATING TO HEALTHCARE.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

This bill, as received by your Committee, would establish the Hui Hoomana Task Force (Task Force) within the State Health Planning and Development Agency (SHPDA) to make recommendations that further the goal of state residents achieving universal access and equity to quality healthcare at an affordable cost. Further, this bill would direct SHPDA to invite, among others, the Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaii Primary Care Association or designee to participate in the Task Force.

The HPCA has had preliminary discussions with the SHPDA Administrator and strongly supports this effort. We note that the State has a unique opportunity to utilize the vast experience that Dr. John (Jack) Lewin possesses to further many of the objectives that he spearheaded years ago when he devised the MedQUEST Program under the Waihee Administration. This concept later served as the basis for the federal Affordable Care Act, which is in existence today.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or [eabe@hawaiiipca.net](mailto:eabe@hawaiiipca.net).

Wednesday, January 31, 2024; 10:15 am  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference

**House Committee on Health & Homelessness**

To: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

From: Michael Robinson  
Vice President, Government Relations & Community Affairs

Re: **Comments on HB 2728  
Relating To Healthcare**

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My name is Michael Robinson, and I am the Vice President of Government Relations & Community Affairs at Hawai'i Pacific Health. Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system comprised of its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox and over 70 locations statewide with a mission of creating a healthier Hawai'i.

**I write to provide comments on HB 2728** that establishes the Hui Ho'omana task force to develop a comprehensive plan to provide universal access to equitable and affordable high-quality healthcare for state residents. The purpose of the task force is to make recommendations to achieve universal access and equity to quality healthcare at an affordable cost for our residents.

When compared to other states, Hawai'i has an exceptional healthcare system that provides low-cost quality care and high rates of insurance coverage. However, HPH recognizes the existence of challenges to access to care for portions of our population who live in rural communities and due to social inequities for the underserved groups.

HPH has been working with SHPDA on similar issues related to access to healthcare through the Universal Access Advisory Council and is also a member of the Data Advisory Council, a subcommittee of the Universal Access Advisory Council. We are happy to have been invited and appreciate the opportunity to be a member of the Hui Ho'omana task force. We look forward to addressing the issues that would make Hawai'i's healthcare system stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



## Hawaii Medical Association

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Phone: 808.536.7702 • Fax: 808.528.2376 • hawaiimedicalassociation.org

### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS

Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Date: January 31, 2024

From: Hawaii Medical Association, Marc Alexander, Executive Director

### **RE HB2728**, Relating to Health - Healthcare; Health Insurance; Task Force; Reports

#### **Position: Support**

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the House Committee on Health & Homelessness.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT of HB2728**, Relating to Healthcare, which would establish the Hui Hoomana task force “to identify actionable priorities and financial resources to offer the State's residents universal access to affordable, high-quality healthcare and health insurance” (HB2728, p. 2, lines 13-16). While Hawaii is a leader in health system innovation and reform, dating back to the monarchy, and continuing to the Hawaii Prepaid Health Care Act and our successful Med-QUEST program, gaps remain with approximately 80,000 Hawaii residents remaining uninsured.

This task force intends to bring together key healthcare leadership to strategically plan and prioritize actions which would advance our state's commitment to universal healthcare. Convened by the state health planning and development agency – which is the official recipient of data required to understand healthcare costs, quality of care issues, community health, and health disparities – we believe this task force will be positioned to make impactful and data-informed recommendations for the governor and legislature's consideration.

Mahalo for your kind consideration of this proposed legislation, and for your service to our community.

Marc Alexander  
Executive Director of the Hawaii Medical Association, and  
Member of the Universal Access Advisory Council

#### **2024 Hawaii Medical Association Officers**

Elizabeth Ann Ignacio, MD, President • Nadine Tenn-Salle, MD, President Elect • Angela Pratt, MD, Immediate Past President  
Jerris Hedges, MD, Treasurer • Thomas Kosasa, MD, Secretary • Marc Alexander, Executive Director

#### **2024 Hawaii Medical Association Public Policy Coordination Team**

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





Government Relations

Testimony of  
Jonathan Ching  
Government Relations Director

Before:  
House Committee on Health & Homelessness  
The Honorable Della Au Belatti, Chair  
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

January 31, 2024  
10:15 a.m.  
Conference Room 329 & Via Videoconference

**Re: HB 2728, Relating to Healthcare.**

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on HB 2728, which establishes the Hui Ho‘omana task force within the State Health Planning and Development Agency to develop a comprehensive plan to provide universal access to equitable and affordable high-quality healthcare for state residents, including defining action plan items, setting timeline and deadline for each action item, and identifying resources required and funding options.

**Kaiser Permanente Hawai‘i provides the following COMMENTS on HB 2728.**

Kaiser Permanente Hawai‘i is one of the nation’s largest not-for-profit health plans, serving 12.6 million members nationwide, and more than 274,000 members in Hawai‘i. In Hawai‘i, more than 4,200 dedicated employees and more than 650 Hawai‘i Permanente Medical Group physicians and advance practice providers work in our integrated health system to provide our members coordinated care and coverage. Kaiser Permanente Hawai‘i has more than 19 medical facilities, including our award-winning Moanalua Medical Center. We continue to provide high-quality coordinated care for our members and deliver on our commitment to improve the health of our members and the 1.4 million people living in the communities we serve.

The State of Hawai‘i has been a pioneer among the states in healthcare for decades. Notably, the Legislature’s passage of the Hawai‘i Prepaid Health Act (PHCA) in 1974 was the first in the nation to set minimum standards of healthcare coverage for workers. Under the PHCA, Hawaii has long boasted low uninsured rates. With the enactment of the ACA in 2010, many more residents obtained affordable health insurance. As part of one of the nation’s largest nonprofit integrated health care systems, Kaiser Permanente Hawai‘i seeks to make healthcare more affordable and available to everyone.



Government Relations

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i appreciates the opportunity to be included in the Hui Ho'omana task force and looks forward to continuing discussions on how we can ensure universal access and equity to quality healthcare at an affordable cost for state residents.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

**HB-2728**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 12:50:20 PM

Testimony for HLT on 1/31/2024 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Rainbow Family 808	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 supports HB2728. Please pass this bill.

Mike Golojuch, Secretary/Board Member

**HB-2728**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 1:30:30 AM

Testimony for HLT on 1/31/2024 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carolyn M Golojuch	Rainbow Family 808	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

January 30, 2024

Honorable Chair and Board Members

RE: Strong Support for HB2728 – Establish Hui Hoomana Task Force

Rainbow Family 808 strongly supports HB 2728 in order to identify actionable priorities and financial resources to offer the State’s residents universal access to affordable high quality healthcare and health insurance with reports to the Legislature.

Universal Health Care is a civil right to all residents. It is also a sign of a humane society. Our country is the only country in the western world without Universal Health Care. The sight of GOP Senator John McCain, a noted, war veteran enter the US Senate Chamber to vote for Health Care was a magical moment. Now, I hope to experience Hawai`i doing this for our residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our support for HB 2739. Rainbow Family 808 asks that you pass HB 2728 this session. Every day without these steps toward this Humane measure is a crime to humanity..

Sincerely,

Carolyn Martinez Golojuch

President and Founder Rainbow Family 808

**HB-2728**

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 7:37:59 PM

Testimony for HLT on 1/31/2024 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Support.

**HB-2728**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 7:17:46 AM

Testimony for HLT on 1/31/2024 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth Giesting	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: The Hon. Dell Au Belatti, Chair, and members of the House Committee on Health & Human Services

From: Beth Giesting

**Re: Support for House Bill 2728**

Thank you for the opportunity to support House Bill 2728. Universal access to affordable, quality care is essential, but such a goal cannot be achieved without State oversight, regulation, and assistance. The proposed Hui Ho‘omana would be the group to assess needs and oversee plans and actions to accomplish such access.

While the proposed members of Hui Ho‘omana come from appropriate agencies with diverse areas of expertise, I urge the committee to **add to the list of invitees individuals** who will bring **oral health and behavioral health service** issues to the work of the Hui.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support this bill.

Testimony in Support of HB2728 Relating to Health

Testimony of Jillian Kelekoma – Chair Kaua'i County SHPDA Advisory Council

Aloha Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services,

My name is Jillian Kelekoma, and I have dedicated many years to advancing healthcare in Hawaii, working in various roles ranging from direct patient care to healthcare administration. Today, I am here to express my strong support for HB2728, a pivotal bill that promises to significantly enhance the healthcare landscape in our state.

HB2728 proposes the establishment of the Hui Ho'omana Task Force, a critical step towards achieving a healthcare system that is inclusive, culturally aware, and future-oriented. In my experience within Hawaii's healthcare system, I have observed the myriad challenges we face – from workforce shortages to disparities in access, particularly in our rural, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities. The formation of this Task Force represents a hopeful and comprehensive approach to addressing these challenges.

The collaborative framework of the Hui Ho'omana Task Force is of particular importance. By uniting diverse stakeholders, we can draw upon the collective expertise and experiences of healthcare professionals, community representatives, and policy makers. This approach ensures the inclusion of diverse perspectives, particularly those most affected by healthcare decisions.

Moreover, the creation of advisory councils focusing on Keiki Care, Kupuna Care, Health Data, and Universal Access is essential. These councils will play a vital role in providing the Task Force with crucial insights and recommendations, guiding informed policy-making and effective strategizing.

As a passionate advocate for healthcare improvement in Hawaii, I am enthused by the potential of HB2728 and the Hui Ho'omana Task Force. This initiative represents a significant step towards ensuring equitable, high-quality, and affordable healthcare for every Hawaiian resident. It embodies the essence of 'ohana and kuleana that are at the heart of our state's values.

I strongly urge your support for HB2728. This bill is more than just a legislative measure – it symbolizes our collective commitment to the health and well-being of all Hawaiians. Together, we can work towards realizing the vision of "Hawai'i the Health State" and become a model for healthcare excellence nationwide.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Jillian Kelekoma

**January 29, 2024**

**Dear House Committee on Health and Homelessness,  
I am submitting this testimony in support of HB 2728.**

I support this initiative to create a task force to envision inclusive, equitable and affordable healthcare for Hawaii. As a public health professional who is very involved with healthcare for those with serious illness, I believe that this Hui Ho'omana Task Force is an excellent idea

The volunteer Task Force is directed to advise the State Health Planning and Development Agency (SHPDA), the Legislature, the Governor, and the people of Hawai'i. This kind of collaborative public planning effort has not been performed for longer than a decade to attempt to describe the most promising, culturally acceptable, and achievable future of health care in Hawai'i, which must also include long-term care. Clarity in these regards is very much needed.

To accelerate the deliberations of the Hui Ho'omana, SHPDA has already formed 4 new Advisory Councils that have been gathering information and expert, community-based, and neighbor island inputs around Keiki Care, Kupuna Care (and the future of long-term care), Health Data, and achieving Universal Access. I am currently serving on the Kupuna Care Committee as well as the Plan Development Committee for SHIPDA.

I believe the Hui Ho'omana Task Force will offer the Governor, the Legislature, state agencies, and Hawaii's health sector valuable insights to accelerate our ability to realize the Governor's "Hawai'i the Health State" vision.

Mahalo

Jeannette Kojane, MPH, Executive Director, Kōkua Mau

[jkojane@kokuamau.org](mailto:jkojane@kokuamau.org)



**HB-2728**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 9:42:26 AM

Testimony for HLT on 1/31/2024 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Katherine F Davis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this Bill.

**HB-2728**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 11:57:36 AM

Testimony for HLT on 1/31/2024 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

This is testimony in support of H.B. 2728.

H.B. 2728 will enable the formation of a Task Force to develop a path to "a future of universal access to high-quality, equitable, and affordable health care for ALL".

It has been over 10 years since this type of planning was attempted. Because the Health Care landscape is changing, with new issues and solutions, Hawaii needs an updated vision to address the challenges and newer solutions.

The result of this work of the Task Force will be a clarity of present and future Health Care challenges, and a workable path forward for Hawaii.

Thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony.

Fred Shaw

Health Care Data Analyst

Melvin M. Sakurai

Wednesday, January 31, 2024 @ 10:15 AM  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference

House Committee on Health & Homelessness

To: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

FROM: Melvin Sakurai, PhD., Research Information Services  
Member SHPDA Universal Access Advisory Council

RE: **Testimony in support of HB 2728**  
**Relating to Healthcare**

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My name is Melvin Sakurai and I am a management consultant with healthcare policy planning experience working with the State Department of Health (SHPDA), Governor's Executive Office on Again, Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Health Care, Legislative Auditor, and the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation on projects ranging from developing a publicly funded long-term care financing system to the regulation of adult residential care homes and formulating a public-private partnership solution for acute hospital wait listed patients.

I wish to testify in support of HB 2728 establishing the Hui Hoomana Task Force on universal access to affordable healthcare for all Hawaii residents. This measure provides all stakeholders a voice to express their preference for achieving universal access to affordable high-quality healthcare services as well as health insurance. As such, it is a perfect complement to SB 2285 which gives the State Health Planning and Development Agency statutory authority to guide and regulate Hawaii's healthcare system.

I would like to offer the following suggested amendments for HB 2728:

1. Require the submission of a detailed interim report to the 2025 Legislature with a final report due for the 2026 Legislature. The

Melvin M. Sakurai

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immense breadth, scope, and importance of the Task Force's mission cannot be fully realized as currently provided in the draft bill—the currently allocated time is too short.

2. Accordingly, the sunset date for the Task Force would need to be amended to July 1, 2026.
3. Some provision for funding support services should be incorporated to realistically assure that heavy and essential data, policy, and analysis work gets done.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on this important legislative measure.

**HB-2728**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 6:53:56 PM

Testimony for HLT on 1/31/2024 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

*To the Honorable Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi and members of the Health and Homelessness Committee*

My name is Wesley Sumida and I am the Chair of the Statewide Health Coordinating Council (SHCC)'s Plan Development Committee (PDC) and a member of the Honolulu Subarea Health Planning Council (HONSAC). I appreciate the opportunity to offer my testimony as an individual in **strong support** of HB 2728, relating to the establishment of the Hui Ho'omana task force to be convened by the State Health Planning and Development Agency.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Wesley Sumida