



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

**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB164 SD2
RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS.**

REP. DELLA BELATTI, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS

Hearing Date: March 16, 2023

Room Number: 329

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** Proposed \$1M general fund appropriation as required match for federal
- 2 funds.
- 3 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) supports the State Loan Repayment
- 4 Program, which has demonstrated success at influencing a majority of participants – healthcare
- 5 providers of various specialties, not just physicians – to remain in Hawaii, practicing almost
- 6 exclusively in underserved areas.
- 7 DOH looks forward to continued partnership with the University of Hawaii John A. Burns
- 8 School of Medicine across a continuum of health care workforce initiatives.
- 9 **Offered Amendments:** N/A.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA

March 15, 2023

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

Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Place: Via Videoconference and Conference Room 329, State Capitol

From: Jade T. Butay, Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

**Re: S.B. 164 SD2 RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE
PROFESSIONALS**

I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

DLIR supports this measure provided it does not conflict with the priorities identified in the Governor's Executive Budget request SB164 SD2 proposes to appropriate funds subject to a matching funds requirement for Health Care Provider Loan Repayment Program administered through the John A. Burns School of Medicine of the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

II. CURRENT LAW

N/A.

III. COMMENTS ON THE SENATE BILL

Reducing the tremendous burden of student debt will encourage more health professionals to continue working in underserved areas and thereby helping reduce the pressing need for healthcare workers in those areas. For this reason, the Department supports this bill as an effective strategy to address shortages in the healthcare workforce in medically underserved areas, provided sufficient funds are appropriated and its passage does not replace or adversely affect priorities identified in the Governor's Executive Budget request.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Health & Homelessness
Wednesday, March 15, 2023 at 8:30 a.m.

By

Lee Buenconsejo-Lum, Interim Dean

and

Kelley Withy, MD, Professor, Department of Family Medicine and Community Health,
Hawai'i/Pacific Basin Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Director

John A. Burns School of Medicine

And

Michael Bruno, Provost

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 164 SD2 – RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

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

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today. The John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) **strongly supports SB 164, SD2** which seeks funding for the Hawai'i State Loan Repayment Program administered by JABSOM in the amount of \$1,000,000 for fiscal years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. We request that the measure take effect on July 1, 2023.

Since September 2012, the Hawai'i State Loan Repayment program has been operating successfully, and has supported 76 recipients in exchange for work commitments in underserved geographic practice areas in Hawai'i. Of the loan repayment participants, 80% have remained in Hawai'i to practice, and more than half have remained at the site where they performed their service. As of this date, there are 23 active providers in the Hawai'i State Loan Repayment program with another 9 providers applying for JABSOM'S Innovative Loan Repayment Program, which is also administered by JABSOM and uses non-federal monies to match State funds to support other local healthcare providers who do not meet the federal guidelines but who still work in an area of need.

The Hawai'i State Loan Repayment program leverages public funds and private donations to access matching federal funds through the State Loan Repayment Program of the National Health Service Corps Branch of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Currently, health care professionals who have benefited from the loan repayment program serve on all islands and in the communities of Waimea, Kīhei, Wai'anae, Hilo, and Wailuku; at health clinics in Kalihi-Pālana and

Kōkua Kalihi Valley; and in public institutional settings at the federal detention center in Honolulu, the Hālawā correctional facility and the Maui County correctional center. Health care professionals who are eligible to participate in the program include physicians, nurse practitioners, psychologists, social workers, and many others.

Many Hawai'i residents are unable to obtain timely and appropriate health care due to shortages of primary and behavioral health care professionals in the State. These shortages not only threaten individual health, but also cumulatively affect the State's health care costs. Areas of Hawai'i that have been designated by the federal government as medically underserved have been most significantly affected by shortages of primary and behavioral health care professionals, such as physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and psychologists. Social workers, marriage and family therapists, and nurses are also urgently needed in these areas.

In many cases, the increasingly high cost of education for health care professionals binds graduates to a career path designed to repay often exorbitant student loans. These career paths most frequently lead to professional practice in highly specialized practice in urban areas rather than in general practice on the neighbor islands or in underserved areas of O'ahu where the need is greatest. Furthermore, those states with robust primary health care systems have lower costs and improved patient outcomes. Recognizing this correlation, many states have made the policy decision to dedicate public funds to loan repayment programs to help develop a strong primary health care workforce for underserved areas.

An investment of State matching funds would enable JABSOM to draw as much federal money as possible and allow the program to provide loan repayment to more health care professionals in our ongoing efforts to alleviate the health care professional shortages in Hawai'i.

We request a minor, non-substantive amendment to page 2, line 12 by the insertion of the word "Branch" to reflect the correct name of the federal program that underwrites the Hawai'i State Loan Repayment Program:

"National Health Service Corps Branch State Loan Repayment Program of the United States Department of Health and Human Services".

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Testimony of
Jonathan Ching
Government Relations Director

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

March 15, 2023
8:30 a.m.
Conference Room 329 and Videoconference

Re: SB 164, SD2, Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 164, SD2, which appropriates funds to the Department of Health for the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program for Health Care Professionals, provided that the funds are matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis by funds from a private or another public source.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i SUPPORTS SB 164, SD2.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i is one of the nation's largest not-for-profit health plans, serving 12.6 million members nationwide, and more than 269,000 members in Hawai'i. In Hawai'i, more than 4,200 dedicated employees and more than 650 Hawai'i Permanente Medical Group physicians and advance practice providers work in our integrated health system to provide our members coordinated care and coverage. Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i has more than 20+ medical facilities, including our award-winning Moanalua Medical Center. We continue to provide high-quality coordinated care for our members and deliver on our commitment to improve the health of our members and the 1.4 million people living in the communities we serve.

Our rural areas continue to be the most underserved populations in Hawaii. Therefore, we appreciate inclusion of areas served by rural health clinics as part of underserved geographic areas. Hawai'i has a shortage of about 776 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. In 2022, approximately 60 physicians were found to have retired, 212 decreased their work hours, and 84 physicians left the state, further contributing to the physician shortage. Without these doctors and other healthcare providers, the people of Hawai'i do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on neighbor islands and underserved areas served by rural health centers. The funding from this loan repayment program, will create opportunities directly in the state to recruit and retain our physician and healthcare workforce.

We ask the committee to PASS SB 164, SD2. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

Wednesday, March 15, 2023 at 8:30 AM
Via Video Conference; Conference Room 329

House Committee on Health and Homelessness

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

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

**Re: Testimony in Support of SB 164, SD2
Relating to Loan Repayment For Health Care Professionals**

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

HPH writes in SUPPORT of SB 164, SD2 which appropriates funds for the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program administered by the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM).

The continuation of the Hawaii State Loan Repayment program that supports payments of educational debt for primary care and behavioral health physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and certified nurse midwives who work for non-profit organizations in Health Professions Shortage Areas of Hawaii plays a vital role in addressing the shortage of healthcare professionals in the state. Hawaii has a shortage of almost 800 doctors, and almost all other types of primary care and behavioral healthcare workers. Without these healthcare providers, the people of Hawaii do not have access to the healthcare they need. The shortage is most acute for those on the neighbor islands and those with the least resources. One of the fastest and least expensive methods for recruiting providers is through loan repayment.

JABSOM has successfully administered the program which has supported 76 healthcare providers since the program began in 2012. To date, nearly 2/3 of those providers continue to work in medically underserved communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**Written Testimony Presented Before the House
Committee on Health & Homelessness
Wednesday, March 15, 2023 at 8:30 A.M.
Conference Room 329 and via Videoconference
by
Laura Reichhardt, APRN, AGPCNP-BC
Director, Hawai'i State Center for Nursing
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT on S.B. 164, S.D. 2

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify **in support of S.B. 164, S.D. 2**, loan repayment for health care professionals.

In Hawai'i, health care professionals are in high demand yet in low supply, particularly on the neighbor islands and in rural and underserved areas of our state. This includes all of Hawai'i and Kaua'i Counties as well as most of Maui County. O'ahu, though population dense, has areas that are medically underserved.

The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing acknowledges that supporting healthcare professionals including nurses, by reducing their personal expenses through loan repayment, is one way to recruit and retain these valued professionals in and across our state. This program has proven success year after year in supporting healthcare professionals in starting and continuing service in rural areas and underserved areas in our state. The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing provides testimony in support of this measure both for the intent of the measure and for full funding of this initiative. Further, HSCN agrees with and supports the proposed amendment as submitted by University of Hawai'i John A. Burns School of Medicine.

The mission of the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing is that through collaborative partnerships, the Center provides accurate nursing workforce data for planning, disseminates nursing knowledge to support excellence in practice and leadership development, promotes a diverse workforce, and advocates for sound health policy to serve the changing health care needs of the people of Hawai'i.



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

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

Hearing: Wednesday, March 15, 2023, 8:30 AM

RE: **SB164 SD2 Relating to the Hawai`i State Loan Repayment Program**

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of SB164 SD2**, which would provide funding for the State's loan repayment program at the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) to support various healthcare professionals who practice in underserved areas.

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 care.

According to the 2022 Hawai`i Physician Workforce Assessment, Hawai`i has a shortage of almost 800 doctors. Workforce shortages are also seen across the spectrum of healthcare workers. This shortage means that in certain areas, residents are unable to obtain timely and appropriate health care.

AlohaCare is committed to improving access to care, which is why in 2012, AlohaCare and others provided funding for the state loan repayment program created by JABSOM Area Health Education Center. The program has successfully brought more healthcare workers to underserved areas across the state. And an overwhelming majority of the loan repayment recipients continue to practice in our community health centers and are vital to ensuring access to quality healthcare to underserved areas.

We support this measure as a critical and effective way to expand provider capacity and improve access to care for the residents of Hawai`i, especially our rural communities.

We are grateful to the Committee for considering this measure. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in **support of SB164 SD2**.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Health and Homelessness
Wednesday, March 15, 2023; 8:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 329
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0164, SENATE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS.

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

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill No. 0164, Senate Draft 2, RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS.

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

This bill, as received by your Committee, would appropriate unspecified amounts of general funds for fiscal years 2023-2024, and 2024-2025, for the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program so long as these funds are matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis by funds from a private or another public source. The funds would be expended by the John A. Burns School Medicine of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and would take effect on July 1, 2023.

The bill would take effect on December 31, 2050, for discussion purposes.

The State of Hawaii is experiencing a severe shortage of health care professionals in the workforce, especially in rural areas. Recent studies note that the current shortage of physicians is at 20% of the total full-time equivalent positions throughout the State. The shortage is especially severe in the fields of primary care, infectious diseases, colorectal surgery, pathology, general surgery, pulmonology, neurology, neurosurgery, orthopedic surgery, family medicine, cardiothoracic surgery, rheumatology, cardiology, hematology/oncology, and pediatric subspecialties of endocrinology, cardiology, neurology, hematology/oncology, and gastroenterology.

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 0164, Senate Draft 2
Wednesday, March 15, 2023; 8:30 a.m.
Page 2

This bill would provide the resources to continue a financial incentive that enhances the quality and stock of Hawaii's future healthcare workforce. Accordingly we commend this effort and wish to participate in any and all discussions concerning workforce development.

For this reason, the HPCA supports this bill.

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



Hawaii Medical Association

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Date: March 15, 2023

From: Hawaii Medical Association

Bernard Robinson, MD; HMA Public Policy Committee

Re: SB164 SD2; RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS.

Position: Support

Currently, Hawaii has a statewide physician shortage of 776 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs), as reported in the UH System Annual Report on Findings from the Hawai'i Physician Workforce Assessment Project. This deficit is 44 FTEs larger than one year ago. Since 2012, support from the Hawaii State Legislature in partnership with JABSOM, HMSA and Queens Medical Center through the State Loan Repayment Program has helped to recruit physicians to practice in Hawaii. HMA is grateful for the continued support of this financial assistance program, particularly for needed recruitment to counties like Hawaii and Maui, where provider shortages are as high as 40%. HMA also supports the expansion of this program to include incentives for psychologists and social workers.

It remains an important priority for Hawaii physicians to sustain quality healthcare in Hawaii and maintain the delivery of vital services to our underserved areas, particularly on the neighbor islands. The Loan Repayment Program must be sustained to support young physician trainees and improve our Hawaii physician workforce that remains critically low.

Thank you for allowing the Hawaii Medical Association to testify in support of this measure.

REFERENCES

Withy K et al . UH System Annual Report to the 2023 Legislature on Findings from the Hawai'i Physician Workforce Assessment Project. https://www.hawaii.edu/govrel/docs/reports/2023/act18-sslh2009_2023_physician-workforce_annual-report_508.pdf

Associated Press. Shortage of Hawaii Doctors Worsens During COVID-19 Pandemic. <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/hawaii/articles/2021-01-06/shortage-of-hawaii-doctorsworsens-during-covid-19-pandemic>

Hiraishi K. "Hawai'i Doctor Shortage Worsens Under Pandemic. " Hawaii Public Radio. Jan 5, 2021. <https://www.hawaiipublicradio.org/post/hawai-i-doctor-shortage-worsens-underpandemic>

2023 Hawaii Medical Association Officers

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

2023 Hawaii Medical Association Public Policy Coordination Team

Elizabeth Ann Ignacio, MD, Chair • Beth England, MD, Co-Chair
Linda Rosehill, JD, Government Relations • Marc Alexander, Executive Director



SB164 SD2 Loan for Behavioral Health Workers

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Wednesday, Mar. 15, 2023: 8:30 : Room 329 Videoconference

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition supports SB164 SD2

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 and prevention agencies and recovery services.

There is a huge shortage of behavioral health workers, including psychiatrist, psychologists, nurses, and social workers. So much news about it, we hardly need to justify it. However, here is a report from HRSA:

By 2030, we project these changes in demand for behavioral health workers:¹

- 3% increase in demand for adult psychiatrists (to 39,550)
- 1% decrease in demand for child & adolescent psychiatrists (to 9,190)
- 15% increase in demand for nurse practitioners (to 12,050)
- 8% increase in demand for physician assistants (to 1,670)
- 5% increase in demand for psychologists (to 95,600)
- 12% increase in demand for social workers (to 268,750)
- 9% increase in demand for marriage & family therapists (to 57,970)
- 15% increase in demand for addiction counselors (to 105,410)
- 13% increase in demand for mental health counselors (to 158,850)
- 3% increase in demand for school counselors (to 119,140)

This loan matching program would certainly help.

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

¹ Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Behavioral Health Projections: August 2022
<https://bhw.hrsa.gov/data-research/projecting-health-workforce-supply-demand/behavioral-health>



**Testimony in Support of SB164 SD2 WITH COMMENTS,
Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals**

March 15, 2023

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

March 15, 2023

8:30 AM

Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

Aloha Chair Au Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee,

Thank you for allowing Hawaii Dental Service (HDS) to submit testimony **SUPPORTING WITH COMMENTS SB164 SD2 – RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS**. HDS is Hawaii’s leading dental benefits provider, offering affordable, comprehensive dental plans to more than 1 million residents in Hawaii, Guam and Saipan.

SB164 SD2 appropriates state funds to the loan repayment program for health care professionals and requires matching funds from a private donor or another public source. HDS supports SB164 SD2 to encourage graduates in healthcare professions to commit to careers in underserved geographic practice areas in Hawaii. **HDS strongly encourages the committee to amend the bill to extend this benefit to Hawaii dentists and dental hygienists** who practice in underserved communities and where there is a shortage of healthcare professionals.

There is a growing realization that oral health is just as important to our overall health and well-being as primary and behavioral health. Studies consistently document the connection between oral health and chronic health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and dementia.

Hawaii should recognize oral health care as a medical specialty. Current practices deprive dentists and dental hygienists of being rightfully recognized as healthcare colleagues of equal status to primary and behavioral healthcare professionals, including physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, marriage and family therapists, and registered nurses.

Currently, Hawaii dentists and dental hygienists are excluded from the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program. This program is only available to other healthcare professionals. HDS strongly believes health equity in our state will be greatly enhanced if funds appropriated to the Hawaii Department of Health for the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program and administered through the UH John A. Burns School of Medicine could also be extended to dentists and dental hygienists.



HDS proposes amending Section 1 as follows:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that many Hawaii residents are unable to obtain timely and appropriate health care due to shortages of primary and behavioral health care professionals in the State. These shortages not only threaten individual health, but the entire State's health care system. Areas of Hawaii that have been designated by the federal government as medically underserved have been most significantly affected by shortages of primary and behavioral health care professionals, including physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, **dentists, dental hygienists**, and psychologists. Social workers, marriage and family therapists, and registered nurses are also urgently needed in these areas.

We strongly urge the committee to **pass SB164 SD2** with the amendments proposed. Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

Quin Ogawa
Chief Financial Officer



March 15, 2023 at 8:30 am
Conference Room 329

House Committee on Health & Homelessness

To: Chair Della Au Belatti
Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi

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

Re: **Support**
SB 164 SD 2, Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals

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

We would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to **support** this measure, which would provide funding for loan repayment at the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) to support various healthcare professionals who practice in underserved areas. Investing in our healthcare workforce is critical because of the shortage of professionals in several categories in Hawaii, including physicians and other critical allied professionals. This funding will help to alleviate that shortage by creating opportunities directly in the state to train our healthcare workforce. By training professionals in-state, we are more likely to keep them and their skills here, serving patients in Hawaii.

We are supportive of the legislature's efforts to direct funding towards effective and important programs that will help to ensure that residents have access to needed care.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our testimony in support of this measure and funding.



Hawaii Medical Association

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COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Date: March 15, 2023

From: Hawaii Medical Association

Bernard Robinson, MD; HMA Public Policy Committee

Re: SB164 SD2; RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS.

Position: Support

Currently, Hawaii has a statewide physician shortage of 776 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs), as reported in the UH System Annual Report on Findings from the Hawai'i Physician Workforce Assessment Project. This deficit is 44 FTEs larger than one year ago. Since 2012, support from the Hawaii State Legislature in partnership with JABSOM, HMSA and Queens Medical Center through the State Loan Repayment Program has helped to recruit physicians to practice in Hawaii. HMA is grateful for the continued support of this financial assistance program, particularly for needed recruitment to counties like Hawaii and Maui, where provider shortages are as high as 40%. HMA also supports the expansion of this program to include incentives for psychologists and social workers.

It remains an important priority for Hawaii physicians to sustain quality healthcare in Hawaii and maintain the delivery of vital services to our underserved areas, particularly on the neighbor islands. The Loan Repayment Program must be sustained to support young physician trainees and improve our Hawaii physician workforce that remains critically low.

Thank you for allowing the Hawaii Medical Association to testify in support of this measure.

REFERENCES

Withy K et al . UH System Annual Report to the 2023 Legislature on Findings from the Hawai'i Physician Workforce Assessment Project. https://www.hawaii.edu/govrel/docs/reports/2023/act18-sslh2009_2023_physician-workforce_annual-report_508.pdf

Associated Press. Shortage of Hawaii Doctors Worsens During COVID-19 Pandemic. <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/hawaii/articles/2021-01-06/shortage-of-hawaii-doctorsworsens-during-covid-19-pandemic>

Hiraishi K. "Hawai'i Doctor Shortage Worsens Under Pandemic. " Hawaii Public Radio. Jan 5, 2021. <https://www.hawaiipublicradio.org/post/hawai-i-doctor-shortage-worsens-underpandemic>

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Linda Rosehill, JD, Government Relations • Marc Alexander, Executive Director

THE KŪPUNA CAUCUS



HLT_03-15-23 8:30 AM

TO: COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

CONCERNING: SB 164 SD2 (SSCR779) Relating to the Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals

POSITION: SUPPORT

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

The Kūpuna Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i has a membership of more than 2,000 politically active and aware seniors and we support all programs which will help Hawaii add to and retain medical professionals practicing in our State.

There is a profound need for medical professionals in Hawaii, and those most likely to practice here are those who already live here. Hawaii is so expensive to live in that we continue to drive away many doctors and nurses who can practice elsewhere for more money and have a less expensive cost of living. If our state government does not find more ways to make Hawaii a desirable place to live and work for medical professionals, they will continue to leave.

One of the greatest burdens a medical graduate has is paying back their student loans. This bill will contribute funds to relieve much of that burden. Local students who receive this relief from this economic burden will be more likely to stay here in Hawaii. They are more likely to practice here, at least in the beginning. We will have to go much further if we want them to stay here for many years.

The Kūpuna Caucus recommends that you pass this bill

Martha Randolph on behalf of the Kūpuna Caucus



THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEM

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

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

Date: March 15, 2023

Re: Testimony in Support of SB164 SD2: Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals

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

Queen's appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB164 SD2, which appropriates funds for the Hawaii state loan repayment program administered through the John A. Burns School of Medicine; provided that the funds are matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis by a private or another public source.

We support efforts to develop our healthcare workforce given the projected shortage in our state. The 2022 Hawai'i Physician Workforce Assessment estimated the current shortage for physicians to be over 700. Queen's supports our local medical students and graduates who would like to live and work in Hawai'i through internship and residency programs. In FY 2020 Queen's contributed approximately \$17 million in education and training to support current and future health care professionals in the community. The burden of student loans and Hawai'i's high cost of living can act as barrier to attracting and retaining healthcare professionals. This loan repayment program has a record of success in keeping quality health care professionals in our state and we wholeheartedly support funding this program moving forward.

Thank you for allowing us to provide this testimony in support of SB164 SD2.

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

SB-164-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2023 7:51:11 AM

Testimony for HLT on 3/15/2023 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nash Witten	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Chair and Committee Members,

As a born and raised primary care Family Medicine physician practicing in Wai‘anae and Hale‘iwa, O‘ahu, I STRONGLY SUPPORT this bill. Funding to assist with loan repayment is one of the key means of recruiting health professionals to work in Hawai‘i, especially in rural areas, and this program has already proven to be successful with health professional recruitment and retainment in underserved communities across the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill,

Nash Witten, MD

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 HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

March 15, 2023 8:30 A.M. - VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE – ROOM 329

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB164 SD2, RELATED TO MENTAL HEALTH

The Hawaii Psychological Association strongly supports SB164 SD2 as a critical tool in improving access and meeting the overwhelming demand for quality mental health services by creating a loan repayment program for healthcare professionals.

Student loan debt can often run in the neighborhood of \$100,000, which limits the profession to the affluent. This bill would help increase the number of providers as well as diversify the profession - attracting minorities and economically disadvantaged who can better identify with the needs of Hawaii's residents. Ultimately, this proposal will increase access to services.

In 2022, ratios of clients/patients to mental health providers in Hawai'i were reported as follows:

Hawai'i 320:1

Honolulu 370:1

Kauai 480:1

Maui 550:1

Moloka'i has no registered providers.

We are in the middle of a mental health crisis, particularly during and following the prolonged pandemic. This bill would address the need by supporting and increasing the pipeline of mental health professionals who may find the cost-of-living here in Hawaii otherwise a barrier to exploring educational and training opportunities.

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



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. Della Au Belatti, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

March 15, 2023 - 8:30AM - Via Videoconference – Rm 329

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB164 SD2, RELATED TO MENTAL HEALTH

The Hawaiian Islands Association for Marriage and Family Therapy strongly supports SB164 SD2 as a critical tool in improving access and meeting the overwhelming demand for quality mental health services by creating a loan repayment program for healthcare professionals.

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We are in the middle of a mental health crisis, particularly during and following the prolonged pandemic. This bill would address the need by supporting and increasing the pipeline of mental health professionals who may find the cost-of-living here in Hawaii otherwise a barrier to exploring educational and training opportunities.

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

Sincerely,

Dr. John Souza, Jr., LMFT, DMFT, President

The Hawaiian Islands Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS
Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

March 15, 2023 - 8:30AM - Via Videoconference – Rm 329
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB164 SD2, RELATED TO MENTAL HEALTH

The National Association of Social Workers – Hawaii Chapter strongly supports SB164 SD2 as a critical tool in improving access and meeting the overwhelming demand for quality mental health services by creating a loan repayment program for healthcare professionals.

Student loan debt can often run in the neighborhood of \$100,000, which limits the profession to the affluent. This bill would help increase the number of providers as well as diversify the profession - attracting minorities and economically disadvantaged who can better identify with the needs of Hawaii's residents. Ultimately, this proposal will increase access to services.

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We are in the middle of a mental health crisis, particularly during and following the prolonged pandemic. This bill would address the need by supporting and increasing the pipeline of mental health professionals who may find the cost-of-living here in Hawaii otherwise a barrier to exploring educational and training opportunities.

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

Sincerely,

 *Sonja Bigalke-Bannan*, MSW, LCSW

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



TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF S.B.1, S.D.2

Wednesday, March 15, 2023, at 2:00 PM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

To: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Health and Homelessness

Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair
Representative Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

From: The Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights
Co-Chairs Amy Agbayani and Pat McManaman

The Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights works to achieve equity, justice, inclusion, uphold civil rights, and eliminate discrimination. We are in **STRONG SUPPORT OF S.B.1, S.D.2**

Section 1 – Purpose Clause

The Section 1 purpose clause provides clear guidance to courts and policymakers of Hawai'i's strong commitment to protecting individual privacy in deeply personal choices related to reproductive health care decisions. It leads to the inescapable conclusion that the right to abortion is rooted in Hawai'i's constitution, legislative history, and social policies. And it swiftly rejects the reach of Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, 142 S.Ct. 2228 (2022) to lawful abortions performed within Hawai'i.

Part I, Section 2 – Advanced Practice Registered Nurses

Section 2 allows advanced practice registered nurses to provide medication or abortion care in the first trimester of pregnancy and eliminates the requirement that these services must be performed in a hospital, clinic, or registered office of the advanced practice registered nurse. The elimination of these restrictions will hopefully expand the availability of reproductive health professionals to rural areas of Hawai'i including Kaua'i, Hawai'i Island, and Lana'i.

Part II and Part III.

Part II provides clear protection for reproductive health care providers against foreign subpoenas, demands to surrender, and summons in matters relating to reproductive health care services which are legal in Hawai'i. It also prohibits state agencies from providing any information or expending resources to assist a foreign state seeking to impose civil or criminal liability upon a person or entity who assists, provides, pays for, or responds to an inquiry about reproductive health care services that are legal in Hawai'i.

Part III protects reproductive health care providers who provide medical, surgical, pharmaceutical, counseling, or referral services from licensure sanctions where the services provided are in accordance with Hawai'i law or would have been in accordance with Hawai'i laws if the actions occurred in Hawai'i.

Collectively, these provisions shield agencies, corporations, non-profits, and individuals by creating a hard border for foreign actors attempting to enforce their reproductive health care laws, judgments, and licensure actions in Hawai'i.

Part IV.

Part IV protects Hawai'i's reproductive healthcare providers against enforcement of foreign judgments for providing abortion-related services consistent with Hawai'i law. As such, it protects providers from liens and asset seizures on real or personal property found or located in Hawai'i.

We urge the passage of S.B.1, S.D.2. It is critical to do all we can to ensure that all persons' reproductive rights – including the right to abortion care – are strengthened to be at least as strong as they were under *Roe v Wade*, and to guarantee that our medical providers can deliver care safely and without fear of overreach from other states.



March 15, 2023

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

Re: SB 164 SD1 – Relating to Loan Repayment for Health Care Professionals

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

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 164 SD2, which would appropriate funds to the Department of Health for the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program, which provides loan repayments for health care professionals who commit to work in federally designated health professional shortage areas.

HMSA recognizes the challenges our communities face due to the shortage of health care professionals. We appreciate the collaborative efforts of both the public and private sectors as we try to address workforce development and increase accessibility to health care and the wellbeing of our residents in underserved areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB164 SD2.

Sincerely,

Dawn Kurisu
Assistant Vice President
Community and Government Relations