



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. NO.101, RELATING TO MEDICAL SCHOOL TUITION.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

DATE: Tuesday, February 4, 2025

TIME: 3:15 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 229

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Candace J. Park, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Kim and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

This bill adds a new subpart to part II, chapter 304A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, that will require each graduate of the University of Hawai'i John A. Burns School of Medicine who benefitted from Hawaii resident tuition to commit to serving as a physician in Hawaii for two years following a residency or fellowship.

This bill implicates article X, section 6, of the Hawai'i Constitution, which gives the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i "exclusive jurisdiction over the internal structure, management, and operation of the university." Section 6 further provides: "This section shall not limit the power of the legislature to enact laws of statewide concern. The legislature shall have the exclusive jurisdiction to identify laws of statewide concern." We recommend an amendment that adds a statement identifying this bill as a law of statewide concern.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

LATE

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at 3:15 p.m.

By

T. Samuel Shomaker, MD, Dean, and
Lee Buenconsejo-Lum, MD, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
John A. Burns School of Medicine

And

Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 101 – RELATING TO MEDICAL SCHOOL TUITION

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide COMMENTS on SB 101, which would require graduates of the University of Hawai'i John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) who paid in-state tuition to serve as a physician in the State for at least two years following their medical residency or fellowship. We support the intent of this measure and appreciate the legislature's efforts to seek solutions to address the healthcare professional shortage in Hawai'i.

The requirement to commit to working in Hawai'i for two years after completing medical school and residency may be daunting for most applicants. This could discourage individuals from attending JABSOM, negatively affecting the number of applicants, especially residents. Typically, medical education takes four years to complete. After earning their M.D. degree, students must undergo a graduate medical education (GME) residency program, which involves three to five years of training in their chosen specialty (e.g., internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics-gynecology, psychiatry, surgery, family medicine). Furthermore, students or residents wishing to further sub-specialize need additional fellowship training, which lasts from one to four years, before they can become board-certified in that sub-specialty (e.g., cardiology, pulmonology, addiction psychiatry, geriatrics, oncology, cardiothoracic surgery, etc.). According to this proposed legislation, all medical school entrants paying in-state tuition must agree to the two-year work commitment, which could start eight or more years later. Many applicants may hesitate to make this commitment at the start of their training as they are uncertain about their specialty and the infrastructure available in the area where they would practice so many years later. Even those who state a commitment to a primary care specialty (e.g., Family Medicine, Pediatrics, Primary Care Internal Medicine) and who intend to ultimately practice in Hawai'i may still be reluctant to commit seven years into the future, especially if life circumstances lead to a change in specialty choice or make it difficult to live and work in Hawai'i immediately after completing their training.

Additionally, if applicants choose not to attend JABSOM, we will see a corresponding drop in tuition revenue. A portion of the medical school tuition funds returned to JABSOM from UH Mānoa is allocated to scholarships. Reducing this funding would jeopardize the needs-based scholarships that JABSOM provides to many medical students. Any decline in tuition revenue will threaten our accreditation and negatively impact our ability to provide the excellent medical education we currently have, including our learners who complete a portion of their training on one of our neighbor islands.

A key method to recruit accepted applicants to JABSOM and enhance medical school education in Hawai'i is through scholarships. To this end, JABSOM has developed a tuition support program that effectively acts as a scholarship and can be awarded for part or all of a medical student's tuition at JABSOM. While many scholarships are available for Hawai'i residents, there are also options for out-of-state students, some of whom choose to stay or eventually return to Hawai'i to practice. Currently, JABSOM relies on private donations to sustain this tuition support program. Approximately one-fourth of the first-year class receives four-year scholarships covering tuition and fees, many of which now include a year-for-year service commitment after completing their specialty training. In AY2022-23, 94.5% of enrolled medical students received some form of financial assistance (scholarships, loans, work-study). State support for the scholarship program at JABSOM, particularly for students from or with family ties to a neighbor island or rural regions of O'ahu, would significantly aid our collective and multifaceted efforts to retain talent in Hawai'i.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 4, 2025; 3:15 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0101, RELATING TO MEDICAL SCHOOL TUITION.

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, 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. 0101, RELATING TO MEDICAL SCHOOL TUITION.

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 measure, as received by your Committee, would require each graduate of the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine who benefitted from Hawaii resident tuition to commit to serving as a physician in Hawaii for two years following a residency or fellowship.

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.

The HPCA believes that requiring graduates who benefitted from receiving their medical education at reduced costs to serving in Hawaii for a period after residency or fellowship is not only appropriate but desperately needed given how urgent the workforce shortage is for qualified physicians in the State is.

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 0101
Tuesday, February 4, 2025; 3:15 p.m.
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Accordingly, the HPCA urges your favorable consideration of this measure.

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.

SB-101

Submitted on: 1/31/2025 10:09:30 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/4/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol Linde	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We have a scary shortage of doctors in Hawaii, especially in rural areas. I can often see the difference in the quality of experience between doctors who understand what it means to live in and love Hawaii and those who do not. I believe this initiative is a good way to encourage more local students to make their home and grow their practice here in Hawaii, for the betterment of the whole community.

SB-101

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 8:50:14 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/4/2025 3:15:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Comment: Five (5) years committment instead of 2 years as prposed.

Johnnie-Mae L.Perry

TO: Members of the Committee on Higher Education

FROM: Natalie Iwasa
808-395-3233

LATE

HEARING: 3:15 p.m. Tuesday, February 4, 2025

SUBJECT: SB101, Medical School Tuition - **OPPOSED**

Aloha Chair Kim and Committee Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB101, which would require med students who receive resident tuition to serve as physicians in Hawaii for two consecutive years after graduation or face retroactive charges of non-resident tuition.

This is simply not fair. It is not right. It is tantamount to holding these future graduates hostage.

The bill should not be passed.

Vote "no" on SB101.

SB-101

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 6:59:23 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/4/2025 3:15:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephen T Hazam	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please OPPOSE SB101

This is a misguided effort to solve the problem of a lack of healthcare professionals. This will only reduce the number of Hawaii residents studying medicine in Hawaii, which is counter productive. If they don't chose to practice in Hawaii, this is unlikely to change their mind.

Please OPPOSE SB101