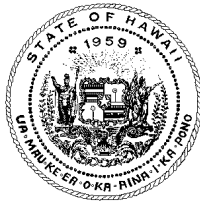


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
Ka 'Oihana Ho'opalekana Lehulehu
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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

TOMMY JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

Melanie Martin
Deputy Director
Administration

Michael J. Hoffman
Acting Deputy Director
Corrections

William F. Oku
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1300, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH

By

Tommy Johnson, Director

House Committee on Finance
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 23, 2023; 1:30 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308 and via Video Conference

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committees:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) has reviewed House Bill (HB) 1300, House Draft (HD) 1, which seeks to establish provisional or associate level licensure requirements for marriage and family therapists, mental health counselors, and psychologists, authorize insurance reimbursements in certain circumstances, allow the Board of Psychology to grant licensure waivers in certain circumstances for psychologists and allow psychologist license applicants to sit for the licensing examination before completing supervised experience requirements.

The Department **strongly supports** the allowance of the Board of Psychology to grant licensure waivers for psychologists in certain situations and the allowance of psychologist license applicants to sit for the licensing examination before completing the supervised experience requirements. PSD defers to the expertise of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) on the feasibility of the proposed regulatory matters involving provisional or associate level licensure.

Like other entities throughout the State, PSD is also experiencing a high demand for mental health services. In order to meet the mental health needs of individuals in

Testimony on HB 1300, HD 1
House Committee on Finance
February 23, 2023
Page 2

our care and custody, the proposed measure seeks to address the limitations in Hawai'i Revised Statutes 465-7.6 Licensure of state employed clinical psychologists.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB 1300, HD 1.

Testimony of the Board of Psychology

**Before the
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023
1:30 p.m.
Conference Room 308 and Videoconference**

**On the following measure:
H.B. 1300, H.D. 1, RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH**

Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

My name is Christopher Fernandez, and I am the Executive Officer of the Board of Psychology (Board). The Board offers comments on Part IV of the bill only:

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) establish a provisional or associate level licensure requirements for marriage and family therapists, mental health counselors, and psychologists and authorize insurance reimbursements in certain circumstances; (2) allow psychologist license applicants to sit for the licensing examination before completing other requirements; (3) allow the Board of Psychology to grant licensure waivers in certain circumstances for psychologists; and (4) authorize insurance reimbursements for services provided by a supervised social work intern in certain circumstances.

The Board offers the following comments:

- 1) Section 20 of the bill creates a new license type with the inclusion of a provisional associate license for purposes of reimbursement. Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) section 26H-2 provides that “the regulation and licensing of professions and vocations shall be undertaken only where reasonably necessary to protect the health, safety, or welfare of consumers of the services; the purpose of regulation shall be the protection of the public welfare and not that of the regulated profession or vocation.” Creating a license for the purpose of reimbursement is not consistent with HRS section 26H-2. Further, decisions related to insurance reimbursement are not under the purview of the Board and should not be a basis for creating a license under the Board. Should the measure proceed, however, the Board notes and supports this draft’s

addition of requested personnel and funding for DCCA to administrate the new license type.

- 2) Page 30, lines 7 to 12, authorizes a supervised licensed associate psychologist to be eligible for insurance reimbursement. The Board is unsure whether authorizing reimbursement via HRS chapter 465 rather than the appropriate insurance law would result in reimbursement from insurance providers.
- 3) Page 37, lines 18 to 20, allows a holder of a doctoral degree in clinical, counseling, and school psychology to sit for the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (exam) required for licensure prior to meeting pre-doctoral internship and postdoctoral experience requirements. The Board disagrees with the timing of authorization to sit for the exam and finds the current language very concerning and in direct conflict with the Board's administrative rules. The Board does not believe that taking the examination prior to completing a doctoral degree comports with the intent of this bill, which appears to be more focused on creating a provisional license for the purposes of insurance reimbursement. The Board also believes that internship experience and degree completion are essential to better chances of successfully passing the exam, which primarily tests the theoretical knowledge psychologists learn in their education program. The Board requests that the timing of the exam requirement be after the completion of the doctoral degree and qualifying internship. The Board asks that the bill language on page 37 be amended as follows:

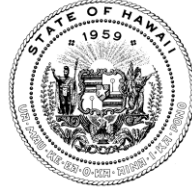
The applicant shall be required to complete the requirements of paragraph (1) and sub-paragraphs (2)(A) or (B) not be required to complete the requirements of paragraph (2) to be eligible to take the examination required in paragraph (3)."

- 4) Page 38, lines 10 to 13, the Board expressed concerns and requests clarification regarding the length of time the proposed waiver may be valid.

As drafted, the waiver could be extended indefinitely, allowing a civil service employed clinical psychologist to remain unlicensed indefinitely. The Board is concerned that without a time limit to the waiver, a state employed psychologist will have no incentive to complete the requirements (e.g., exam and postdoctoral experience) to become licensed in Hawaii. Additionally, the Board questions if this section is necessary since a provisional license is already being created by this measure. With the addition of a provisional license, this section appears to be redundant since the provisional license provides the same authority as a waiver.

- 5) Page 40, lines 5 to 8, authorizes the Board to grant waivers or extensions to licensees who are unable to comply with its continuing education requirements. The Board notes that this language is unnecessary since HRS section 465-11(f) already provides a remedy for such circumstances.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
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JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

NADINE Y. ANDO
DIRECTOR | KA LUNA HO'OKELE

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

Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

**Before the
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023
1:30 p.m.
Conference Room 308 and Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:
H.B. 1300, H.D. 1, RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH**

Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rochelle Araki, and I am the Executive Officer of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' (Department) Professional and Vocational Licensing Division (Division), Marriage and Family Therapy Program, Mental Health Counselors Licensing Program, and Social Worker Licensing Program. The Department offers comments on this bill.

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) establish a provisional or associate level licensure requirements for marriage and family therapists, mental health counselors, and psychologists and authorize insurance reimbursements in certain circumstances; (2) allow psychologist license applicants to sit for the licensing examination before completing other requirements; (3) allows the Board of Psychology to grant licensure waivers in certain circumstances for psychologists; and (4) authorizes insurance reimbursements for services provided by a supervised social work intern in certain circumstances.

The Department limits its comments to Part II, Part III and Part V of this bill as follows:

H.B. 1300, H.D. 1, requires the Department to grant, upon application and payment of proper fees, provisional licensure as an associate marriage and family therapist and mental health counselor to those who meet certain requirements to obtain reimbursement for services rendered. While the Department appreciates the intent of this measure, the creation of this new license type appears contrary to the provisions of Hawaii Revised Statutes section 26H-2, which provides, in part, that “the regulation and licensing of professions and vocations shall be undertaken only where reasonably necessary to protect the health, safety, or welfare of consumers of the services; the purpose of regulation shall be the protection of the public welfare and not that of the regulated profession or vocation.” A new licensure scheme should not be implemented solely for the purpose of reimbursement.

Further, there may be unintended consequences of regulating or requiring licensure of a currently exempted population of professionals who provide mental health services. For example, the cost of services provided by these individuals may increase and could possibly be passed to consumers.

Regarding part V of this bill, the Department expresses similar concerns that authorizing reimbursements to a currently exempted population: social work interns, could have unintended consequences such as higher costs for services rendered. These costs could be passed on to consumers.

The Department appreciates the current draft’s addition of necessary funding and personnel to implement this measure. Should the Committee consider passing this bill, the Department respectfully requests further a delayed implementation date of July 1, 2025, to ensure that the Division has the appropriate time to (1) establish, recruit, and hire the personnel granted by this measure and (2) create the necessary applications and make appropriate updates to its database.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



HB1442 HD1 Diversion and ACT

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Thursday Feb 23, 2023, 1:30 Room 308

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Strongly Supports HB1442 HD1:

ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the current chair of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide organization for substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health disorder treatment, prevention agencies and recovery-oriented services.

A comprehensive program that includes diversion to treatment and reentry to community services produces better outcomes and is more cost-effective.

HSAC strongly supports diversion alternatives for people subject to exclusion from charges or for violating their probation due to their mental health disease. It's time for Hawaii to expand our criminal justice diversion programs. The diversions include screening and evaluations for involuntary hospitalization or assisted community treatment. We also need more behavioral health crisis centers so that more diversions can happen in our justice systems.

- Often people who have severe substance use disorders, or who are mentally impaired that are frequently arrested are unsheltered homeless.
- It requires a lot of time of police officers who have to arrest them even if the crimes are misdemeanors. This is how jails become overcrowded because of this population.
- The alternative is a danger to public safety when criminal defendants, who could qualify for commitment due to severe mental health issues, are released back into the community.

Expanding the qualifying offenses will allow more people to be diverted and requiring screening or a mental health evaluation and treatment will enable a faster resolution of their cases and a sooner realized benefit from treatment and support for their mental health. Such treatment can reduce or eliminate their involvement with the criminal justice system.

By focusing on people who are reoccurring in the justice system, HSAC strongly supports diversion strategies to help people receive effective mental health treatment and/or substance abuse treatment. Providing treatment and supports will help people with mental health issues to better access housing, employment and possibly get off the street entirely. This is a clear path to help end homelessness.

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



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1300 HD1: RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH

TO: House Committee on Finance

FROM: Rob Van Tassell, President and CEO, Catholic Charities Hawai'i

Hearing: **Thursday 2/23/2023 at 1:30 PM; CR 308 & via videoconference**

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members, Committee on Finance

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of **HB 1300 HD1**, which establishes a provisional or associate level licensure for marriage and family therapist, mental health counselors, and psychologists. I am Rob Van Tassell, with Catholic Charities Hawai'i.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawai'i for over 75 years. CCH has programs serving children, families, elders, homeless, and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawai'i. Catholic Charities Hawai'i has a long history of providing counseling services to the people of Hawai'i.

The mental health workforce has historically endured a shortage of qualified mental health providers (includes psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, counselors, marriage and family therapist, and advanced practice nurses). The pandemic has exacerbated this workforce shortage, while increasing the overall need for mental health services. According to Mental Health America data, there are 360 individuals for every one mental health provider in Hawai'i. Catholic Charities Hawai'i has years of experience providing counseling services and has been able to train and develop highly qualified mental health professionals to add to the workforce. This bill would provide the opportunity for organizations like ours to expand on workforce development and contribute to improving access to mental health services in Hawai'i.

Catholic Charities Hawaii supports this bill which will increase the workforce capacity of qualified mental health professionals to address the mental health crisis in Hawai'i.

We urge your support for this bill and ask for your assistance in its passing during this legislative session.

Please contact our Director of Advocacy and Community Relations, Shellie Niles at (808) 527-4813 or shellie.niles@catholiccharitieshawaii.org if you have any questions.



Aloha--

My name is Britt Young, and I'm the founder and Executive Director for Xplor Counseling, LLC. I am in support of this measure for several reasons and feel it is of extreme importance to pass this measure for the sake of our community.

Since I graduated from my Masters Program in 2008, about half of my graduating class has gone on to become Mental Health professionals, and the overwhelming reason for this is the financial and logistical difficulty to get to the next level, which is full licensure.

For the current graduate, finding placement for post-graduate work is quite limited, and one has only a handful of choices in any given community. Often, the work will be important, yes, but also low-paid and not likely in the preferred field of study. For example, "interns" as they are called would be limited to working in a privately or publicly funded agency or practice, or in a practice that has enough self-pay clients to be sustainable. In this case, the intern is paid minimal fees for service and, because options are limited, will likely work with a population of someone else's choosing.

For example, although I had no intention of working with children, my first intern positions were working exclusively with children. As much as I enjoyed the work, it did not prepare me for my eventual family systems practice.

When I lived in Deerfield, Illinois, I was thrilled to learn there was an Associate Licensure track for which I qualified. Because insurance companies reimbursed for my services, I was able to serve a population of my choosing and hone my skills working with Family Systems. What's more is that I was able to earn a wage that allowed me to pursue my career vs the low wages offered at private or state agencies.

Because I was heavily supervised, the quality of my work was never in question, and I was able to grow as a clinician. Please note, sampling different populations as a clinician is important, and I enjoyed my time working with children, but had I lived in a state where I was contained only to one population, I would have missed-out on developing important skills.

Hawaii is only one of a few states that does not have this Associate Licensure, and this means we are at risk of losing countless therapists because they cannot earn a living wage post-graduation and have limited options for internships.

Please consider passing this measure.

Fondly,

Britt Young, M.A., LMFT

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 12:06:47 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristine Altwies, MA/LMFT	A Family Tree/Pono Roots Counseling Center	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. As the director of a nonprofit organization that offers therapist training and child and family counseling I see the seriousness of the mental health crisis in Hawai'i, and also know the problems that arise when qualified, pre-licensed therapists cannot find adequate training opportunities.

After completing a minimum of two hands on internships and a minimum two year graduate degree in one of the mental health/counseling tracks, new therapists seek an additional two years supervised clinical work before being able to sit for licensure. During this time they are more than qualified to provide a number of mental health support services, and are required to collect supervised training hours. During this time therapists should be able to earn a living, to begin to pay back student debt, and to contribute to the under-staffed mental health crisis. By not allowing these therapists to collect insurance reimbursements, we are risking losing good therapists to the unregulated and highly lucrative coaching profession.

The vast majority of mental health professionals in Hawai'i now have wait lists. It is hard for those seeking mental health support to book an appointment. By passing this bill you increase the opportunities for hard working ambitious therapists and support the people of Hawai'i in improving their chances of mental health.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kristine Altwies, MA/LMFT

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 11:43:14 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Damien Young	Kauhale Healing LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and have been working in the mental health field in Hawaii for close to a decade. Now more than ever we are facing a mental health epidemic and a crisis on our islands in that there is a huge need for mental health services and very few providers to serve the community. Every licensed provider that I know of is full with a long waiting list, myself included, so I literally have nowhere to send patients who are so desperate for help. Even with telehealth as an option now, the same story is true across all the islands. As such so many who urgently need mental health services have nowhere to turn to. At my practice we have several pre-licensed interns working on their hours who have availability to meet with patients, however since they cannot bill insurance, and most patients can not afford to pay out of pocket for therapy, we are left with a situation of providers being ready and able to serve our community but an arbitrary roadblock stopping them. These providers are being directly supervised by licensed professionals like myself. The state of Hawaii more than any other state needs to create an avenue to make mental health support more accessible given our community's urgent needs and our extremely limited resources. Please, be pono and pass this bill.

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 11:46:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anuheha St. Laurent	Anuheha St.Laurent-Marriage and Family Therapy LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Anuheha St.Laurent and I am in SUPPORT for this bill. As a recently licensed marriage and family therapist who has been working at a group practice as a therapist intern for over a year, I have seen the incredibly high demand of clients in search of mental health counseling and the incredibly low supply of available therapists. In addition, I and over 20 other therapist interns at my group practice have had availability in our schedules, wanting to work, and help other clients in need, but have had to turn potential clients away daily because we were not able to bill their medical insurance and the clients could not afford to pay for services out-of-pocket, even at our sliding scale rates, which are \$20-\$50 per 60 minute session. Not only are individuals in need of mental health services harmed by the lack of care available, but therapist interns myself struggle to remain in Hawaii because of high cost of living and inability to earn a livable wage throughout graduate school and the two years or more post-graduate when we're working toward licensure under the supervision of another licensed therapist. For those with families, like myself, it often takes much longer to get licensed, for me it took 10 years! Why? Because I couldn't afford to get paid at a therapist intern rate and pay for supervision from a licensed therapist to oversee me and be able to actually support my family of 5. This proposal will expand the number of providers in Hawaii and fill in some of the gap between supply and demand for mental health services. This is urgent and dire! I STRONGLY SUPPORT THIS BILL!

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 23, 2023 - 1:30PM - Via Videoconference – Rm 308

Testimony in Strong Support of HB1300 HD1

The National Association of Social Workers – Hawai'i (NASW- HI) strongly supports HB1300 HD1 Relating to Mental Health, which establishes associate level licenses for Psychologists, Mental Health Counselors, and Marriage and Family Therapists; and clarifies the ability of a Licensed Social Worker to bill under the supervision of a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.

This bill does several important things:

It creates an Associate level of Licensure for Psychologists, Mental Health Counselors, and Marriage and Family Therapists, based on the current LSW level of licensure for social workers, which will allow for a mechanism by which clinicians who have completed their graduate school courses can be compensated while they are receiving their required period of supervised practice.

It also clarifies that a LSW social worker can bill insurance under the clinical license and supervision of an LCSW.

These steps will create the opportunity to open up more clinicians in supervision to see clients in the very near future, which is vital given the ongoing pandemic and the current shortage of clinical level mental health providers, and long wait times to get in to therapy as a client.

It also opens the door to more diverse candidates in the field of mental health. Few people can afford to work for two years either unpaid or underpaid, as they complete their clinical supervision, which leads to an overrepresentation in our profession of people from affluent backgrounds and an underrepresentation of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in the fields of social work, Psychology, Mental Health Counseling, and Marriage and Family Therapy.

This bill can help encourage people who have completed their graduate education in Hawai'i to stay and work here, if they can receive a living wage. We strive to educate students in cultural competency and the importance of understanding the community in which they practice, to create clinicians who will thrive here, then do very little to help keep them in state, after graduation.

It also provides the opportunity for those in supervision to get experience working in private practices and doing more direct therapy, under supervision, which serves to strengthen them as clinicians when they reach the level of independent practice.

Suggested Amendments to Strengthen Purpose/Legislative Intent

The only black-letter amendments we suggest is to clarify the language relating to the supervision of social workers seeking licensure as a “Licensed Clinical Social Worker.” We prefer the language of a substantially and substantively similar bill - **HB1242**, also referred to this Committee, **on page 47, line 12 – page 48, line 4** – which makes clear that billing must be done through the supervising Licensed Clinical Social Worker. This is important as there is currently confusion in insurance billing practices.

“Services provided by a supervised social worker who is working to obtain post masters clinical social work experience under the supervision of a licensed clinical social worker or individual identified in section 467E-7(a) (3) (D) in order to qualify for a license as a licensed clinical social worker shall be eligible for insurance reimbursement through the insurance of the applicable client through reimbursements of claims submitted by the supervising licensed clinical social worker while listed under the supervising licensed clinical social worker's treatment authority and supervision; provided that the licensed supervising clinical social worker's services shall be eligible for reimbursement as a contracted provider; provided further that the billed rate for the licensed social worker shall be commensurate with the requisite level of training.”

We also appreciate the comprehensive purpose language in HB1242, explaining the gravity of demand and the costs and hardships for new professionals and their Hawaii-based patients. We therefore **respectfully request that HB1242’s purpose language be included in an HD1**, in addition to two additional enumerated purposes:

(3) Clarifying in law that Associate Level practitioners would not be allowed to do anything they aren’t already permitted to do now, except have their services billed through the insurance covering their supervisor’s treatment and supervision; and

(4) Enabling and encouraging post-degree, pre-licensed mental health practitioners to stay in Hawaii to complete the required hours of supervised work for full licensure – thereby promoting a diverse pool of homegrown providers that can best meet the needs of Hawaii’s people.

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

Sincerely,

 , MSW, LCSW

Sonja Bigalke-Bannan, MSW, LCSW
Executive Director,
National Association of Social Workers- Hawai’i Chapter

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 12:33:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tyra Gardner	Pau Hana Counseling	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tyra Gardner



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 FINANCE

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

February 23, 2023 1:30 P.M. - VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE – Rm 308

The Hawai'i Psychological Association (HPA) strongly supports HB1300 HD1 as a critical tool in meeting the burgeoning demand for quality mental health services – and is especially timely as the emotional and mental toll of the pandemic and its associated hardships is felt by all our residents, prolonged now for three years. The aftermath effects on our public behavioral health systems is immeasurable.

This bill expands access to much-needed high quality mental health services provided by local practitioners, and will significantly increase the speed with which trained, qualified, credentialed, and culturally cognizant practitioners can enter the workforce and meet Hawaii's demands. There is a critical shortage of mental health professionals in Hawaii, particularly in rural areas; and this bill helps to reduce some arbitrary and/or administrative obstacles to practicing here.

To become licensed as a psychologist, Hawaii Revised Statutes requires candidates to have completed a doctoral degree (Ph.D. or Psy.D.) in psychology including practicum experience comprised of a full time one-year psychology internship; followed by at least one year of supervised practice experience after completing the degree; and then a passing score on a rigorous national examination.

This proposal helps to alleviate several financial hardships psychology trainees in Hawaii typically face while on this path. New professionals seeking to complete their hours of supervised practice are having tremendous difficulty managing financially - due to Hawaii's very high cost of living.

The associate licensing framework in this bill will authorize insurance reimbursement for work done by pre-licensed, "post-doc" psychology trainees. Post-docs often work in an agency or other setting where they are supervised closely by a licensed psychologist, but insurance plans vary greatly on whether they will reimburse the agency or supervisor for services provided in this way. Some post-docs end up working for free, while maintaining other jobs to survive. Many leave the state – where associate-level licensure is already in place.

Another issue that causes financial hardship and delay during this post-doctoral period is the timing of the license application process. Currently, according to the Board of Psychology's administrative rules, applicants must complete their 1-year post-doctoral experience; apply for licensure; then be "seated" for the required examination (the EPPP); then pass it before they can be licensed. This process can lead to a many-month delay before they are allowed to practice as a psychologist. Many licensure candidates apply to take the exam in another state (incurring

further personal expense) so that they can expedite the board of psychology review process by having their passing grade in hand when their application is reviewed by the Hawaii Board. Accordingly, this proposal requires the board to allow licensure candidates to take the exam as soon as they complete their doctorate.

HB1300 HD1 also addresses unnecessary administrative barriers experienced by state-employed psychology post-docs. Current law allows non-licensed individuals who have earned their doctoral degree to be hired into state psychologist positions before licensure; however, these employees must obtain licensure within two years of hire, and then cease practicing if the license is not obtained in that time period. The state has interpreted this to mean they must be terminated from their state position if this occurs.

During the pandemic, the Board of Psychology did not meet for a prolonged period to approve several candidates' licenses, and several state-employed psychologists lost their jobs due to no fault of their own. Of those terminated included practitioners at the state hospital and in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division. This is a wholly avoidable hardship for these individuals, and the clients they were serving. The language proposed in this bill would allow the board to give a state-employed psychologist more time to obtain their license under such extenuating circumstances; and would also help others who may need more time due to, for example, the need for maternity or other medical leave.

The only amendments to this bill we would recommend is to incorporate the **purpose language of HB1242**, a near-identical bill introduced by Representative Nakashima, but makes clear that this proposal's legislative intent is to meet burgeoning demand for mental health services and keep homegrown talent in Hawaii, without authorizing licensees to do anything they aren't already allowed to do; as well as **clarifying language provided in the National Association of Social Workers – Hawaii Chapter's testimony regarding insurance billing**.

The pandemic has had devastating effects not only to our public health system and economies, but to our collective mental health. The disruptions, anxieties, depression, substance abuse, and chronic stress that COVID has created in our lives have brought many in our community to the brink of emotional collapse. The need for mental health services could not be more apparent or pressing; and we must all do what is necessary to improve access to professional treatment. We all deserve access to quality mental health treatment – and this bill is a highly effective, low-cost way of addressing this need which is in keeping with modern regulatory approaches in other jurisdictions.

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



To: The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Finance

From: Paula Arcena, External Affairs Vice President
Mike Nguyen, Public Policy Manager

Hearing: Thursday, February 23, 2023 1:30 PM

RE: **HB1300, HD1 Relating to Mental Health- Support**

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of HB1300, HD1**. This measure establishes associate-level licensure requirements and insurance reimbursements for certain mental health professionals in training, allows psychologist license applicants to sit for their examination prior to supervised experience requirement completion, allows the Board of Psychology to grant licensure waivers in certain circumstances and authorizes insurance reimbursement for supervised social work interns in certain circumstances.

Founded in 1994 by Hawai'i's community health centers, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving over 80,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members on all islands. Approximately half of our membership are keiki. We are Hawai'i's only health plan exclusively dedicated to serving Medicaid beneficiaries. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating for access to quality health care for all. We believe that health is about supporting whole-person health needs.

Hawai'i's high demand for mental health services, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and recession, have highlighted our State's dire shortage of mental health professionals. The shortage most severely impacts our most vulnerable residents, Medicaid beneficiaries and those who live in rural communities. A lack of timely access to mental health treatment can have devastating consequences on our residents.

This measure expands access to quality mental health services by addressing licensing and reimbursement limitations as well as helping to relieve the financial burden on aspiring mental health professionals. In turn, this will increase the number of local practitioners in the workforce needed to meet the demand of our community.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support of HB1300, HD1**.

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 1:10:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alan R. Spector, LCSW	Alan R. Spector, LCSW, Psychotherapy	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha:

I support this bill and encourage you to vote in support of it. We have a severe shortage of licensed mental health professionals in Hawaii. Associate licensure is available in other states and this would help to increase the number of mental health providers in Hawaii. Quality mental health services can be provided by associate level clinicians with proper clinical supervision by Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Licened Mental Health Counselors, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, and Licensed Psychologists. Making such services insurance reimbursable will increase the number of mental health providers in the state.

Alan R. Spector, LCSW

Kaneohe

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 1:14:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Gustin	Pau Hana Counseling, LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings, my name is Erin Gustin and I am the founder and owner of one of Hawaii's largest mental health counseling centers, Pau Hana Counseling. We currently employ 35 therapists and serve over 1000 residents of Hawaii. I am writing in strong support of this bill being passed. The current state of mental health services on this island is untenable. We turn away hundreds of Hawaii residents every month who desperately need mental health services due to lack of availability of licensed clinicians. And yet, we have half a dozen associate therapists email us every month, trying to get jobs as therapists to help Hawaii residents. There is a huge disconnect between services needed vs our ability to provide them. As a large counseling organization, who has been dedicated to serving the Hawaiian islands for almost 10 years, in the current state of affairs, we are left with two choices, either to not pay our associate counselors for the hard work they do, or to force clients to pay cash for the intern services. Many of these Hawaii residents that we are asking to pay cash have great insurance that they pay a lot of money for that they really want to use for services, and we end up turning a great deal of people away that desperately need help because of this reason. Passing this bill would greatly improve the accessibility of mental health services to our Hawaii residents. We would be able to pay associates for their services, and allow residents to use their insurance for services. Cash pay is not sustainable long term for many of our residents, and thus we end up not really serving their needs. As a counseling center, we take almost nothing from these cash pay clients for them to be able to receive services and to make sure that our associates get paid and complete their hours necessary to become licensed therapists. With rising prices of everything in Hawaii, it is becoming more and more difficult to live here, and most associate therapists cannot provide services and get their hours without some sort of stipend. If this bill were passed, it would link the need for services with the need for insurance reimbursements that is desperately needed for us therapists to continue to provide mental health services to our residents.



February 23, 2023

The Kyle Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: HB 1300 – Relating to mental health

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on HB 1300, which will establish provisional or associate-level licensure requirements for marriage and family therapists, mental health counselors, and psychologists and authorizes insurance reimbursements in certain circumstances.

HMSA supports the legislature's intent to expand access to behavioral health care services in Hawaii. While we believe that access to behavioral health care is important and, especially in rural areas poses a challenge for our community, without established criteria and scope of service, we believe that more clarity is needed to define the circumstances that would be eligible for reimbursement to those with provisional or associate licensures.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB1300.

Sincerely,

Jennifer A. Diesman
Senior Vice President
Government Policy and Advocacy



The Hawaiian Islands Association
for Marriage and Family Therapy
(HIAMFT)

We know systems.

We know relationships.

We know FAMILY MATTERS.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 23, 2023 - 1:30PM - Via Videoconference – Rm 308

Testimony in Strong Support of HB1300 HD1 RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH

The Hawaiian Islands Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (HIAMFT) strongly supports HB1300 HD1 as a critical tool in improving access and meeting the overwhelming demand for quality mental health services, particularly during and following the prolonged pandemic. Here's a snapshot of recently recorded ratios of clients/patients to mental health providers in Hawai'i:

Hawai'i 320:1

Honolulu 370:1

Kauai 480:1

Maui 550:1

Moloka'i has no registered providers.

Obviously, this demand far exceeds the viable supply of mental health providers. Among other provisions to remove administrative barriers and increase the speed with which trained and qualified practitioners can enter the workforce, HB1300 HD1 would establish provisional/associate-level licensure requirements for Marriage and Family Therapists (MFTs), Mental Health Counselors, and Psychologists. This would ensure a regulatory framework that would encourage relevant and quality training to associate-level providers by authorizing insurance reimbursement for supervised care provided by these post-degree/pre-licensed mental health professionals during the 12 to 24-month period in which they are completing required supervised practice hours under the mentorship and guidance of an independently licensed mental health professional.

In 23 other states, associate-level licensure is already established as common practice. This regulatory approach not only expands clients' access to providers, it also creates a viable career path for would-be providers: Hawai'i residents interested in pursuing careers as mental health professionals (of which there is a 10,000-15,000 shortage), but who might otherwise not be able to actualize such a career due to outdated statutes that often force post-graduate/pre-licensed providers to work for sub-par wages or even pro bono (while also paying a supervisor to oversee their work, costing MFT supervisees anywhere from \$10,000-\$30,000 for 1,000 hours of supervised direct care during their 2-year post-degree period) and/or in contexts that do not provide sufficiently relevant clinical experience (e.g., prisons, substance abuse centers, case management, etc.) to ensure providers are ready for independent licensure.

This bill would update Hawai'i's licensing statutes in ways that would not only modernize our processes, but ultimately improve the quality and utilization of mental health care provided in our state by creating a more robust system of clinical accountability/training and a financially viable career path for local would-be providers who have a deep understanding of local cultures/customs and who in turn, may be better able to connect with clients, who in turn will be more likely to actually utilize available mental health services.

Moreover, this bill will reduce the loss of potential future mental health professionals to other careers or one of the other 23 states that have already modernized their licensing laws. In turn, this will contribute to the state economy through associate licensing fees, taxes from wages earned by associate-level licensees, and local purchases made by these licensees.

Overall, many aspects of our mental health system are deeply flawed, understaffed, and are in no way prepared to manage the onslaught of mental health issues that the general population are experiencing during and after this pandemic. The consequences of this pandemic, both short- and long-term, in terms of mental health, could be significant and could weaken the Hawai'i health care system.

If we don't develop the means to stave off and/or treat these mental health issues, individuals and families will suffer even more than they already have/do. In all areas of life, untreated mental health issues can become chronic and with crippling, long-term effects – for individuals, families, and communities.

These circumstances call for a change in the paradigm and practices of mental health care in Hawai'i. Our current model of mental health care does not adequately address the complex challenges of modern living. Let's re-vision current models of mental health care delivery by learning from other states and being creative and flexible in how we provide mental health services. To protect our community now and in the future, let's take appropriate action now. Mental health care cannot be an afterthought.

The only amendments to this bill we would recommend is to incorporate the **purpose language of HB1242**, a near-identical bill introduced by Representative Nakashima, but makes clear that this proposal's legislative intent is to meet burgeoning demand for mental health services and keep homegrown talent in Hawaii, without authorizing licensees to do anything they aren't already allowed to do; as well as **clarifying language provided in the National Association of Social Workers – Hawaii Chapter's testimony regarding insurance billing.**

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Souza, Jr., LMFT, DMFT". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dr. John Souza, Jr., LMFT, DMFT, President
The Hawaiian Islands Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 5:56:52 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Catherine Okumura	Ho'oulu Counseling	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community. This measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

As a small business owner, this bill would allow for job creation and economic stimulation. Interns/pre-licensed mental health professionals often are employed by non-profit organizations, that are contracted by the State or have grants that dictate the services provided, because they need to earn living wages. This leads to missed opportunities to provide the mental health services that hone in on their area of discipline. Additionally, as a current practicing supervisor for a Marriage & Family Therapist Intern, this business model does not support the overhead and operating expenses associated with having an Intern on board. Frankly, and for many different reasons, the majority of people in Hawaii are unable to privately pay for mental health services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Catherine Okumura

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 10:12:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cards Pintor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Cards Pintor

TESTIMONY OF ELLEN GODBEY CARSON ON HB 1442, SD2

I write in support of HB 1442's provisions regarding Assisted Community Treatment.

While I write as an individual, I have served as President of Hawaii Women Lawyers, the Hawaii State Bar Association, and the Institute for Human Services. The major part of my legal career and thousands of hours of volunteer community work have been spent seeking to protect constitutional rights and the rights of vulnerable persons.

I support HB 1442, HD2 because it will make our Assisted Community Treatment ("ACT") law more effective for persons in our criminal justice system who are mentally ill and in need of treatment. This bill will increase the likelihood that these persons will receive early intervention and appropriate care and treatment in the least restrictive setting, which is good for them and for the community.

HB 1442, SD2 will help us better address these needs in the following way:

For criminal defendants held because they are "unfit to proceed" (ie., experiencing mental illness that precludes moving forward with criminal trial), who do not meet criteria for involuntary hospitalization, their clinical team will be required to "determine whether an assisted community treatment plan is appropriate" pursuant to our ACT law. (page 8, section 3(b)).

This will assure these criminal defendants who are exhibiting mental illness will be considered for an ACT order to help them receive appropriate medical care in the community, in the least restrictive setting.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony and helping protect our most vulnerable residents.

Ellen Godbey Carson
Honolulu, Hawaii

TESTIMONY OF MARYA GRAMBS ON HB 1442

I write in support of HB 1442's provisions regarding Assisted Community Treatment.

My name is Marya Grambs. I am testifying as an individual, but I was previously Executive Director of Mental Health America of Hawaii; I am currently President of the Board of Partners in Care's nonprofit arm and member of the Board of Directors of Waikiki Health; and I am a volunteer with HIS Women's and Family Emergency Homeless Shelter.

HB 1442 make our Assisted Community Treatment ("ACT") law more effective for persons in our criminal justice system who are mentally ill and in need of treatment by increasing the likelihood that they will receive early intervention and appropriate care and treatment in the least restrictive setting. This is both good for them and for the community.

These are the individuals we see every day on our streets, who are living in deplorable, unsafe conditions, talking to voices only they can hear, unable to understand that they are ill and in need of treatment, and who commit minor criminal offenses. By virtue of their severe mental illness they do not deserve to be jailed, and involuntary hospitalization may not be the best answer, but ACT would enable them to remain in the community under mandated treatment orders, which include wrap-around case management support.

This bill specifically addresses individuals who are arrested and held because they are "unfit to proceed" (ie., they have severe mental illness that prevents moving forward with a criminal trial), but who do not meet criteria for involuntary hospitalization. ***Their clinical team will be required to determine whether an assisted community treatment plan is appropriate in accord with our ACT law. Thus, they will be able to be treated in the least restrictive setting and they will receive case management support services.***

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony and helping protect our most vulnerable residents. They are literally dying on our streets, and we must help them. And we must get them off the tragic merry-go-round of jail, streets, hospital, jail.

February 21, 2023

RE: HB1300

Aloha Senate Committee on Health & Homelessness,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 1300 and the establishment of provisional or associate-level licensure requirements for marriage and family therapists, mental health counselors, and psychologists and authorizes insurance reimbursements in certain circumstances. My name is Taliesin Sumner-Longboy, I have been a direct service provider for over 5 years on Hawai'i island and will be graduating from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Thompson School of Social Work in May 2023. In my work as a professional and as a graduate student, I have seen the need for mental health providers as well as the barriers to utilizing qualified graduates to address that need while working under licensed professionals.

This bill will not only provide more on the ground resources for vulnerable populations, but also incentivize graduates to complete clinical hours locally as they will have access to compensation that is otherwise, without the passing of this bill, only available in other states.

I implore you to support this bill and its passage in this legislative session.

Mahalo,

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

Taliesin Sumner-Longboy

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 7:40:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judith White	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This will help address the critical lack of mental health accessibility. Especially in rural communities, such as Kauai. Please pass!

Dr. Judith White,

Clinical Psychologist, Kapaa

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 8:11:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy Chadwick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Support of HB1300 RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH

I strongly supports HB1300 as a critical tool in improving access and meeting the overwhelming demand for quality mental health services, particularly during and following the prolonged pandemic. Here’s a snapshot of recently recorded ratios of clients/patients to mental health providers in Hawai’i:

Hawai’i 320:1

Honolulu 370:1

Kauai 480:1

Maui 550:1

Moloka’i has no registered providers.

Obviously, this demand far exceeds the viable supply of mental health providers. Among other provisions to remove administrative barriers and increase the speed with which trained and qualified practitioners can enter the workforce, HB1300 would establish provisional/associate-level licensure requirements for Marriage and Family Therapists (MFTs), Mental Health Counselors, and Psychologists. This would ensure a regulatory framework that would encourage relevant and quality training to associate-level providers by authorizing insurance reimbursement for supervised care provided by these post-degree/pre-licensed mental health professionals during the 12 to 24-month period in which they are completing required supervised practice hours under the mentorship and guidance of an independently licensed mental health professional.

In 23 other states, associate-level licensure is already established as common practice. This regulatory approach not only expands clients’ access to providers, it also creates a viable career path for would-be providers: Hawai’i residents interested in pursuing careers as mental health professionals (of which there is a 10,000-15,000 shortage), but who might otherwise not be able to actualize such a career due to outdated statutes that often force post-graduate/pre-licensed providers to work for sub-par wages or even pro bono (while also paying a supervisor to oversee their work, costing MFT supervisees anywhere from \$10,000-\$30,000 for 1,000 hours of

supervised direct care during their 2-year post-degree period) and/or in contexts that do not provide sufficiently relevant clinical experience (e.g., prisons, substance abuse centers, case management, etc.) to ensure providers are ready for independent licensure.

This bill would update Hawai'i's licensing statutes in ways that would not only modernize our processes, but ultimately improve the quality and utilization of mental health care provided in our state by creating a more robust system of clinical accountability/training and a financially viable career path for local would-be providers who have a deep understanding of local cultures/customs and who in turn, may be better able to connect with clients, who in turn will be more likely to actually utilize available mental health services.

Moreover, this bill will reduce the loss of potential future mental health professionals to other careers or one of the other 23 states that have already modernized their licensing laws. In turn, this will contribute to the state economy through associate licensing fees, taxes from wages earned by associate-level licensees, and local purchases made by these licensees.

Overall, many aspects of our mental health system are deeply flawed, understaffed, and are in no way prepared to manage the onslaught of mental health issues that the general population are experiencing during and after this pandemic. The consequences of this pandemic, both short- and long-term, in terms of mental health, could be significant and could weaken the Hawai'i health care system.

If we don't develop the means to stave off and/or treat these mental health issues, individuals and families will suffer even more than they already have/do. In all areas of life, untreated mental health issues can become chronic and with crippling, long-term effects – for individuals, families, and communities.

These circumstances call for a change in the paradigm and practices of mental health care in Hawai'i. Our current model of mental health care does not adequately address the complex challenges of modern living. Let's re-vision current models of mental health care delivery by learning from other states and being creative and flexible in how we provide mental health services. To protect our community now and in the future, let's take appropriate action now. Mental health care cannot be an afterthought.

The only amendments to this bill we would recommend is to incorporate the **purpose language of HB1242**, a near-identical bill introduced by Representative Nakashima, but makes clear that this proposal's legislative intent is to meet burgeoning demand for mental health services and keep homegrown talent in Hawaii, without authorizing licensees to do anything they aren't already allowed to do; as well as **clarifying language provided in the National Association of Social Workers – Hawaii Chapter's testimony regarding insurance billing.**

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

Sincerely,

Christy Chadwick, M.S.D.E., M.A. MFT

Marriage and Family Therapist - Intern

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 9:04:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB1442 HD2. We need to be diverting nonviolent offenders away from incarceration as much as possible.

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 10:06:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy Quick	HIAMFT	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill to increase the number of providers and improve access to mental health services in Hawaii.

S. Joy Quick, MA, LMFT, CSAC

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 10:41:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Danni Sutana Gardner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Danni Sutana Gardner

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 10:54:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dr. John Souza, Jr.	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would only serve to improve the care available to our community by expanding the pool of providers on all islands (particularly on neighbor islands) to help meet the incredibly high demand for mental health services.

This bill would also improve the training, cultivation, and retention of homegrown mental health professionals by giving them a viable career path.

In conclusion, this measure will benefit those seeking services, and those providing services, improving access to, and encouraging utilization of critical mental health services in Hawai'i.

Thank you for your consideration,

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 2:04:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jodie E. Gerson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jodie E. Gerson

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 7:07:21 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine Kirk, LMFT	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Katherine Kirk

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 7:37:58 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colin Moore	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Colin Moore

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 8:41:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vishwani Ram-Souza, LMFT, PhD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha-Namaste.

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services. This is especially important for pre-licensed therapists of color who are supporting family and pursuing licensure. Let's help them get licensed by providing this stepping stone!

Thank you for your consideration,

Vishwani Ram-Souza, LMFT, PhD

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 8:43:50 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charity Dudoit	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Charity Dudoit

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 8:47:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Chow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Daniel Chow

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:12:38 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise Grayzell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Denise Grayzell

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:15:07 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Micah Kobayashi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Micah Kobayashi

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:39:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Ampolos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lauren Ampolos, PhD

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 10:47:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Kay	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Diane, I'm a pre-licensed therapist in the state. I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. With long waitlists and an already limited number of providers, access to mental health resources is nearly impossible for some, yet so critical for our wellbeing.

An associate license would benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services, which benefits everyone.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Diane Kay

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 10:57:49 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jina Uyeda	Hawaii MFT.	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration, Jina Uyeda

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 11:52:05 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands (in person and via telehealth) , particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community. This bill will also encourage aspiring counselors from other states/countries to pursue licensure in Hawaii to help serve the undeserved and ease the burden on those current providers that are doing their best.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Matthew Johnson

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 11:56:47 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Kirkham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support the Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly neighboring islands, to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging the utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Thomas Kirkham, MA

Clinical Psychology Intern

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 12:01:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raymond Black III	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha To Our Hawaii State Legislature Here in this Beautiful Land

My name is Raymond Black III, 23 Year Veteran of the USN, LMHC (HI), LPC (GA), CSAC (HI), MFT (I), and CEO of Heavenly Counsel in Waipahu HI. Sr Pastor of Living the Word Ministries (I4tK)

I come from Ohio but have lived in Hawaii for 25 years now. Military brought me to this beautiful place but ministry kept me here. I own my own private practice because ministry can't cover the cost of living here (Smile). I retired in 2010 where I had already started the schooling needed to do what I am now doing. 2013 I graduated from Wayland Baptist with my Masters in Counseling. I had to do my internship at SARP Peral Harbor (Drug and Acohol) before I was able to take exam. Glad I had income to cover because I didn't get any pay for the hours I worked for schooling. After testing for my License having to take the test twice by the way. Two years from school and having to pay for my hours, things were very tight for me and my family. Having to take the exam so far from school didn't help on that first exam.

Being in the field for a few years I recognized that I wanted to move more toward Mariage and family so had to go back to school. This time had benifits to cover schooling but still had to come out of pocket. I went to Chaminade University respecializing in order to do what I felt I was gifted to do. This time internship was at US VETS where I worked as a Drug and Alcohol counselor in a field I was already certified by the state of Hawaii doing. Again no pay and I also had to pay for the hours post grad. Now I didn't have the Military pay to support. Things were tight for a while and I got through the schooling and my hours waiting to take the exam for MFT.

I now have my own practice and look to help those coming up in the field by doing internships. I work with them in private practice making sure they enter the field doing what they paid for in their schooling.

I had one really bright intern who did her internship but it got to hard for her to stay in the field because she had to get a job supporting her family. This was sad because she had to do what she could to support her family. If she could take the exam out of school and start work right away she would be a great asset to our profession. She is frustrated that she doesnt as a intern get to start seeing clients and support her family by doing so. I hope and pray this bright young lady makes it to the exam in a year or so from now. I pray that her fire she had in counsel doesn't burn out.

I believe this bill if passed, would allow for me to continue to do what I love doing by training our future counselors and passing it on to the next generation, while they (the students) will be able to support their families while working in private practice with those in the field they desire to be a part of. If she had where able to get her Lic. I can see how I could work with her to make a living and support the field.

V/r

Raymond Black III

Samantha Bailo- MA, Counseling Psychology
Mental Health Counselor at Pau Hana Counseling
and Hale Kipa Non-profit

February 2, 2023

Testimony regarding Bill HB1300

As a mental health counselor both at a private practice and at a mental health agency in our local community, I am aware of the massive need for mental health clinicians in both Hilo and the whole state. I graduated from the University of Hawai'i, Hilo in May 2022 and have been working in the community ever since.

Who I can serve is limited due to not being able to bill most major insurance companies until I am licensed. Our wait list at Pau Hana is 100+. I have more room on my schedule unfortunately I cannot take on clients due to this lack of licensure status. At Hale Kipa we also have a long wait list of clients waiting for therapists. This is a common problem. Many private and group practice providers are unable to hire unlicensed providers at all because they cannot bill insurance companies for their services.

In many other states (such as Washington, California, and D.C.) a provisional license is granted once passing a state exam, then hours are accrued for up to two years and you apply for your state license. In the state of Hawaii we don't have a provisional license yet. The consequences to our community due to this gap in licensure are endless. **This means graduates are typically forced to take low/underpaid positions in larger agencies (some of these are wonderful positions but the options are limited). 30% of these graduates wind up leaving the field due to not making enough money to support themselves.**

This bill would allow MHCs, MFTs Psychologists to earn an associate/provisional license so that they can bill insurance companies for their work (provided they are supervised, payment may be less than fully licensed providers).

This is an important piece of legislation as it will open the doors to more opportunities for trained mental health professionals and it increases access to mental health care to the citizens of the State Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Licensed Mental Health Counselors, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, and Licensed Psychologists all use the "Psychotherapy" CPT code for insurance billing purposes.

Thank you for your time,
Samantha Bailo

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 12:18:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ken Farm	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong Support

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 12:22:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anthony Papa, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As the director of the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. Program at UH Mānoa, I strongly support Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. Our graduates struggle to make ends meet in order to meet post-doctoral supervised work requirements for licensure after completing their degree. Current Hawai'i statutes provide no means for this required work to be remunerated, requiring many to work for free if they wish to stay in Hawai'i.

Given the cost of living in HI and the need to begin to pay back student loans during a time when financial resources have often been depleted in order to pay for graduate training, many move to the mainland to states with Associate Licensing laws in place for psychologists. Once there, they become professionally established and don't return to Hawai'i.

Thus, the lack of a statutory framework for Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals is a key contributor to a brain drain of professional mental health expertise from the Islands a key contributor to the lack of mental health resources across the islands.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tony Papa, Ph.D.

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 12:29:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Nicole Shifflett, LSW

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 12:32:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ahmal allen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

[Ahmal H Allen]

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 12:41:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

TMahalo for your consideration,

Kedan Frank

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 12:46:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amma King	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: Aloha, I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community. Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services. Thank you for your consideration. Amma King

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 1:09:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Petra Parvati Meedt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Petra P. Meedt, M.A., M.S.

Marriage and Family Therapy Intern (HI)

Licensed Psychologist (PR)

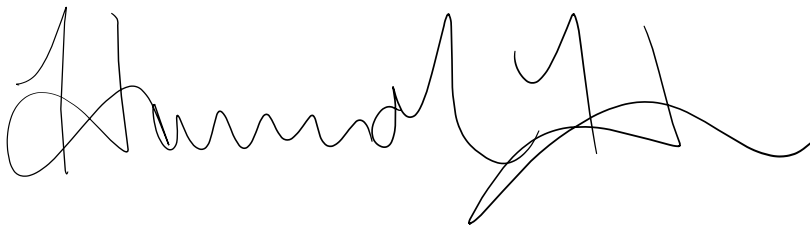
Aloha,

As a Hawaii licensed therapist, I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Hannah Hancock, MSW, LCSW

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

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 1:29:57 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa St Claire	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Melissa St. Claire, MA

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 1:31:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chauncey St. Laurent	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Chauncey St. Laurent

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 1:49:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Miriam Goldberg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Miriam Goldberg, LCSW

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 1:52:18 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kapualeinani K Beyer Cavaco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. Working here on Maui, my practice is inundated with requests for therapy. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community. I have been told again and again the value I bring as a Native Hawaiian, local provider doing this work, my patients genuinely need, want and deserve care from their own community members. We need more providers like me who are already part of the community, and we need our talent pool to stay connected and not get lost in a very confusing and poorly supported graduate-to-professional system.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Me ka ha‘a ha‘a,

Dr. Kapua Beyer Cavaco

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 1:57:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frank de Gracia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Frank de Gracia

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 2:10:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kendyl Oshiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Kendyl Oshiro and I am a third-year doctoral student at the Hawaii School of Professional Psychology at Chaminade University of Honolulu. I am a big supporter of the Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask the committee to pass this bill. This bill would offer so many benefits for practicing clinicians and would help to meet the needs of the community. This bill would also encourage people to stay in Hawaii instead of going off to the Mainland who offer this amenity. As someone w/ a Masters in Counseling Psychology, this bill would have been helpful while I was working towards licensure, especially due to high cost of living and student loan debt. I wholeheartedly support this bill and I hope you will see the benefits of what this bill would offer.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kendyl Oshiro

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 2:19:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leza Gordon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in **support** of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill.

This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Leza Gordon M.A.

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 2:54:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nirit Stephens	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing today to respectfully ask the committee to approve bill HB1300, which would allow for an associate-level license and increase the number of mental health providers in the state of Hawai'i. Mental health is essential to the people of Hawai'i and we need more therapists to be able to offer services to the public!

I'm a student of marriage and family therapy and will be graduating next year. From what I hear from colleagues and friends, finding a therapist can be very challenging. Many therapists are so inundated with clients, they will not even have the time to return a phone call to let new clients know they are at capacity. Approving this bill would allow graduates like myself to practice and get insurance reimbursement for our services. With the bill approved, more Hawai'i residents can have access to a therapist, and graduates would gain valuable experience towards obtaining their license. Hawai'i needs more access to mental health, and this bill can be a game-changer for so many people.

I hope you will take this testimony into consideration and approve this bill.

Respectfully,

Nirit Stephens

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 3:07:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kelly	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have been a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist for the last 15 years. I am in strong opposition of this Bill. I feel that without the complete training a Therapist is not qualified to work independantly. In addition, more specific preparation needs to be considered prior to this type of Associate License being Considered . There needs to be more specification as to how the Supervision will be administered and what qualifes a Supervisor to administer the Supervision. Consequently, there needs to be very specific guidelines as to what supervision entails (hours/ how data will be recorded and who will monitor this process).

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 4:05:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bryana Turner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Bryana Turner

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 4:21:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justin Miller	CBT Gym	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a Licensed Mental Health Counselor, I am fully in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. Doing so would dramatically improve access to mental health counseling for all islands, and in particular on neighbor islands. This bill would also help both pre-licensed providers and small private practices to work together. At present it is not financially feasible for pre-licensed providers or private practices to employ pre-licensed clinicians as insurance reimbursement is currently not available. This bill fixes this problem and will greatly benefit the citizens of our state.

Thank you for reviewing my testimony.

Kind regards,
Justin Miller, LMHC
CBT Gym

CHARMAINE HIGA-MCMILLAN, PHD
LICENSED PSYCHOLOGIST, #1010
HILO, HI 96720

In Consideration of HB1300

February 1, 2023

I am writing in strong support of HB1300 and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands, to help meet the demand for mental health services. **This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community. Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.**

I am a licensed psychologist and I am a professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Hawaii at Hilo. I am also currently serving as the Director of the MA Program in Counseling Psychology (Clinical Mental Health Specialization) at the UH Hilo. Our program began in 2005 and coincided with the creation of the Mental Health Counselor license in the State (both were created to try to address the lack of qualified mental health providers). We have a rigorous 60 credit program that is designed to prepare students to help meet the mental health service needs of the diverse and multicultural populations in Hawai'i, and we were recently nationally reaccredited through the Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (through June 2029).

I am writing as a resident of Hilo, HI and as a licensed psychologist.

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 4:31:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maria	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Maria Mitsioura

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 4:37:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anita Trubitt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of the passage of this bill that will increase the pool of mental health services in our community.

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 4:37:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew N. Polloi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Andrew Polloi

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 4:52:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Haunani Iao	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo nui,

Dr. Haunani Iao

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 5:33:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily Powers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Emily Powers

BACKGROUND

Help improve access to quality mental health services by supporting legislation for Associate-level Licensure, and insurance reimbursement for supervised services provided by trainees in Psychology, Social Work, Marriage & Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counseling.

HB1300 HD1 establishes provisional or associate level licensure requirements for early career mental health professionals and authorizes insurance reimbursements in certain circumstances, among other provisions that remove administrative barriers and increase the speed with which trained, qualified, and credentialed practitioners can enter the workforce.

WATCH THIS!

Here is a [short video \(3min20sec\)](#) by Britt Young, a prominent Marriage & Family Therapist here in Hawaii who describes how impactful and helpful her Associate License in Illinois was to her development as a therapist.

Here is the [live testimony](#) from the last hearing in the House Health and Human Services Committee. <https://youtu.be/1ghtHoG-7nY?t=386>

If you're looking for sample testimony or more info: here is the previously [submitted written testimony](#).

This proposal also received very strong support from the public and in the Senate last session ([SB2829 SD2](#)). Here is the [testimony from last year](#). The [oral testimony here at this link](#) (cued to the relevant time) is quite effective in demonstrating the widespread support and effectiveness of this proposal at addressing severe shortages on the neighbor islands, staffing at DOH, and particularly meeting the needs of our youth in crisis. Even [Civil Beat reported on it](#).

MORE DETAILS ON HOW IT WORKS:

An "Associate License" structure will infuse Hawaii's workforce of mental health providers with recent graduates who are working through their required hours of supervised clinical work, but who otherwise could not be compensated through insurance reimbursement. An "Associate License" system - akin to what nearly half the other states have in place - will greatly curb the brain drain of homegrown professionals who choose to do their clinical hours on the mainland, where they can get paid, rather than staying in Hawaii where they will be forced to work for free *and* pay back student loans, while struggling with our disproportionately high cost of living.

Here is a [graph](#) showing that nearly half the other states already have an Associate/Provisional licensing structure for Marriage & Family Therapy - for example.

To be clear, these Associate professionals would not be allowed to do anything they don't already do now. They would continue to operate within their permitted scope of practice - with supervision. What would change is having the authorization, though an "Associate License," to have their supervised work (required to apply for full licensure) to be reimbursed through their supervisor's insurance. In fact, this structure is already currently in place for Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs) who supervise those with a Masters in Social Work (MSW) seeking further credentials as a LCSW.

WHY?

There is a dire need for mental health services in Hawaii; which is exacerbated by the professional landscape and cost of living here. Associate Licensure will go far to address Hawaii's mental health crisis and keep homegrown therapists here in Hawaii - to serve the people of Hawaii.

HOW?

The best way to ensure your input is included in the record is to register on the Hawaii State Legislature website, and submit your testimony from your own individual account. Below is a guide explaining this easy process. We hope you'll weigh in, .

Aloha~

***Hawaii Psychological Association; National Association of Social Workers - Hawaii Chapter;
Hawaiian Islands Association for Marriage & Family Therapy; & Policy Matters LLC***

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 5:41:33 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachel Lehn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Rachel Lehn

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 5:53:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Victoria Trevino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Victoria Trevino

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 5:59:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachel Ferguson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Rachel Ferguson

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 5:59:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Naghum Alfulajj	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Naghum Alfulajj

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 6:05:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Adabelle Carson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 6:09:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
YiLin Fang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

YiLin Fang

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 6:12:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
René Harvey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

René Harvey

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 6:16:56 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leslie Gonzales	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Leslie Gonzales

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 6:21:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rosemary Strong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill is desperately needed to help the people of Hawaii to gain control over their mental health. There are not enough providers to serve the population, especially on neighbor islands. Not many people can afford to pay out of pocket, so the insurance piece is extremely important. Take a stand for the islands and it's people! Support their right to affordable and accessible mental health care. Mahalo nui

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 6:22:55 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taylor Hoepner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of HB1300 Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

I believe this would allow for better connection between providers and individuals needing services. Cultivating the potential providers already within the community would allow for better integration of individuals within the community as there will be a cultural connection between the community in need and those providing care.

Thank you for your consideration,

Taylor Hoepner

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 6:23:14 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Harley Kainoa Derrickson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging the utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Harley Derrickson

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 6:30:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lindsay Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lindsay Johnson

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 6:36:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily Polk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Emily Polk

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 6:39:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine Park	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of HB1300 regarding Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. There is a current need for more mental health providers. HB1300 will expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands where there may be limited access to qualified professionals. Additionally, this proposal will support graduate level professionals and help them to find and obtain employment opportunities while improving on-the-job training. By supporting an associate license, this proposal will help to cultivate homegrown and locally trained professionals- encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will help increase access to mental health care and provide access to qualified and trained professionals.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dr. Christine Park, LMHC

HB1300 HD1
Associate License Bill

February 22, 2023

Dear Legislators,

I support HB1300 HD 1, the Associate License Bill.

1. We are in a mental health crisis, with few opportunities for relief.

Heartbreakingly, I have had this conversation more than once,

“Hello, are you taking new clients?”

“No, I’m sorry but I have a six-month waiting list.”

-starts to cry- “Please my daughter is suicidal”.

“I will try to forward the names of other therapists who might have openings.”

“I have called ten.”

No-one I called had openings.

2. This bill will give many starting therapists much needed opportunity to make a (better) living and much needed experience. We will get more therapists to full licensure.

Of my graduating class only 2 of 8 became licensed therapists. 3 of the 6 who did not get licensed, I estimate would have become licensed therapists, but after three years of costly school and the loss of working opportunity, themselves and their families could not afford another two years of struggle. I put myself in \$70,000.00 of additional debt because the only jobs available pre-license paid only \$10-\$35.00/hour, and I had to pay for supervision hours \$8,000.00.

It is hard to be a therapist. Burn-out is high. During COVID I took few new clients because I had so many of my discharged clients return. We need relief! Patients need therapists!

Pass this bill, please!

If you have any questions, please call me.

Thank you,

Ellyn M. Tong
LMFT 543
(808)782-7342

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 7:01:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karisa Yoshida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Karisa Yoshida, MFT-I

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 7:31:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mayumi Coloma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mayumi Coloma, LCSW

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 7:58:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kapuakea Isaak	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration.

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 8:01:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Meriah Nichols	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kakou,

I graduated from the counseling psychology program at UH-Hilo last May. I am currently in the exact target for this bill, as I am struggling to earn a living, provide for my kids as a single parent, and practice supervised mental health. It is a real struggle.

Positions for those of us who have graduated are limited to say the least, especially here in Hilo. It seems virtually impossible to support oneself by providing therapy service - not many people want to pay out of pocket for this when insurance would cover it. This severely limits us.

Passing this bill would mean that those of us who have graduated can earn a living for ourselves and support our families while supervised, and can accumulate the hours we need for full licensure. As such, I am in full support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for your consideration,

Meriah Nichols

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:25:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brent Llanaza	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 1300 HD1.

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 10:29:20 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Andrea Manzana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Diane Andrea Manzana

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 10:32:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Andrea Malasa

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 10:32:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emma Ishihara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB1300 HD1 ASSOCIATE LICENSE

Aloha,

I am testifying in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Emma.

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 11:13:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration

Daysi G. Cortes

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 11:42:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara Myers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tara Myers

✧ Sharon K. Usagawa MSW, DCSW, LCSW ✧
970 N. Kalaheo Avenue Suite C201 Kailua, Hawaii 96734
ph: 808-386-8523 email: skulcsw@aol.com

February 22, 2023

Aloha,

I am in support of HB1300 HD1, Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals (MHPs) and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. As a practicing Clinician in Private Practice, I am constantly having to turn away clients seeking mental health support and it is heart-breaking. I hate turning people away in their time of need and I often hear the same sentiment from many of my colleagues. In addition, I also provide Supervision and Training for Graduate Student Interns as well as Professional Interns seeking their Clinical License. Given the lack of availability for many of these Interns to obtain their direct practice hours for Licensure; for years now, I have offered them as alternatives to clients that are unable to locate a Licensed MHP. It has helped to address the shortage of MHPs available as well as provide opportunity for Licensure Candidates to assist in obtaining their hours. This option is not very viable as most people are already having to work a full-time job, and it also takes up a lot of my voluntary and donated time where I could work with more clients as well.

This proposal would support those issues on many levels on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands where the need is often greater due to smaller resources. This bill would also improve and incentivize on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community. Lastly, this bill would also provide more relief for the Providers currently working to support the community. I have witnessed an increase in burn-out in some of my colleagues due to the burden of sometimes over-extending themselves or getting overwhelmed with the high need.

The demand for mental health services has risen to a record high, following our 3 years, going on 4 now of the pandemic, economic shutdown and slow recovery. It was predicted that mental health would be the ensuing “wave” of the pandemic. We’ve been in it and need to address this more quickly and efficiently to prevent even greater problems from developing.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this very important matter.



Sharon K. Usagawa LCSW
Licensed Clinical Social Worker

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 8:14:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of associate licensing of mental health professionals, and respectfully ask that this committee pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers and islands to help meet no demands for mental health services. This bill would also improve on the job training and cultivate homegrown talent, encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

thank you for your consideration.

Daly Hardy

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 9:07:47 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Desiree U'ILANI Kiaha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

[HB1300 HD1 ASSOCIATE LICENSE](#)

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

D. U'ilani Kiaha, MSW

MORE INFO

Help improve access to quality mental health services by supporting legislation for Associate-level Licensure, and insurance reimbursement for supervised services provided by trainees in Psychology, Social Work, Marriage & Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counseling.

[HB1300 HD1](#) establishes provisional or associate level licensure requirements for early career mental health professionals and authorizes insurance reimbursements in certain circumstances, among other provisions that remove administrative barriers and increase the speed with which trained, qualified, and credentialed practitioners can enter the workforce.

Here is a [short video \(3min20sec\)](#) by Britt Young, a prominent Marriage & Family Therapist here in Hawaii who describes how impactful and helpful her Associate License in Illinois was to her development as a therapist.

Here is the [live testimony](https://youtu.be/1ghtHoG-7nY?t=386) from the last hearing in the House Health and Human Services Committee. <https://youtu.be/1ghtHoG-7nY?t=386>

This proposal also received very strong support from the public and in the Senate last session ([SB2829 SD2](#)). Here is the [testimony from last year](#). The [oral testimony here at this link](#) (cued to the relevant time) is quite effective in demonstrating the widespread support and effectiveness of this proposal at addressing severe shortages on the neighbor islands, staffing at DOH, and particularly meeting the needs of our youth in crisis. Even [Civil Beat reported on it](#).

MORE DETAILS ON HOW IT WORKS:

An "Associate License" structure will infuse Hawaii's workforce of mental health providers with recent graduates who are working through their required hours of supervised clinical work, but who otherwise could not be compensated through insurance reimbursement. An "Associate License" system - akin to what nearly half the other states have in place - will greatly curb the brain drain of homegrown professionals who choose to do their clinical hours on the mainland, where they can get paid, rather than staying in Hawaii where they will be forced to work for free *and* pay back student loans, while struggling with our disproportionately high cost of living.

Here is a [graph](#) showing that nearly half the other states already have an Associate/Provisional licensing structure for Marriage & Family Therapy - for example.

To be clear, these Associate professionals would not be allowed to do anything they don't already do now. They would continue to operate within their permitted scope of practice - with supervision. What would change is having the authorization, though an "Associate License," to have their supervised work (required to apply for full licensure) to be reimbursed through their supervisor's insurance. In fact, this structure is already currently in place for Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs) who supervise those with a Masters in Social Work (MSW) seeking further credentials as a LCSW.

WHY?

There is a dire need for mental health services in Hawaii; which is exacerbated by the professional landscape and cost of living here. Associate Licensure will go far to address Hawaii's mental health crisis and keep homegrown therapists here in Hawaii - to serve the people of Hawaii.

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 9:28:12 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Logan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a clinical psychologist specializing in substance use disorders, I am acutely aware of the limited provider availability to serve Hawaii. As a former clinical supervisor, I would welcome the chance to supervise a post-doctoral trainee to provide empirically supported and culturally relevant services to our community. I am currently unable to do that given the financial burden of providing those hours without reimbursement, especially when I already have a waitlist of potential clients desperate for help.

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 10:17:06 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sonia Z. S.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly neighbor islands, to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sonia Z. Shalhout

Member of HIAMFT, WAMFT, AAMFT, and NAEYC

Previous Farmer on Hawaii Island

Graduate Student in MAMFT

NCU

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Marnie Honeycutt, LCSW

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 12:34:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah L Scott	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Deborah Scott, LCSW

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 1:04:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marina Galvan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal would expand the pool of providers on all islands, particularly on neighbor islands to help meet the demand for mental health services. This bill would also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent - encouraging them to stay in Hawaii and meet the unique needs of our community.

Most importantly, this measure will benefit those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Marina Galvan

HB-1300-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 1:13:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy Tanimura Winqvist	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of Associate Licensing of Mental Health Professionals and respectfully ask this committee to pass this bill. This proposal will expand the pool of providers for all islands, particularly on the neighbor islands to help meet the huge demand for mental health services. Many of us providers receive calls weekly from individuals desperately in need of services, but due to already full practices have to turn people away. This bill not only will increase the number of providers to help alleviate the shortage, but can also improve on-the-job training and cultivate homegrown talent. Associate level practitioners are being priced out of Hawaii and due to opportunities elsewhere we are losing providers. Hawaii trained providers are more likely to stay here and be better equipped to meet the unique needs of our community--both resource wise and with culturally-informed services.

Most importantly, this measure benefits those seeking services by improving access and encouraging utilization of critical therapy services.

Mahalo nui for your consideration,

Joy Tanimura Winqvist, LCSW