



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
Friday, January 31, 2025 at 9:15 am

By

Bonnie Irwin, Chancellor

and

Rae Matsumoto, Dean

Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy

University of Hawai'i at Hilo

HB 72 – RELATING TO PHARMACY

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 72. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) supports HB 72, which will require the registration of pharmacy technicians through the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. Pharmacy technicians are career professionals working under the supervision of a pharmacist, and have an essential role in the daily operation of pharmacies.

Hawai'i is the only state that does not maintain a list of practicing pharmacy technicians. Legislation to address this oversight is important for supporting public health and safety by ensuring that these essential health care workers have the appropriate background and supervision, can receive timely communications and updates regarding relevant practice and regulation changes that impact their work, and facilitate access to training opportunities as the scope of practice of pharmacy technicians expands nationwide.

We would like to clarify that pharmacy technicians are professionals and represent a distinct category from pharmacy interns who are students in training to become future pharmacists. As career professionals in the health care workforce, pharmacy technicians perform functions under the supervision of pharmacists and may include roles such as dispensing medications, processing insurance claims, and with additional certifications, administering vaccines to patients. As career professionals in the health care workforce, the registration of pharmacy technicians is warranted and appropriate for the level of responsibility and trust afforded by the public.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 72.



50 EAST PUAINAKO STREET
HILO, HAWAII 96720

PHONE: 808-959-4575

Testimony for HB72: A bill to mandate pharmacy technician registration within the DCCA
House Committee on Health
Friday, January 31, 2025
Testimony in SUPPORT of HB72

To the Honorable Chair Takayama Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Megan Arbles Pharm D., Director of Pharmacy for an independent pharmacy on the Big Island and I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill No. HB72, A Bill to Mandate Pharmacy Technician Registration within the DCCA.

As a pharmacist practicing in Hawai'i, I strongly support HB72, which seeks to establish critical regulations for pharmacy technicians in our state. In my practice, pharmacy technicians are essential in performing the following tasks that are critical to the workflow of the pharmacy including processing prescriptions, managing inventory, preparing medications assisting with insurance claims, and providing essential support to pharmacists in ensuring patient safety. By handling these key responsibilities pharmacy technicians help streamline operations, allowing pharmacists to focus on clinical services such as medication counseling, immunizations, and chronic disease management.

Hawai'i is the only state in the nation without an active, managed list of practicing pharmacy technicians, leaving a significant gap in oversight that can impact patient safety. Establishing regulations for pharmacy technicians through HB72 will ensure proper training, standardization, and accountability ultimately improving patient care and pharmacy efficiency in Hawai'i. Additionally, the creation of a pharmacy technician data repository is an essential step forward, providing a centralized resource for communicating practice and regulatory changes.

Beyond enhancing patient safety, HB72 will lay the foundation for pharmacy technicians in Hawai'i to expand their scope of practice in the future. Across the country, pharmacy technicians are taking on advanced roles, such as administering immunizations and assisting with medication management. Without regulation, Hawai'i cannot adapt to these changes and risks falling behind in providing the best possible care to our communities. This initiative comes at a reasonable cost and represents a prudent investment in ensuring the safety, efficiency, and adaptability of our pharmacy workforce.

I urge the Committee to support HB72 and help Hawai'i align with national pharmacy technician regulation standards to strengthen pharmacy practice in our state.

Sincerely,

Megan Arbles, Pharm D.
Director of Pharmacy Operations, KTA Pharmacy
50 E. Puainako St Hilo, HI 96720



Testimony presented before the House Committee on Health
January 31, 2025

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

Honorable Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Pharmacists Association (HPhA) strongly supports HB72, which will require the registration of pharmacy technicians through the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. Currently, Hawai'i is the only state in the nation without an active and managed registry of practicing pharmacy technicians. This lack of oversight presents challenges in ensuring consistent training, competency, and accountability within the pharmacy technician workforce. By mandating a registration process, HB72 enhances patient safety, improves workforce standards, and aligns Hawai'i with national best practices.

Pharmacy technicians play an essential role in supporting pharmacists and ensuring the safe and efficient delivery of medications. Under the supervision of a pharmacist in the community setting, pharmacy technicians can fill and dispense medications, process insurance claims, and with additional training, administer vaccinations. In the hospital setting, we rely on pharmacy technicians to support the compounding of intravenous medications and to stock medication cabinets and other medication delivery systems.

As the roles of pharmacy technicians expand across the country, including here in Hawai'i, it's vital to ensure these essential workers meet a baseline level of competency to ensure patient safety and enhance patient care. Additionally, establishing a technician registry will create a vital data repository that enables clear communication of regulatory and practice updates, ensuring the workforce remains aligned with evolving state and federal requirements.

HPhA believes that HB72 is a crucial step toward strengthening Hawai'i's pharmacy infrastructure and ensuring that pharmacy technicians can continue to serve patients with the highest level of professionalism and safety. We suggest the following minor amendments:

- Deletion of the duplicative "registered pharmacy technician" in Section 2
- Creation of three new definitions to designate between registered pharmacy technicians, pharmacy interns, and auxiliary personnel in Section 2
- Removal of 'continuing education requirements' in Section 5 as requirements are not specified elsewhere within the bill

On behalf of The Hawai'i Pharmacists Association, mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

Very Respectfully,

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



DATE: January 30, 2025

TO: Representative Gregg Takayama
Chair, House Committee on Health

Representative Susan Keohokapu-Lee Loy
Vice Chair, House Committee on Health

FROM: Tiffany Yajima

RE: **H.B. 72 - Relating to Pharmacy**
Hearing Date: Friday, January 31, 2025 at 9:15 a.m.
Conference Room: 329

Dear Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee on Health:

Walgreens submits these **comments** in support of H.B. 72 and offers suggested amendments.

Walgreen Co. (“Walgreens”) operates stores at more than 9,000 locations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. In Hawaii, Walgreens has 13 stores on the islands of Oahu and Maui.

Pharmacy technicians play an important role in the pharmacy setting by handling a range of tasks that allow pharmacists to focus on more complex responsibilities like patient consultations and clinical services. For example, pharmacy technicians can assist pharmacists with the preparation, dispensing, and managing of patient medications. Typically, pharmacy technician tasks include filling prescriptions, labeling and packaging medications, managing medication inventory, and performing administrative duties such as record-keeping and insurance processing.

The 2024 Legislature passed Act 104 that allows, in part, pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns the ability to administer immunizations and vaccinations to persons three years and older under the direct supervision of a pharmacist. This measure builds upon Act 104 to require that pharmacy technicians are registered by the state.

In Hawaii, pharmacy technicians are not currently regulated. This important measure will bring a regulatory framework to the critical role that pharmacy technicians fill, which Walgreens supports. We suggest several amendments to clarify the different roles of pharmacy personnel, including roles that don’t perform the duties of a pharmacy technician.

First, Walgreens is concerned that this bill as introduced is overly broad in its definition of "registered pharmacy technician." As drafted, this definition would capture all pharmacy personnel behind the pharmacy counter, including those personnel such as cashiers whose responsibilities are purely clerical in nature. To address this concern, Walgreens suggests adding on page 3, section 2 of the bill a new definition for "Auxiliary Pharmacy Personnel" as follows:

"Auxiliary pharmacy personnel" means a person who works in a pharmacy assisting a registered pharmacist and registered pharmacy technicians, who may perform the following tasks: (1) retrieval tasks such as retrieving prescriptions or files, (2) clerical tasks such as data entry, typing labels, and maintaining patient profiles, (3) tasks including selling prescriptions, telephoning, filing, and typing, (4) accounting tasks such as record keeping, maintaining accounts receivables, third party billing and posting, (5) inventory control tasks including monitoring, pricing, dating, invoicing, stocking pharmacy, and preparation of purchase orders, and (6) help maintain a clean and orderly pharmacy.

Second, to clarify the specific duties of a pharmacy technician, Walgreens also suggests the following amendments to the definition of "Registered pharmacy technician," which is language used in other states that regulate pharmacy technicians and better clarifies their duties, at page 3, section 2, lines 4-10 as follows:

"Registered pharmacy technician" means a person, exclusive of pharmacy interns and auxiliary pharmacy personnel, registered with the board who may in addition to the tasks of an auxiliary pharmacy personnel, perform filling, packaging, manipulative, repetitive, or other nondiscretionary tasks, and tasks specified in Section 461-11.4, only while assisting and while under the direct supervision and control of a pharmacist [is utilized in pharmacies and whose responsibilities are to provide nonjudgmental technical services concerned with the preparation for dispensing of drugs under the direct supervision and responsibility of a registered pharmacist].

Third, Walgreens suggests the following amendment at 3, section 2, line 10 as follows:

"Supervision" means the [observation], direction, and oversight [overseeing] of a registered pharmacy technician or pharmacy intern by a physically present, responsible registered pharmacist at all times when either party performs acts specified in this chapter or rules adopted pursuant to this chapter."

In the pharmacy setting, the word "observation" implies a direct line of sight by the pharmacist over the pharmacy technician or pharmacy intern. In the case of vaccinations, a technician may be in the patient room administering a vaccination while the pharmacist is behind the counter. This is still considered "direct

supervision" in the pharmacy setting but does not require the technician to be in their line of sight.

Last, we would also suggest replacing the language on page 8, lines 3-8, at subsection (c) to establish the specific functions of a pharmacy technician by statute versus by administrative rule:

(c) A registered pharmacy technician may be employed to perform filling, packaging, manipulative, repetitive, or other nondiscretionary tasks, and the tasks specified in Section 461-11.4, only while assisting and while under the direct supervision and control of a pharmacist and under rules adopted by the board pursuant to chapter 91. [A registered pharmacy technician may be employed to assist the registered pharmacist under rules adopted by the board pursuant to chapter 91 that define the qualifications and functions of the registered pharmacy technician and provide the procedures for control and supervision by a registered pharmacist.]

We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

HB-72

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:01:48 AM

Testimony for HLT on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ronald Taniguchi, Pharm.D., MBA | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support pharmacy technician registration. Mahalo.

Testimony for HB72: A bill to mandate pharmacy technician registration within the DCCA
House Committee on Health
Friday, January 31, 2025
Testimony in SUPPORT of HB72

To the Honorable Chair Takayama Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee,

As a pharmacist practicing in in the State of Hawaii, I strongly support HB72, which seeks to establish critical regulations for pharmacy technicians in our state. In my practice at Kaier Permanente Hawaii, pharmacy technicians are an essential part of the clinical pharmacy workforce. Pharmacy technicians engage patients on their medication adherence, collect important patient data (e.g., home blood sugar readings) for management by health care providers, and they outreach patients for health maintenance (e.g., scheduling follow-up appointments, making reminders for routine lab tests, etc.). Pharmacy technicians are the face of pharmacy, directly interacting with patients every day.

Hawaii is the only state in the nation without an active, managed list of practicing pharmacy technicians, leaving a significant gap in oversight that can impact patient safety. Pharmacy technicians play an essential role in supporting pharmacists and ensuring the safe preparation and delivery of medications, and this initiative will serve as the backbone for consistent standards of training and competency across the profession. Additionally, the creation of a pharmacy technician data repository is an essential step forward, providing a centralized resource for communicating practice and regulatory changes.

Beyond enhancing patient safety, HB72 will lay the foundation for pharmacy technicians in Hawaii to expand their scope of practice in the future. Across the country, pharmacy technicians are taking on advanced roles, such as administering immunizations and assisting with medication management. Without regulation, Hawaii cannot adapt to these changes and risks falling behind in providing the best possible care to our communities. This initiative comes at a reasonable cost and represents a prudent investment in ensuring the safety, efficiency, and adaptability of our pharmacy workforce.

I urge the Committee to support HB72 and help Hawaii align with national pharmacy technician regulation standards to strengthen pharmacy practice in our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shelley Kikuchi". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Shelley K. Kikuchi, PharmD, BCACP
Director, Clinical Pharmacy Department
Kaiser Permanente Hawaii

Testimony for HB72: A bill to mandate pharmacy technician registration within the DCCA
House Committee on Health
Friday, January 31, 2025
Testimony in SUPPORT of HB72

To the Honorable Chair Takayama Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee,

As a pharmacist practicing in Hawai'i, I strongly support HB72, which seeks to establish critical regulations for pharmacy technicians in our state. In my practice, pharmacy technicians are essential in performing the following tasks that are critical to the workflow of the pharmacy. Without quality technicians, the pharmacy cannot operate efficiently and effectively for the patients in the communities we serve.

Hawai'i is the only state in the nation without an active, managed list of practicing pharmacy technicians, leaving a significant gap in oversight that can impact patient safety. Meaning any unlicensed person can legally work in a pharmacy with no formal training. Few technicians have independently sought out national technician certifications, but there's a vast amount that lack the skills necessary to assist and support the pharmacy workflow. Pharmacy technicians play an essential role in supporting pharmacists and ensuring the safe preparation and delivery of medications, and this initiative will serve as the backbone for consistent standards of training and competency across the profession. Additionally, the creation of a pharmacy technician data repository, is an essential step forward, providing a centralized resource for communicating practice and regulatory changes.

Beyond enhancing patient safety, HB72 will lay the foundation for pharmacy technicians in Hawai'i to expand their scope of practice in the future. Across the country, pharmacy technicians are taking on advanced roles, such as administering immunizations and assisting with medication management. Without regulation, Hawai'i cannot adapt to these changes and risks falling behind in providing the best possible care to our communities. This initiative comes at a reasonable cost and represents a prudent investment in ensuring the safety, efficiency, and adaptability of our pharmacy workforce.

I urge the Committee to support HB72 and help Hawai'i align with national pharmacy technician regulation standards to strengthen pharmacy practice in our state.

Sincerely,

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

Faith Hicks, Pharm D.

Relief Pharmacist, KTA Pharmacy

Date: January 29, 2025

To: The Honorable Gregg Takayama, Chair
The Honorable Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Health

Re: **Support for HB72**, Relating to Pharmacy

Hrg: Friday January 31, 2025 at 9:15 am via Videoconference Conference Room 329

Aloha House Committee on Health.

As a licensed Hawai'i pharmacist and retired Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy faculty, I am writing in **strong support of HB72**, which beginning 1/1/2026, requires pharmacy technicians to be registered; imposes a duty on pharmacists-in-charge to report violations conducted by registered pharmacy technicians; and, specifies that supervising registered pharmacists are responsible for the actions of registered pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns.

Pharmacy technicians play an essential role in supporting pharmacists and ensuring the safe preparation and delivery of medications across our state.

Hawai'i is the only state in the nation without an active, managed list of practicing pharmacy technicians, leaving a significant gap in oversight that can impact patient safety. **HB72** aligns with national pharmacy technician regulation standards to strengthen pharmacy practice in Hawai'i.

HB72 serves as the backbone for consistent standards of training and competency across the profession. Creation of a pharmacy technician data repository is an essential step forward, providing a centralized resource for communicating practice and regulatory changes.

Beyond enhancing patient safety, **HB72** lays the foundation for pharmacy technicians in Hawai'i to expand their scope of practice in the future. Across the country, registered pharmacy technicians are taking on advanced roles. Without regulation, Hawai'i cannot adopt these changes and risks falling behind in providing the best possible care to our communities.

HB72 represents a prudent investment in the safety, efficiency, and adaptability of our pharmacy workforce into the future.

I **strongly support HB72**, respectfully ask you to pass it out of committee.

Many thanks for your consideration,

Forrest Batz, PharmD
Keaau, HI

Testimony for HB72: A bill to mandate pharmacy technician registration within the DCCA
House Committee on Health
Friday, January 31, 2025

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB72

To the Honorable Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Camlyn Masuda and I am an Associate Specialist and Clinical Pharmacist with the University of Hawai'i at Hilo Daniel K Inouye College of Pharmacy. I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB72, a bill to mandate pharmacy technician registration within the DCCA. My testimony does not represent the views of the University of Hawai'i at Hilo.

Hawai'i is currently the only state in the nation without an active, managed list of practicing pharmacy technicians. This lack of oversight poses risks to patient safety and limits our profession's ability to adapt to evolving healthcare needs. Regulation is critical to ensuring that pharmacy technicians meet consistent standards, enabling us to perform our duties with the highest level of competency and accountability.

By creating a data repository, this bill will also provide a vital resource for communicating practice and regulatory changes across the workforce, ensuring alignment with both state and federal requirements.

I currently provide train students to become pharmacists that work directly with pharmacy technicians. Pharmacy technicians play a vital role in helping pharmacist process prescriptions by adjudicating claims to insurance companies and assist in filling prescriptions. Pharmacy technicians across the country can become nationally certified and provide additional services, such as immunizations, which free up pharmacists time to perform more patient care activities keeping the people in Hawai'i healthier and prevent harm by using medications properly and adherent to them.

The modest cost of this initiative is a small investment that will have a significant impact on the safety, efficiency, and quality of care I can provide in our communities.

I urge the Committee to support HB72 to bring Hawai'i in line with national standards and to ensure a stronger future for pharmacy technicians and pharmacy practice in Hawai'i.

Sincerely,



Camlyn Masuda, PharmD, CDCES, BCACP
Associate Specialist, Dept. of Pharmacy Practice
Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy
University of Hawai'i at Hilo
677 Ala Moana Blvd. Ste 1025A
Honolulu, HI 96813
Email: camlynm@hawaii.edu

Testimony for HB72: A bill to mandate pharmacy technician registration within the DCCA
House Committee on Health
Friday, January 31, 2025
Testimony in SUPPORT of HB72

To the Honorable Chair Takayama Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee,

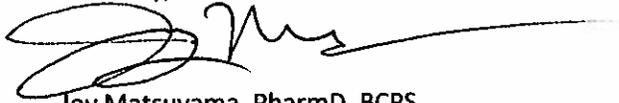
As a pharmacist practicing in Hawai'i, I strongly support HB72, which seeks to establish long awaited for state regulations for pharmacy technicians. In my practice, pharmacy technicians are essential in performing numerous tasks that are critical to the workflow of the pharmacy.

Hawai'i is the only state in the nation which does not regulate pharmacy technicians. This means we are also the only state without an active, managed list of practicing pharmacy technicians, leaving a significant gap in oversight that can impact patient safety. Pharmacy technicians play an essential role in supporting pharmacists and ensuring the safe preparation and delivery of medications, and this initiative will serve as the backbone for consistent standards of training and competency across the profession. Additionally, the creation of a pharmacy technician data repository is an essential step forward, providing a centralized resource for communicating practice and regulatory changes.

Beyond enhancing patient safety, HB72 will lay the foundation for pharmacy technicians in Hawai'i to expand their scope of practice in the future. Across the country, pharmacy technicians are taking on advanced roles, such as administering immunizations and assisting with medication management. Without regulation, Hawai'i cannot adapt to these changes and risks falling behind in providing the best possible care to our communities. This initiative comes at a reasonable cost and represents a prudent investment in ensuring the safety, efficiency, and adaptability of our pharmacy workforce.

I urge the Committee to support HB72 and help Hawai'i align with national pharmacy technician regulation standards to strengthen pharmacy practice in our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joy Matsuyama', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joy Matsuyama, PharmD, BCPS

HB-72

Submitted on: 1/30/2025 10:26:48 AM

Testimony for HLT on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Leia Nu | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony for HB72: A bill to mandate pharmacy technician registration within the DCCA House Committee on Health
Friday, January 31, 2025
Testimony in SUPPORT of HB72

To the Honorable Chair Takayama Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee,

As a pharmacy technician in Hawai‘i, I strongly support HB72, which aims to establish much-needed regulations for pharmacy technicians in our state. Hawai‘i is currently the only state in the nation without an active, managed list of practicing pharmacy technicians. This lack of oversight poses risks to patient safety and limits our profession’s ability to adapt to evolving healthcare needs. Regulation is critical to ensuring that pharmacy technicians meet consistent standards, enabling us to perform our duties with the highest level of competency and accountability.

By creating a data repository, this bill will also provide a vital resource for communicating practice and regulatory changes across the workforce, ensuring alignment with both state and federal requirements.

HB72 is not only a necessary step toward improving patient safety, but it also lays the foundation for pharmacy technicians like myself to expand the services we provide in Hawai‘i. As our role grows nationally to include responsibilities such as administering immunizations and performing medication management tasks, regulation will ensure that Hawai‘i is positioned to follow suit. The modest cost of this initiative is a small investment that will have a significant impact on the safety, efficiency, and quality of care I can provide in our communities.

I urge the Committee to support HB72 to bring Hawai'i in line with national standards and to ensure a stronger future for pharmacy technicians and pharmacy practice in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

Leia Nu CPhT