



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 10:03 a.m.

By

Della Teraoka, Interim Vice President for Community Colleges
University of Hawai'i System

SB 119 SD1 – RELATING TO NURSING

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports the intent of SB 119 SD1 which appropriates funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program at the University of Hawai'i - Maui College.

The UH recognizes the existing workforce shortages in health care and the high demand for nurses in the state. Additionally, the [UH Regents Policy 4.207](#) Community College System acknowledges the need for the neighbor island community colleges to continue to provide a comprehensive set of courses and programs to make the university accessible to every Hawai'i resident who wants and can benefit from the opportunities and experiences provided by the community colleges. The UH is also cognizant of the importance of using our budget resources wisely and being careful not to duplicate existing programs.

SB 119 SD1 indicates “[t]he legislature believes that offering a bachelor of science in nursing program at the university of Hawaii Maui college can help to increase the supply of nurse graduates, reduce the nursing workforce shortage, and allow Maui nursing students to remain on Maui during their entire course of study.” The UH concurs with the legislature that the lack of a BSN program in the county of Maui is a matter of statewide concern and will begin an assessment to ensure there is no duplication of programs and an effective use of resources while initiating the new academic program proposal process for the BSN. The funding from SB 119 SD1 would support students taking the new BSN prerequisites in preparation for the program curriculum and provide for additional faculty lecturers.

While UH supports the intent of SB 119 SD1, we respectfully suggest that should an appropriation be provided, it be included within the general appropriations act. We believe this approach, rather than through a special appropriation, would integrate the necessary funding into the base budget, ensuring greater fiscal stability and predictability for the program's long-term implementation and sustainability. Integrating the funding in this manner would also facilitate better long-range planning and resource allocation.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of SB 119 SD1, on the condition its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 119 SD1.



OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 119 SD 1

RELATING TO NURSING

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Hawai'i State Capitol

February 26, 2025

10:03AM

Room 211

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) submits this testimony in **SUPPORT of SB 119 SD 1** which appropriates funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program at the University of Hawai'i Maui College.

Native Hawaiians face persistent disparities in health outcomes for a variety of reasons including limited access to healthcare in rural areas and on neighbor islands. Within the next 5 years, 22% of Registered Nurses (RNs) are expected to leave the Hawai'i nursing workforce;¹ already RNs are concentrated in Honolulu County.² This combination of factors threatens to increase the challenges facing Native Hawaiians when attempting to access healthcare by exacerbating the shortage of qualified nurses.

A Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program at the University of Hawaii Maui College would play a pivotal role in addressing these issues. The program would equip students with the skills, knowledge, and clinical experience necessary to meet the unique healthcare needs of rural populations, particularly in remote Hawaiian communities. By fostering local talent and promoting a strong presence of Native Hawaiian nurses, this program would help reduce healthcare access barriers, empower individuals to become healthcare leaders in their own communities, and strengthen the overall healthcare infrastructure in rural areas, ultimately improving health outcomes for Native Hawaiians. This program would also expand educational opportunities for students living and working on Maui and who cannot move simply to pursue higher education opportunities.

OHA appreciates recent amendments which changed each appropriation to an unspecified amount, inserted an effective date of July 31, 2050, to encourage further discussion and made technical, nonsubstantive changes for the purposes of clarity and consistency. To improve both educational opportunities for our neighbor island residents and access for Native Hawaiian to culturally competent, community-centered care, OHA urges this committee to **PASS SB 119 SD 1**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

¹ "Hawai'i State Center for Nursing's 2023 Workforce Supply: Statewide Report," at p. 29, <https://www.hawaii-center-for-nursing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/2023HawaiiNursingWorkforceSupply.vFinal.pdf>

² "Hawai'i State Center for Nursing's 2023 Workforce Supply: Statewide Report," at p. 27, <https://www.hawaii-center-for-nursing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/2023HawaiiNursingWorkforceSupply.vFinal.pdf>



February 21, 2025

To: COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Re: SUPPORT OF SB119 RELATING TO NURSING

Hrg: Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 10:03am

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 450 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. Our mission is to promote public health in Hawai'i through leadership, collaboration, education and advocacy.

Thank you for hearing this measure. This measure appropriates funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program at the University of Hawai'i Maui College. Evidence shows that bachelor's-prepared nurses are safer nurses, with fewer medical errors, fewer deaths, and better patient outcomes.

Local nursing education programs are vital to the sustainability of Maui's registered nurse (RN) workforce (statewide report):

- The statewide RN workforce was 16,390 of which 10% are on Maui.
- 54% of RNs working on Maui were educated in the state.

There is demand for BSN education on Maui:

- Statewide, 76% of RNs hold a BSN or graduate degree in nursing (data tables) vs. 59% in Maui County (statewide report).
- RNs in Maui County are proportionally slightly more likely than RNs statewide to be enrolled in a degree-leading nurse education program (Statewide=6% (data tables); Maui=8% (statewide report)).
- Among RNs in Maui County who are enrolled in a degree-leading program, 45% are enrolled in a BSN program. 80% of all Maui County RNs enrolled in a nursing degree program are enrolled in an out-of-state school (unpublished data from the 2023 Hawai'i Nursing Workforce Supply Survey)

The creation of a BSN program in Maui County would respond to existing demand for BSN education in the county and create an opportunity for students in the county to be educated locally. Offering a BSN at UHMC will create a more efficient path for Maui students, increase their earning potential, and increase the quality of care provided for the Maui community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important issue.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Holly Kessler". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Holly Kessler
Executive Director

**Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

HEARING: Wednesday February 26, 10:03A.M.

PLACE: Room 211 State Capital and via videoconference



Hawai'i – American Nurses Association (Hawai'i-ANA)

SB119SD1 – Relating to Nursing

Chair Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, vice Chair Sharon Moriwaki, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means thank you for providing this opportunity for Hawai'i - American Nurses Association (Hawai'i-ANA) to provide testimony **in strong support of SB119, SD1** that seeks to appropriate funds for the to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program at the University of Hawaii Maui College.

Hawai'i-American Nurses Association (Hawai'i- ANA) is the professional association for over 17,000 registered nurses who live and work in Hawai'i. Our mission is to advocate for the improvement of the healthcare system in the communities where we live and work. **We stand in strong support of this bill** appropriating funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program at the University of Hawai'i Maui College (UHMC).

Currently, UHMC educates registered nurses (RNs) for an associates degree in nursing, whereas the preference of facilities in Hawai‘i, including Maui, seeking to hire RNs is for those prepared with a bachelor’s degree. We need well-prepared nurses who understand and know the culture of Hawai‘i, who do not need to leave their home island to achieve their dreams of a job and further education. We strongly support and promote education programs such as the BSN being offered on Maui to increase the number of graduating nurses in our state with a bachelor’s degree.

Hawai‘i-ANA respectfully asks the committee to pass SB119, SD1 through your committee. We thank your committee for its commitment to the people of Hawai‘i, in ensuring that we educate and retain local nurses throughout the state to care for all of us. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

Contact information for Hawai‘i – American Nurses Association:
President: Dr. Denise Cohen, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, president@hawaii-ana.org
Executive Director: Elizabeth M. Kahakua, BSN executivedirector@hawaii-ana.org
phone (808) 779-3001 500 Lunalilo Home Road, #27-E, Honolulu HI 96825



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Wednesday, February 26, 2025; 10:03 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0119, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO NURSING.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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. 0119, Senate Draft 1, RELATING TO NURSING..

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 appropriate unspecified amounts of general funds for fiscal years 2025-2026, and 2026-2027 to:

- (1) Meet the increased demand for prerequisite courses by students newly enrolled in the bachelor science in nursing degree program at the University of Hawaii Maui College;
- (2) Hire additional program personnel;
- (3) Acquire supplies, equipment, and simulation and laboratory upgrades associated with establishment of the bachelor of science in nursing degree program at the University of Hawaii Maui College; and
- (4) Offset instructional costs associated with providing a third year of nursing courses following the establishment of the bachelor of science in nursing degree program at the University of Hawaii Maui College.

This measure would take effect on July 31, 2050.

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 same can be said for registered and practical nurses, community health workers, social workers, pharmacists, and other disciplines in the field of health care.

The HPCA believes that the establishment of a bachelor of science degree in nursing at the University of Hawaii Maui College would greatly expand the learning opportunities of future nurses situated on the neighbor islands. This is critical because the shortage of nursing in Hawaii is dire.

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.



February 26, 2025 at 10:03 am
Conference Room 211

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

To: Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Vice Chair Sharon Y. Moriwaki

From: Paige Heckathorn Choy
AVP, Government Affairs
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Support**
SB 119 SD 1, Relating to Nursing

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 health care continuum in Hawaii. Members include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities and durable medical equipment suppliers. In addition to providing access to appropriate, affordable, high-quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 30,000 people statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support** of this measure, which appropriates funds for the establishment of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program at the University of Hawaii Maui College. Addressing Hawaii's critical nursing workforce shortage is an urgent priority, and this measure takes an essential step toward increasing the pipeline of qualified nurses, particularly for the county of Maui.

According to our most recent healthcare workforce demand survey, Hawaii currently faces a deficit of just over 900 registered nurses. Expanding access to nursing education is an important piece of addressing this shortage, especially in neighbor island communities. Establishing a BSN program at UH Maui College will help to ensure that more individuals interested in nursing as a profession can live and study where they live, without having to relocate to Oahu or even the mainland. This can help to ensure a more stable and well-trained nursing workforce across the state, but especially on Maui.

This program will also serve as an important piece of an initiative that the Association is currently engaged in with UH Maui College to help certified nurse aides (CNAs) to become licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and, eventually, registered nurses (RNs). This type of glidepath program is essential to retaining our nursing workforce, especially in post-acute care settings.

We appreciate the legislature's continued interest in investing in nursing education and the health and well-being of our communities. Thank you for your time and consideration of this measure.



**Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 10:03 AM
Conference Room 211 and videoconference**

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

Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 119, SD1

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee:

Thank you for hearing this measure. This measure appropriates funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program at the University of Hawai'i Maui College.

The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing conducts research on the nursing workforce at the time of nursing license renewal. The survey questions include inquiry into demographics, licensure, certifications, positions, hours worked, educational history, and more. In 2023¹, survey responses from nurses in Maui indicate the following:

Local nursing education programs are vital to the sustainability of Maui's RN workforce (statewide report):

- The statewide RN workforce was 16,390 of which 10% are on Maui.
- 54% of RNs working on Maui were educated in the state.

There is demand for BSN education on Maui:

- Statewide, 76% of RNs hold a BSN or graduate degree in nursing (data tables) vs. 59% in Maui County (statewide report).
- RNs in Maui County are proportionally slightly more likely than RNs statewide to be enrolled in a degree-leading nurse education program (Statewide=6% (data tables); Maui=8% (statewide report)).
- Among RNs in Maui County who are enrolled in a degree-leading program, 45% are enrolled in a BSN program. 80% of all Maui County RNs enrolled in a nursing degree program are enrolled in an out-of-state school (unpublished data from the 2023 Hawai'i Nursing Workforce Supply Survey)

The creation of a BSN program in Maui County would respond to existing demand for BSN education in the county and create an opportunity for students in the county to be educated locally.

The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing commends the legislature for addressing the opportunities for nurses to advance their education in-state.

¹ Hawai'i State Center for Nursing (2024). 2023 Hawai'i Nursing Workforce Supply: Statewide Report.

SB-119-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 10:57:23 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruth Love	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

There is a nursing shortage and also a provider shortage. This funding will help assist in both the nursing shortage but also the provider shortage. Many nurses after reaching the BSN degree branch off into management, administration, and infection control, etc.

Many nurses after obtaining their Bachelors degree advance to a Masters degree for teaching thus improving the availability of nurses for Hawaii in the future.

Other nurses, once obtaining their Bachelors degree become Nurse Practitioners and Nurse Anesthetists. That will help with our provider shortage going forward.

Please pass SB119

Thank you

Mrs Ruth Love

SB-119-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 5:48:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathleen Hagan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Dela Cruz and Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 119, Relating to Nursing.

Evidence shows that bachelor's- prepared nurses are safer nurses, with fewer medical errors, fewer deaths, and better patient outcomes. I teach in the Associate's Degree in Nursing (ADN) program at UHMC and upon polling my current students, 100% of both first- year and second-year students responded they aspire to earn a BSN degree or beyond. We have a healthcare provider shortage and we need to remove barriers from our students achieving their career goals and ability to maximize earnings. Our local hospital will now be offering \$2 extra pay per hour for bachelor's- prepared nurses, not to mention that bachelor's-prepared nurses are now being given preference in the hiring process. Our students are stretched thin, with jobs and families to support in addition to school. Offering a Bachelor's of Science in Nursing (BSN) on their home campus and island will create a more efficient path for them, increase their earning potential, and increase the quality of care provided for our Maui Nui community. Furthermore, the BSN covers additional topics (beyond the acute care focus of the ADN program) including community, public, and global health as well as advanced mental health that are critical to responding to our community's complex modern health needs.

To improve local educational opportunities and better meet the evolving healthcare needs of our community, I urge you to PASS SB 119, Relating to Nursing.

Kathleen Hagan, Adult Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Educator

Paia, Hawaii



UNIVERSITY of HAWAII*
MAUI COLLEGE

TESTIMONY SUPPORTING SB 119 HEARING February 26, 2025

RELATING TO NURSING TESTIMONY TO:

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

BY: Erica Delacruz, Registered Nursing Student, University of Hawaii Maui College

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of SB 119, Relating to Nursing. This bill proposes an appropriation of funds to support the development of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program within the University of Hawai'i - Maui College. This bill would enable nursing students to pursue a baccalaureate degree in nursing without having to leave the island.

My name is Erica C. Delacruz, and I will be graduating with an associate degree in registered nursing from the University of Hawaii Maui College this May. I am writing to you in support of instituting a Bachelor of Science Nursing degree at UHMC not only as a student, but also as a mother who birthed and is currently raising children on Maui. I have been a resident of Maui County, serving the community in healthcare since 2013. I plan to continue my education by pursuing a bachelor's in nursing. As such, I will be staying in Maui working full-time and will be forced to utilize an off-island online RN to BSN program. Instead of competing with others to get into an off-island or even out of state program, creating a bachelor program on Maui will facilitate nurse retention, keep families together, and create affordable education options so locals can "keep it local" by continuing to give back to our beautiful community.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of SB 119, relating to Nursing.

Erica C. Delacruz, LPN, CST

Wailuku, HI

SB-119-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 5:43:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dele Cruz and Members of the Committee,

I **strongly support** SB119 SD1, which will establish a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program at the University of Hawai‘i Maui College. As someone with three family members who are nurses, I have seen firsthand how overworked and exhausted they are due to the ongoing nursing shortage. They work long hours, often picking up extra shifts just to ensure patients receive the care they need. The stress and fatigue they experience not only affect their well-being but also make it harder to provide the highest level of care to their patients.

When there aren’t enough nurses, the burden falls on those already in the field, leading to burnout and unsafe patient-to-nurse ratios. This puts both nurses and patients at risk. By investing in local nursing education, we can ensure that more Hawai‘i residents have the opportunity to enter the profession and help fill these critical gaps. A BSN program at UH Maui College will allow aspiring nurses to stay in their communities while receiving the education they need to support our healthcare system.

More nurses mean safer care, healthier communities, and relief for those who have been carrying the weight of this shortage for too long. I urge you to pass SB119 SD1 to support our nurses, strengthen our workforce, and provide better healthcare for all of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Carol Philips
Haleiwa

**Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 10:03 AM
Conference Room 211 and videoconference**

**by
Anne Scharnhorst, DNP, RN, CNE, Professor of Nursing,
Interim Allied Health Department Chair
[University of Hawaii Maui College]**

Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 199, S.D. 1

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee:

Thank you for hearing this measure. This measure appropriates funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program at the University of Hawaii Maui College (UHMC).

This funding would open the pathway to a BSN degree administered fully on the island of Maui. Though many avenues are in place for students to go from the RN they become after the associate degree, to the full Bachelors preparation, only 50% of RNs on Maui have done this. Allowing every future UHMC graduate to start their practice at the BSN level would stabilize the workforce, and provide the foundation for leadership and advanced practice positions for these graduates.

Anne Scharnhorst commends the Legislature for addressing the need for a stable supply of nurses in Maui County and allowing local students to stay home to complete their Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree.

Submitted on 2/24/25 at 3:15PM

Testimony Taken Place During February 26th, 2025 at 10:03AM

Conference Room 211

RE: SB 119: Relating to Nursing Education - SUPPORT

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

From: Tasia Hays, Student at University of Hawaii at Manoa

My name is Tasia Hays, and I am a student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. My opinion for this bill is my own, and does not represent the University. I am writing in strong support of SB119, which aims to establish a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program at the University of Hawaii Maui College.

Hawaii is facing a serious nursing shortage, with a demand for nurses that exceeds supply by approximately 1,000 positions. Furthermore, the UHMC currently offers two nursing pathways: Practical Nurse (PN) and Associate in Science Registered Nurse (RN). Students pursuing a BSN must transfer to the University of Hawaii at Manoa to complete their degrees. Establishing a BSN program at UHMC would encourage students to complete their education locally, reducing financial and logistical challenges associated with inter-island relocation. Expanding nursing programs is a vital step toward addressing this issue, and adding a BSN program on Maui will help by allowing students to complete their degrees without having to transfer to another island. This will not only make nursing education more accessible to local students, but also ensure that more trained professionals are available to serve our communities.

Many aspiring nurses on Maui face these aforementioned challenges when they have to relocate to continue their education. By keeping students on Maui, this bill will help develop a stronger, local workforce and improve healthcare access across the state. Investing in this program is an investment in Hawaii's future.

I strongly urge you to pass SB119. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tasia Hays

Current UH Manoa Undergraduate Student

808-365-7349

tasiah0811@gmail.com

District 4, Waikoloa, Big Island