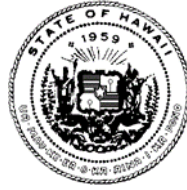


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



RYAN I. YAMANE  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

TRISTA SPEER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

February 4, 2025

TO: The Honorable Representative Lisa Marten, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services & Homelessness

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 1349 – RELATING TO MEDICAID.**

Hearing: February 6, 2025, 10:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the bill's intent and offers comments.

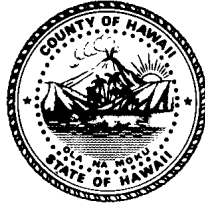
**PURPOSE:** Appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services to authorize Medicaid coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program to income-qualified pregnant persons and children regardless of immigration status.

DHS believes there is a clear benefit to the state to ensure all residents, regardless of immigration status, have access to health care. Per [Senate Concurrent Resolution 183 SD1 \(2023\)](#), DHS completed its [report](#) on this matter. The general fund appropriations in the bill are based on cost estimates in the report to provide coverage for 500 pregnant women and 4,000 children.

DHS respectfully requests that this program and appropriation not conflict with, reduce or replace priorities identified in the executive budget. Additionally, for reference, DHS prefers that any increase appropriation be included in the executive budget bill as a recurring appropriation so that the coverage could be ongoing.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

**Jennifer Kagiwada**  
Council Member District 2 South Hilo



Office: (808) 961-8272  
jennifer.kagiwada@hawaiicounty.gov

## HAWAI‘I COUNTY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 2

25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai‘i 96720

DATE: February 03, 2025  
TO: House Committee on Human Services and Homelessness  
FROM: Jennifer Kagiwada, Council Member  
Council District 2  
SUBJECT: HB 1349

Aloha Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and members of the Committee,

I am writing to you in strong support of HB 1349, which seeks to expand Medicaid coverage through the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status.

Hawai‘i has a rich and diverse immigrant community, with many families working hard to contribute to our economy and society. This bill ensures that all children and expecting parents have access to essential health services, regardless of where they were born. Lack of access to affordable healthcare dramatically increases the risk of premature births, low birth weight, and neonatal death, leading to long-term health complications for children and financial burdens on families and the state. Studies show that preventative care is far more cost-effective than emergency interventions, which often become the only option for uninsured families. Expanding coverage will reduce avoidable hospitalizations, improve maternal and child health outcomes, and lower overall healthcare costs for the state.

Passing HB1349 is not just about healthcare, it is about equity, public health, and the well-being of our most vulnerable residents. It is an investment in the health, safety, and future of our communities. I urge the committee to support this bill and ensure that no child or pregnant person in Hawai‘i is left without essential care.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Mahalo,

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

Jenn Kagiwada

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 9:15:05 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Yvette Kay	Indivisible Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and committee members, I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all

Hearing Date: Thursday, February 6, 2025, 10 AM, Rm. 329

To: Committee on Human Services and Homelessness  
Rep. Lisa Marten, Chair  
Rep. Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair

**Re: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1349 Relating to Medicaid**

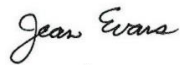
Dear Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and the Members of the Committee,

My name is Jean Evans and I am **strong support of SB 1284** which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services to authorize Medicaid coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program to income-qualified pregnant persons and children regardless of immigration status.

Please support this measure to ensure all pregnant women and children in Hawaii have access to appropriate medical care. Hawaii was once known as the "Health State". Let's live up to that title by supporting this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration

Sincerely,



Jean Evans  
Public Policy Committee, AAUW of Hawaii  
publicpolicy-hi@aauw.net

*The American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Hawaii is an all-volunteer, statewide chapter of a national organization and is made up of six branches: Hilo, Honolulu, Kaua'i, Kona, Maui, and Windward Oahu. AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity through research, education, and advocacy. Our goal is economic security for women and their families.*

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 6:14:41 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gaye Chan	Indivisible Hawai'i Statewide Network	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Members of Indivisible Hawai'i thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB1349 to appropriate funds to the Department of Human Services to authorize Medicaid coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program to income-qualified pregnant persons and children regardless of immigration status.

Hawai'i's residents are primarily from elsewhere. Immigrants are our friends, neighbors, and coworkers. Non-citizens, including undocumented migrants, pay taxes and contribute to our shared resources and economy. It is especially important to treat pregnant persons and children with the utmost care and dignity. We are well when ALL of us are well.

Sincerely,  
Gaye Chan

Indivisible Hawai'i Statewide Network.

We're a grassroots movement of thousands of local Indivisible groups with a mission to elect progressive leaders, rebuild our democracy, and defeat the Trump agenda. In Hawai'i, we have ten groups across four islands, representing over a thousand pro-democracy citizens.



Statement Before The  
Thursday, February 6, 2025  
10:00 AM  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference

in consideration of  
**HB1349**

**RELATING TO MEDICAID.**

Chair MARTEN, Vice Chair OLDS, and Members of the  
House Human Services & Homelessness Committee

The Legal Clinic (TLC) supports HB1349, which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services to authorize Medicaid coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program to income-qualified pregnant persons and children regardless of immigration status.

TLC is a Hawai'i nonprofit, nonpartisan organization. TLC is a direct legal services provider, representing those in Hawai'i who meet income eligibility guidelines without regard to immigration status, national origin, ethnic background, race, religion, ideology, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or disability. TLC works alongside immigrants so they can attain authorization to work and live with dignity, reunite with their families after years of separation and escape horrific violence to find refuge in the United States. TLC recognizes that every person needs and deserves to feel a sense of trust, welcome, and belonging.

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, Hawai'i is the most diverse state in the nation.<sup>1</sup> In 2023, Hawai'i had about 256,000 immigrants, which is approx. 18% of the State population.<sup>2</sup> The top countries of origin for immigrants were the Philippines (45 percent of immigrants), China (9 percent), Japan (8 percent), Korea (6 percent), and the Pacific Island Nations (4 percent).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://thehill.com/homenews/state-watch/567625-hawaii-california-and-nevada-are-most-diverse-states-in-the-us-census/> (retrieved 1/14/2025).

<sup>2</sup> See <https://usafacts.org/answers/how-many-immigrants-are-in-the-us/state/hawaii/> and <https://data.census.gov/profile/Hawaii?g=040XX00US15#populations-and-people> (retrieved 1/14/2025).

<sup>3</sup> See [https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/immigrants\\_in\\_hawaii.pdf](https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/immigrants_in_hawaii.pdf) (retrieved 1/14/2025).

There are between 41,000 -50,500 undocumented immigrants in Hawai'i.<sup>4</sup> Hawaii is the only state where undocumented women (55%) outnumber men.<sup>5</sup>

Approximately 500 pregnant persons and 4,000 income qualified children in Hawaii are denied access to affordable health care through Medicaid, the children's health insurance program, and health insurance exchanges established under Affordable Care Act, solely due to their immigration status.

Low-income immigrants without prenatal care are 7 times more likely to give birth prematurely and 5 times more likely to experience neonatal death, demonstrating that limited access to health care for pregnant persons and their newborn children significantly increases risk of exposure to life-threatening situations. Providing access to health insurance coverage for income-qualified pregnant persons will help lower barriers and increase access to health care for resident immigrant populations in the State. It will also increase health outcomes.

Low-income immigrant children without access to health care services experience a higher rate of preventable hospitalizations during childhood. Without appropriate medical management, chronic conditions such as asthma and diabetes may lead to life-threatening medical emergencies. Inadequate access to preventative care such as immunizations and well-being and well-child visits may aggravate various health conditions increasing the occurrence of acute and chronic conditions and can leave developmental health conditions undiagnosed and untreated.

As of June 2024, 24 states and the District of Columbia provide Medicaid coverage to income-eligible children regardless of immigration status. Hawaii DHS estimates the cost of providing income-qualified pregnant persons with health insurance coverage and twelve months of post-partum care at \$1,364,000 annually. Hawaii DHS estimates the cost of providing income-qualified children with health insurance coverage under the federal health services initiative program at \$2,976,000, with a wholly funded state program estimated at \$9,600,000. Increasing access to health insurance coverage for income-qualified children will improve health care outcomes for all keiki, regardless of immigration status.

A 2024 report by the Department of Human Services found that the state may “leverage the Unborn Children Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) State Plan option. This Medicaid option allows states to cover the unborn child of pregnant persons who are not traditionally eligible for coverage due to their immigration status. This option is supported with a federal matching rate of just over 69%.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> See <https://www.civilbeat.org/2024/12/data-dive-hawai%CA%BBi-deportation-cases-hit-quarter-century-high/> (retrieved 1/14/2025).

<sup>55</sup> See <https://mchb.tvisdata.hrsa.gov/Narratives/Overview/a0ac94c0-8538-417e-85c9-da6ac5c06603> (retrieved 1/14/2025).

<sup>6</sup> See [https://data.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2024/bills/DC202\\_.PDF](https://data.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2024/bills/DC202_.PDF) (retrieved 1/16/2025).

As for children, “[s]tates do have the option to cover immigrant children who do not meet the immigration criteria for Medicaid or CHIP using state-only funds. This option does not require CMS approval or reporting but is a larger financial commitment from the state to fund the benefits. Several states, like Illinois, California, New York, and Oregon, use state-only funds to cover all children regardless of immigration status.”<sup>7</sup>

TLC understands that it may be more feasible at this time to only provide coverage to pregnant persons through HB1349 and will support a clarifying amendment to this bill stating that HB1349 appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services to authorize Medicaid coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program to income-qualified pregnant persons, omitting children, regardless of immigration status.

This bill will ensure that people are afforded some measure of medical care for health and welfare to benefit themselves, their families and their communities, and for basic our human rights and dignity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB1349 with clarifying language, and I respectfully urge the Committee members to pass HB1349 out of your Committee. If you have questions of me, please contact me at [sma@tlchawaii.org](mailto:sma@tlchawaii.org).

Very respectfully yours,

*Sandy Ma*

Sandy Ma  
Community & Policy Advocate  
The Legal Clinic

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<sup>7</sup> See [https://data.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2024/bills/DC202\\_.PDF](https://data.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2024/bills/DC202_.PDF) (retrieved 1/16/2025).





*Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.*

To: Committee on Human Services and Homelessness  
Re: HB 1349 Relating to Medicaid  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 329 & Via Videoconference  
Thursday, February 6, 2025, 10:00AM

Dear Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and Committee Members,

**On behalf of HCANSpeaks!, I am writing in support of HB 1349, relating to Medicaid.** This bill appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services to authorize Medicaid coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program to income-qualified pregnant persons and children regardless of immigration status. This bill is not just about healthcare—it is about equity, public health, and the well-being of our most vulnerable residents.

Hawai'i has a rich and diverse immigrant community, with many families working hard to contribute to our economy and society. However, due to restrictive federal policies, many immigrants—even those who have lived in our state for years—are excluded from critical healthcare programs. Given Hawai'i's already high cost of living, many families are forced to make impossible choices between rent, food, and medical care. This bill ensures that all children and expecting parents have access to essential health services, regardless of where they were born.

Other states, including California, Illinois, New York, and Oregon, have already expanded Medicaid-like coverage to all income-eligible pregnant persons and children, recognizing that denying healthcare based on immigration status is both inequitable and harmful to public health. Hawai'i should follow suit and uphold its values of fairness, inclusivity, and compassion.

The consequences of inadequate prenatal and pediatric care are devastating and costly. Lack of access to affordable healthcare dramatically increases the risk of premature births, low birth weight, and neonatal death, leading to long-term health complications for children and financial burdens on families and the state. Studies show that preventative care is far more cost-effective than emergency interventions, which often become the only option for uninsured families. Expanding coverage will reduce avoidable hospitalizations, improve maternal and child health outcomes, and lower overall healthcare costs for the state.

As an advocate for children's health and wellness and as a parent myself, I have witnessed firsthand how gaps in coverage put lives at risk. Every child deserves the chance to grow up healthy, and every parent should have the medical support they need during pregnancy, regardless of their immigration status. Passing HB1349 is a moral and economic imperative. It is an investment in the health, safety, and future of our communities. I urge the committee to support this bill and ensure that no child or pregnant person in Hawai'i is left without the care they need. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support of HB 1349.**

Sincerely,  
Noreen Kohl, Ph.D.  
Policy Researcher and Advocate



*The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
District VIII, Hawai'i (Guam & American Samoa) Section*

*As a section of the Nation's leading group of physicians dedicated to improving health care for women, the Hawai'i Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (HI ACOG) represents more than 200 obstetrician/gynecologist physicians in our state*

## **Strong Support for HB1349 – Medicaid Coverage for Income-Qualified Pregnant Persons and Children Regardless of Immigration Status**

On behalf of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) Hawai'i Section, we write in strong support of HB1349, which seeks to expand Medicaid coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status. Ensuring equitable access to prenatal and postpartum care is essential to improving maternal and infant health outcomes across our state.

As obstetrician-gynecologists, we see firsthand the devastating impact of inadequate prenatal care. Studies show that low-income immigrants without access to prenatal care are significantly more likely to experience preterm birth and neonatal mortality. These preventable outcomes place immense emotional and financial burdens on families and increase healthcare costs, particularly in neonatal intensive care units where daily care costs can reach up to \$8,000. Investing in prenatal and postpartum care will not only improve health outcomes but also reduce long-term healthcare expenditures for the State of Hawai'i.

Currently, 24 states and the District of Columbia have taken the necessary steps to provide Medicaid coverage to all income-qualified pregnant residents, regardless of immigration status. Hawai'i has the opportunity to join these states in eliminating barriers to healthcare and ensuring that every pregnant person and child has access to essential medical services.

By passing HB1349, Hawai'i will take a critical step toward promoting health equity and supporting the well-being of our most vulnerable populations. We urge you to support this bill and prioritize the health of pregnant persons, newborns, and children in our community.

Mahalo for your leadership and commitment to advancing healthcare access in Hawai'i. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can provide further insight on the importance of this measure.

Sincerely,

Ricardo A. Molero Bravo, MD  
Legislative Chair, ACOG Hawai'i Section  
rmolerob@hawaii.edu

**HB-1349**

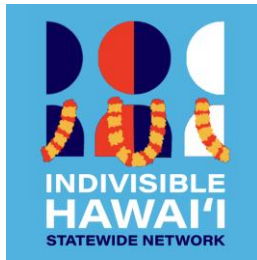
Submitted on: 2/3/2025 6:05:54 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Doris Matsunaga	Save Medicaid Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Save Medicaid Hawaii strongly supports HB1349



To: COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS JUDICIARY

Date/Time: Thursday, February 6, 2025 at 10:00 AM

Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 329

Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1349

Dear Rep. Lisa Marten, Chair, Rep. Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee:

Members of Indivisible Hawai'i thanks you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB1349 which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services to authorize Medicaid coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program to income-qualified pregnant persons and children regardless of immigration status.

Sincerely,  
Indivisible Hawai'i

*We're a grassroots movement of thousands of local Indivisible groups with a mission to elect progressive leaders, rebuild our democracy, and defeat the Trump agenda. In Hawai'i, we have ten groups across four islands, representing over a thousand pro-democracy citizens.*



www.hicir.org | Instagram @hicir  
hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com

**Testimony of Liza Ryan-Gill in SUPPORT of HB1349**  
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND HOMELESSNESS

Representative Lisa Marten, Chair  
Representative Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: February 6th, 2025

Dear Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawai‘i Coalition for Immigrant Rights (HCIR) submits this testimony in strong support of HB1349, which seeks to expand Medicaid coverage through the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status.

HCIR is committed to advancing the rights and well-being of immigrants in Hawai‘i by advocating for policies that promote equity, healthcare access, and full participation in society. A key part of our mission is ensuring that all individuals—regardless of where they were born—have the opportunity to live healthy lives and become productive members of our community. However, many immigrant families in Hawai‘i lack access to basic healthcare due to their immigration status, putting them and their children at serious risk.

Hawai‘i is home to a significant immigrant population, many of whom contribute to our economy in essential industries such as agriculture, healthcare, construction, and hospitality. Yet, despite their contributions, many immigrant families are excluded from critical healthcare programs. This is especially harmful to pregnant individuals and children, who require consistent, quality medical care to thrive. Without access to affordable healthcare, many forego necessary prenatal checkups, vaccinations, and routine pediatric care, leading to severe and preventable health complications.

States such as California, Illinois, New York, and Oregon have already recognized this inequity and expanded Medicaid-like coverage to all income-eligible pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status. Hawai‘i must follow suit and reaffirm its values of inclusion, equity, and compassion.

The public health and economic benefits of passing HB1349 are undeniable:

- **Reducing premature births and neonatal deaths:** Lack of prenatal care is one of the leading causes of low birth weight, complications during delivery, and long-term health issues for infants. These preventable outcomes place a heavy emotional and financial burden on families and increase costs for the state’s healthcare system.

- **Lowering emergency healthcare costs:** When families cannot access routine care, they are forced to rely on emergency rooms for preventable conditions, which is far more expensive and places additional strain on Hawai'i's hospitals and public health resources.
- **Improving economic stability for families:** Ensuring that children and expecting parents have medical coverage allows families to focus on work, education, and their future, rather than living in fear of a medical crisis they cannot afford.

At HCIR, we believe that no child and no expecting parent should be denied healthcare simply because of their immigration status. HB1349 is a common-sense, compassionate, and cost-effective solution that will improve health outcomes, reduce disparities, and strengthen Hawai'i's communities.

We strongly urge the committee to pass this bill and ensure that every child and every pregnant person in Hawai'i has access to the healthcare they need to thrive.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Liza Ryan-Gill  
Executive Director  
Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights



To: The Honorable Lisa Marten, Chair  
The Honorable Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Human Services and Homelessness

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

Hearing: Thursday, February 6, 2025, 10:00 a.m., Conference Room 329

RE: **HB1349 Relating to Medicaid**

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AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of **HB1349**. This measure appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services to authorize Medicaid coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program to income-qualified pregnant persons and children regardless of immigration status.

Founded in 1994 by Hawai'i's community health centers, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving over 70,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members on all islands. Approximately 37 percent of our members are keiki. We are Hawai'i's only health plan exclusively dedicated to serving Medicaid and Medicaid-Medicare dually-eligible beneficiaries. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating for access to quality, whole-person care for all.

Consistent with our mission and our values, AlohaCare is committed to promoting access to quality, whole-person healthcare for all of Hawai'i's residents, regardless of immigration status. An estimated 45,000 undocumented immigrants live in Hawai'i, making up 3% of the State's total population. Expanding coverage will contribute to our State's health equity and social determinants of health (SDOH) priorities at large by increasing healthcare access.<sup>1</sup> Under the SDOH framework, a person's social and community context are key factors that affect health outcomes. AlohaCare understands expanding coverage may improve our current member's health and well-being, specifically those that are family of undocumented immigrants, as they are often subject to trauma and various social and environmental stressors.<sup>2</sup> In 2014, approximately 60,202 people in Hawai'i lived with at least one undocumented family member.

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<sup>1</sup> [Hawai'i Medicaid State Plan and Demonstration](#)

<sup>2</sup> [American Psychiatry Association. Stress & Trauma Toolkit for Treating Undocumented Immigrants in a Changing Political and Social Environment.](#)



Our neighbors, friends, and ‘ohana who are undocumented immigrants are working, contributing to Hawai‘i’s economy, and should not be subject to the risks of living without health insurance. The American Immigration Council estimates that undocumented workers are overrepresented in the State’s labor force at 4.5%, primarily in the leisure/hospitality and agriculture industries.<sup>3</sup> In 2024, undocumented immigrants paid an estimated \$157 million in State and local tax contributions, and across the nation undocumented immigrants paid an estimated \$59.4 billion to the federal government.<sup>4</sup>

According to Hawai‘i Friends of Civil Rights testimony on the 2023 bill SB842, many of the 45,000 undocumented persons in Hawai‘i secure health insurance through the Hawai‘i Prepaid Health Care Act, while approximately 11,000 undocumented immigrants are uninsured—with 43% of these households reporting incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level—unable to access the care they need until they have a medical illness or condition that becomes an emergency.<sup>5</sup>

Expanding coverage will allow undocumented immigrants to access primary and preventative care and may decrease emergency room visits. Hawai‘i’s Medicaid program currently provides coverage of emergency medical services to individuals who are ineligible for Medicaid due to immigration status. This emergency coverage is provided to stabilize the emergency medical condition, but Medicaid does not cover any follow-up visits resulting from the emergency visit.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of **HB1349**.

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<sup>3</sup> [Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigrant population estimates by state, 2016,” February 5, 2019.](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Tax Payments by Undocumented Immigrants – ITEP](#)

<sup>5</sup> [capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/Session2023/Testimony/SB842\\_TESTIMONY\\_HHS\\_02-13-23\\_PDF](#)



**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 8:47:51 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
amy agbayani	hawai'i friends of civil rights	Support	In Person

Comments:

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 1349**

Submitted by 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 stand in **Strong Support of H.B. 1349**

Long-established medical consensus holds that prenatal care is fundamental to reproductive and infant health. The lack of access to prenatal care increases the risk of premature birth and low birth weight and is a factor in a range of poor health outcomes experienced by undocumented pregnant women and their babies, including higher rates of labor and delivery complications and premature births. Many of these negative outcomes pose long-term development risks to newborn U.S. citizen children and could be avoided with full access to prenatal care.

A recently released report, the Hawaii Department of Health reported that from 2018 to 2021, the maternal death rate in the United States increased from 17.4 to 32.9 per 100,000 live births and that disadvantaged populations including Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, Black, and American Indian and Alaska Native persons have the highest rates of pregnancy-related deaths. The report further noted that approximately 80% of pregnancy-related deaths are preventable requiring a multilevel approach that includes ensuring quality care for all pregnant and postpartum persons. Additionally, the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) noted that expanding Medicaid coverage regardless of immigration status resulted in improved outcomes including increases in average gestation and birth weight among newborns. Med-Quest's estimate for providing Medicaid coverage for an estimated cohort of 500 undocumented pregnant persons is \$744,000 in state funds for pregnancy-related services and 2 months of postpartum care. Extending postpartum care an additional 10 months would increase state-funded costs to \$1,364,000.

With one of the lowest national rates of uninsured persons and a leader in healthcare, Hawai'i has the opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to healthcare through this measure and to recognize the substantial federal and state tax contributions made by Hawai'i's undocumented residents.



**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 10:15:40 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Veronica Mendoza	Roots Reborn Maui	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Re: Urgent Support for HB 1349, Relating to Medicaid

To: Representative Lisa Marten, Chair

Representative Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: February 6th, 2025, 10:00

Dear Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

As the founding director of Maui Roots Reborn, I've witnessed firsthand the resilience and vulnerability of our migrant and immigrant community. Forged in the fires of the 2023 Maui wildfires, our organization, comprised entirely of bilingual and bicultural migrants and children of immigrants, has become a lifeline for over a thousand individuals. We are trusted, we understand the cultural nuances, and we share the lived experiences of those we serve.

Hawai'i has a rich and diverse immigrant community, with many families working hard to contribute to our economy and society. However, due to restrictive federal policies, many immigrants—even those who have lived in our state for many years—are excluded from critical healthcare programs. Given Hawai'i's already high cost of living, many families are forced to make impossible choices between rent, food, and medical care. This bill ensures that all children and expecting parents have access to essential health services, regardless of where they were born.

Other states, including California, Illinois, New York, and Oregon, have already expanded Medicaid-like coverage to all income-eligible pregnant persons and children, recognizing that

denying healthcare based on immigration status is both inequitable and harmful to public health. Hawai'i should follow suit and uphold its values of fairness, inclusivity, and compassion.

The consequences of inadequate prenatal and pediatric care are devastating and costly. Lack of access to affordable healthcare dramatically increases the risk of premature births, low birth weight, and neonatal death, leading to long-term health complications for children and financial burdens on families and the state.

Studies have proven that preventative care is far more cost-effective than emergency interventions, which often become the only option for uninsured families. Expanding coverage will reduce avoidable hospitalizations, improve maternal and child health outcomes, and lower overall healthcare costs for the state.

As someone who works closely with Maui's immigrant community, I have witnessed firsthand how gaps in coverage put lives at risk. Every child deserves the chance to grow up healthy, and every parent should have the medical support they need during pregnancy, regardless of their immigration status.

Passing HB1349 is a moral and economic imperative. It is an investment in the health, safety, and future of our communities. I urge the committee to support this bill and ensure that no child or pregnant mother in Hawai'i is left without the care they need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Veronica Mendoza Jachowski

Executive Director

Roots Reborn

Re: Urgent Support for HB 1349, Relating to Medicaid

To: Representative Lisa Marten, Chair

Representative Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: February 6th, 2025, 10:00

Dear Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

As the founding director of Maui Roots Reborn, I've witnessed firsthand the resilience and vulnerability of our migrant and immigrant community. Forged in the fires of the 2023 Maui wildfires, our organization, comprised entirely of bilingual and bicultural migrants and children of immigrants, has become a lifeline for over a thousand individuals. We are trusted, we understand the cultural nuances, and we share the lived experiences of those we serve.

Hawai'i has a rich and diverse immigrant community, with many families working hard to contribute to our economy and society. However, due to restrictive federal policies, many immigrants—even those who have lived in our state for many years—are excluded from critical healthcare programs. Given Hawai'i's already high cost of living, many families are forced to make impossible choices between rent, food, and medical care. This bill ensures that all children and expecting parents have access to essential health services, regardless of where they were born.

Other states, including California, Illinois, New York, and Oregon, have already expanded Medicaid-like coverage to all income-eligible pregnant persons and children, recognizing that denying healthcare based on immigration status is both inequitable and harmful to public health. Hawai'i should follow suit and uphold its values of fairness, inclusivity, and compassion.

The consequences of inadequate prenatal and pediatric care are devastating and costly. Lack of access to affordable healthcare dramatically increases the risk of premature births, low birth weight, and neonatal death, leading to long-term health complications for children and financial burdens on families and the state.

Studies have proven that preventative care is far more cost-effective than emergency interventions, which often become the only option for uninsured families. Expanding coverage will reduce avoidable hospitalizations, improve maternal and child health outcomes, and lower overall healthcare costs for the state.

As someone who works closely with Maui's immigrant community, I have witnessed firsthand how gaps in coverage put lives at risk. Every child deserves the chance to grow up healthy, and every parent should have the medical support they need during pregnancy, regardless of their immigration status.

Passing HB1349 is a moral and economic imperative. It is an investment in the health, safety, and future of our communities. I urge the committee to support this bill and ensure that no child or pregnant mother in Hawai'i is left without the care they need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Veronica Mendoza Jachowski

Executive Director

Roots Reborn

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 1/31/2025 10:19:46 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nancy D Moser	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In STRONG SUPPORT of HB 1349.

Aloha Chair and members of the Committee,

Please vote YES on this measure.

Nancy Moser in Waikoloa on Hawai'i Island

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 7:40:35 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kayla Marie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure



**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 8:11:55 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Linda Morgan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

“I strongly support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all. In the richest country in the world, it is despicable to deny health care to anyone, especially pregnant women and children.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 8:30:02 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Denise L Martinez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 8:41:48 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary M. McNamara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all. Health care should be a human right.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 9:39:16 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
David Kay	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 9:59:21 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Noelle Lindenmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Committe Members:

I write in support of HB1349. I support accessible, affordable, and equitable healthcare for all. All people need healthcare, including immigrants.

Thank you,

Noelle R Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 10:07:02 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nandita Sharma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure and urge you to pass it because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

A person's citizenship or immigration status should not be use as a basis of discrimination. I want to live in a society where all those within it are treated respectfully and get the medical care they need. All of us are impoverished when we refuse healthcare to any one of us.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 10:31:39 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
gabrielle davidson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senate members,

Please support this measure to ensure everyone in our society has access to quality healthcare regardless of their immigration status. Are we really going to say "No" to mothers and children living amongst us that they can't receive care? I surely hope not. I want to live in a place where human life is more important than the bottom line. Let's make it clear that Hawaii is a humane, supportive place to live.

Thank you for the opportunity to have a voice in this issue,  
Gabrielle Davidson

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 11:42:13 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lois Langham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Healthcare is a human right. I support this bill.



**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 1:17:52 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Doreen Akamine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 1:39:27 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
chelsea pang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all fiscally and ethically

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 2:08:53 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Terri Gately	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 2:57:19 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alice Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all. Healthcare should not be political. Period.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 3:17:09 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Diann Karin Lynn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is a **human right**.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 3:23:53 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Patrick Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 4:34:06 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Belinda pate	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

"I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all."

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 5:24:00 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gail Morrison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.



**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 6:45:44 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Younghee Overly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for hearing this measure. I support this measure because an accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all in Hawaii.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 9:53:58 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
DeWaine Tollefsrud	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I will be concise, I STRONGLY support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all!

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 10:44:57 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kerry Porter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 10:45:58 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary Elyse Scott	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In what world is keeping people, especially children, healthy a bad thing? And funds spent earlier will prevent worse, more expensive outcomes that damage the whole community, regardless of anyone's immigration status.

Overall, [research](#) shows that immigrants, including lawfully present and undocumented immigrants, use less health care than U.S.-born citizens. Lower use of health care among immigrants likely reflects a combination of them being [younger and healthier](#) than their U.S.-born counterparts as well as them facing increased barriers to care including a higher uninsured rate, [language access](#) challenges, confusion, and [immigration-related](#) fears. Reflecting their lower use of health care, immigrants have lower health care expenditures than their U.S.-born counterparts. [KFF analysis](#) of 2021 medical expenditure data show that, on average, annual per capita health care expenditures for immigrants are about two-thirds those of U.S.-born citizens (\$4,875 vs. \$7,277). Recent research further finds that, because immigrants, especially undocumented immigrants, have lower health care use despite contributing billions of dollars in insurance premiums and taxes, they help [subsidize](#) the U.S. health care system and offset the costs of care incurred by U.S.-born citizens. -KFF

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 11:15:31 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Eve Furchgott	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In the spirit of Aloha our State should provide critical health care services to people in need, regardless of immigration status.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 11:39:22 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Philip Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 12:16:53 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
JANE TOLLEFSRUD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

I LOVE MEDICARE! and Medicaid! and the Affordable Care Act! ALL American citizens should have free health care!! We should not all go bankrupt because of a terminally ill family member!

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 3:23:53 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Rachel D Laderman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.



**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 4:29:51 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
DORIEN MCCLELLAN	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Medicaid coverage for income-qualified pregnant persons and children is essential to the health and well-being of all in Hawaii, regardless of immigration status.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 7:44:21 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bailey Aughe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Accessible, affordable healthcare is good for all people

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 10:26:31 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michelle Ma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 10:26:58 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
J. Takane	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all of us. We live on islands where illnesses can quickly spread as we learned from Covid. Access to healthcare for all helps keep us all healthy.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 10:39:22 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kanani Kai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 11:29:10 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Phillip Jung	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 5:59:42 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shannon Oshiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 7:58:37 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Hilary Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB1349, which would extend vital healthcare coverage through CHIP to income-qualified pregnant persons and children regardless of immigration status, recognizing that access to prenatal and pediatric care is fundamental to the health and wellbeing of our entire community. This bill reflects Hawaii's values of caring for all keiki and families, while also making sound fiscal sense since preventive and prenatal care leads to better health outcomes and reduces costly emergency interventions. By ensuring that all eligible pregnant persons and children can access essential healthcare services through Medicaid CHIP coverage, we invest in healthier families, reduce health disparities, and strengthen our commitment to treating all Hawaii residents with dignity and compassion regardless of their immigration status.



**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 9:26:11 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joanne Amberg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I work at one of Hawai'i's community health centers. This is critical and life saving.

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

**Strong support for HB1349**

February 2, 2025

Representative Lisa Marten, Chair House Committee on Human Services and Homelessness  
Representative Ikaika Olds, Vice-chair, Committee on Human Services and Homelessness

Re: HB1349

Dear Chair Marten, V-Chair Olds and Members of the Committee

My name is Gail Breakey and I am testifying in strong support of HB1349 , which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services to authorize Medicaid coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program to income-qualified pregnant persons and children regardless of immigration status.

This measure is necessary because of the current federal administrations assault on immigrants as well as on the Medicaid program. We need to be able to take care of all people in our state. Accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

Thank you for your consideration of this legislation and for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sincerely,

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

Gail Breakey, RN, MPH

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 12:46:26 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sheryl Summers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is imperative.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 1:33:02 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cynthia J. Goto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 3:47:28 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brian Piotrowski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.  
This is common sense.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 4:18:22 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Erica Yamauchi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this legislation to help the most vulnerable in our communities.

Erica Yamauchi, Kaimukī/Wilhemina Rise

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 10:52:23 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sara Harris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am an OBGYN and I have cared for patients who were uninsured because of immigration status. They are unable to access necessary parts of their prenatal care like routine labs and ultrasounds which can adversely affect their health and their pregnancy. I support this bill.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 6:05:07 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

As a public health professional and son of refugees, I write in **strong support of HB1349**, which seeks to expand Medicaid coverage through the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status. This bill is not just about healthcare—it is about equity, public health, and the well-being of our most vulnerable residents.

Hawai‘i has a rich and diverse immigrant community, with many families working hard to contribute to our economy and society. However, due to restrictive federal policies, many immigrants—even those who have lived in our state for years—are excluded from critical healthcare programs. Given Hawai‘i’s already high cost of living, many families are forced to make impossible choices between rent, food, and medical care. This bill ensures that all children and expecting parents have access to essential health services, regardless of where they were born.

The consequences of inadequate prenatal and pediatric care are devastating and costly. Lack of access to affordable healthcare dramatically increases the risk of premature births, low birth weight, and neonatal death, leading to long-term health complications for children and financial burdens on families and the state. Studies show that preventative care is far more cost-effective than emergency interventions, which often become the only option for uninsured families. Expanding coverage will reduce avoidable hospitalizations, improve maternal and child health outcomes, and lower overall healthcare costs for the state.

As someone who grew up in an immigrant family and continues work with these communities, I have witnessed firsthand how gaps in coverage put lives at risk. Every child deserves the chance to grow up healthy, and every parent should have the medical support they need during pregnancy, regardless of their immigration status.

Passing HB1349 is a moral and economic imperative. It is an investment in the health, safety, and future of our communities. I urge the committee to support this bill and ensure that no child or pregnant person in Hawai‘i is left without the care they need.



Mahalo,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

Makiki, HI

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 8:56:28 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tanya Dean	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all. Protect Hawai'i's vulnerable immigrants! I work with students who families will be directly impacted by this provision.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 10:23:19 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cheryl Bellamy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all who live and work in Hawaii.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 11:55:29 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marlee Monahan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is both tragic and hypocritical that some individuals who cry "save the children" in their attempts to strip away reproductive freedoms are simultaneously vehemently opposed to policies that would actually protect the babies being born, simply because they are born to poor or immigrant families. These same voices that demand forced birth are the ones who stand in the way of providing essential healthcare, including prenatal care, to the very children they claim to be "saving."

Evidence shows that lack of prenatal care leads to higher rates of premature birth and neonatal death, and denying healthcare to pregnant individuals does not make our state safer, healthier, or more financially responsible. The cost of a single neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) stay in Hawai'i is prohibitively expensive, but providing Medicaid for these individuals would cost a fraction of what the state will ultimately pay in preventable emergency medical costs. Investing in preventative and prenatal care for all residents is not only humane, but it is also the fiscally responsible choice.

If we truly care about children, we must recognize that ensuring their well-being begins long before birth. This bill offers an opportunity for Hawai'i to do what is truly right: to ensure that all pregnant individuals and children, regardless of immigration status, have access to the healthcare they need to survive and thrive. By expanding Medicaid to cover all income-qualified pregnant individuals and children, we can prevent needless suffering, improve public health, and ensure that every child born in our state has the best possible start in life.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 11:56:31 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Liza Ryan Gill	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

**The Hawai‘i Coalition for Immigrant Rights (HCIR) submits this testimony in strong support of HB1349, which seeks to expand Medicaid coverage through the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status.**

**HCIR is committed to advancing the rights and well-being of immigrants in Hawai‘i by advocating for policies that promote equity, healthcare access, and full participation in society. A key part of our mission is ensuring that all individuals—regardless of where they were born—have the opportunity to live healthy lives and become productive members of our community. However, many immigrant families in Hawai‘i lack access to basic healthcare due to their immigration status, putting them and their children at serious risk.**

**Hawai‘i is home to a significant immigrant population, many of whom contribute to our economy in essential industries such as agriculture, healthcare, construction, and hospitality. Yet, despite their contributions, many immigrant families are excluded from critical healthcare programs. This is especially harmful to pregnant individuals and children, who require consistent, quality medical care to thrive. Without access to affordable healthcare, many forego necessary prenatal checkups, vaccinations, and routine pediatric care, leading to severe and preventable health complications.**

**States such as California, Illinois, New York, and Oregon have already recognized this inequity and expanded Medicaid-like coverage to all income-eligible pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status. Hawai‘i must follow suit and reaffirm its values of inclusion, equity, and compassion.**

**The public health and economic benefits of passing HB1349 are undeniable:**

- **Reducing premature births and neonatal deaths:** Lack of prenatal care is one of the leading causes of low birth weight, complications during delivery, and long-term health issues for infants. These preventable outcomes place a heavy emotional and financial burden on families and increase costs for the state's healthcare system.
- **Lowering emergency healthcare costs:** When families cannot access routine care, they are forced to rely on emergency rooms for preventable conditions, which is far more expensive and places additional strain on Hawai'i's hospitals and public health resources.
- **Improving economic stability for families:** Ensuring that children and expecting parents have medical coverage allows families to focus on work, education, and their future, rather than living in fear of a medical crisis they cannot afford.

**At HCIR, we believe that no child and no expecting parent should be denied healthcare simply because of their immigration status. HB1349 is a common-sense, compassionate, and cost-effective solution that will improve health outcomes, reduce disparities, and strengthen Hawai'i's communities.**

**We strongly urge the committee to pass this bill and ensure that every child and every pregnant person in Hawai'i has access to the healthcare they need to thrive.**

**Mahalo for your time and consideration.**

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 11:56:44 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kimberly Nagamine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Maternal morbidity and mortality in this country is increasing. Access to healthcare is more important than ever to reduce poor outcomes for mothers and their children. Lack of health insurance contributes to delayed and/or incomplete care for complications of pregnancy or pre-existing medical conditions that are often more severe during pregnancy. Inability to access healthcare during pregnancy can also lead to increased utilization of the healthcare system to manage acute emergencies related to poorly controlled conditions during pregnancy.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 11:59:20 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Hannah Dean	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.



House Committee of Human Services and Homelessness Hearing  
Thursday, February 6, 2025 at 10:00am  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE  
Conference Room 329  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

RE: HB 1349 RELATING TO MEDICAID.

#### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, Maui Rep. Amato, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christine Andrews, and I submit this testimony today in SUPPORT of HB 1349, Relating to Medicaid.

Every year, approximately five hundred pregnant persons in Hawai`i are denied access to affordable health care through Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and health insurance exchanges established under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, P.L. 111—148, because of their immigration status. Evidence-based studies show that low-income immigrants without access to prenatal care are seven times more likely to give birth prematurely and five times more likely to experience neonatal death. Improving maternal and neonatal outcomes is not only a highly-desirable public health goal, it is also a cost-saving measure, as providing health coverage to improve outcomes avoids the costs of avoidable intensive medical interventions.

While providing health coverage to low-income pregnant persons regardless of immigrant status provides public health benefits and save costs, as of May 2024, Hawai`i was not among the community of twenty-four states plus the District of Columbia to provide medicaid coverage to all income-qualified pregnant residents regardless of their immigrant status. The Department of Human Services estimates the cost of providing income-qualified pregnant persons with health insurance coverage and twelve months of postpartum care at \$1,364,000 annually.

Increasing access to health insurance coverage to include income-qualified pregnant persons will reduce barriers and increase access to health care for resident immigrant populations in the State. To estimate the potential cost savings of the proposal, I will discuss the financial benefits of avoiding costs associated with preterm births. According to the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics, in 2022, Hawai`i ranked 18th nationwide for preterm births, with a preterm birth rate of 9.82%. For the approximate five hundred pregnant persons in Hawai`i currently denied access to affordable health care, that comes to approximately 49 preterm births. According to "Preterm birth lifetime costs in the United States in 2016: An update", the annual societal economic cost (medical, educational, and lost productivity) associated with preterm birth in Hawaii was an estimated \$73,000, or over \$97,200 in today's dollars. So, while the cost of the proposed bill, which is the cost of providing income-qualified pregnant persons with health

insurance coverage and twelve months of postpartum care, is cost-effective when considering potential avoided preterm birth costs alone, which could be as much as 49 preterm births times \$97,200, or \$4,762,800. Health care provided to income-qualified pregnant persons ultimately avoids greater public health care costs.

I SUPPORT HB 1349 as both a financially prudent public health care investment as well as a moral imperative to support our community members regardless of immigrant status.

Mahalo for considering my testimony. I humbly request that you PASS HB 1349.

Aloha,

Christine L. Andrews, J.D.  
Wailuku, Maui

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 5:18:10 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tara Nash	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Esteemed Committee Members,

I support this measure because accessible and affordable healthcare should be available for everyone. Our state is only as strong as our most vulnerable members to include kupuna. Please support this bill to provide equitable healthcare for all Hawai'i residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 7:10:49 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bella Dadzie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 7:51:06 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jan Allen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support Bill HB1349. Thank you! Jan Allen

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 10:04:07 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gabriela Schneider	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because accessible, affordable, equitable healthcare for all is good for all.

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 9:47:14 AM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carl Bergquist	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Dear Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,**

**My name is Carl Bergquist, and I am submitting testimony in strong support of HB1349, which seeks to expand Medicaid coverage through the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status. This bill is not just about healthcare—it is about equity, public health, and the well-being of our most vulnerable residents.**

**As a former resident of Hawai’i, a proud 2019 graduate of the William S. Richardson School of Law who practices immigration law, and father of two daughters including one born at Queen Kapio’lani Medical Center (KMC), I write with personal knowledge and conviction that the expansion of Medicaid to these populations is a wise and justified investment in the future of Hawai’i and its population.**

**The care that my partner and our second daughter received at KMC those days in 2016 and prior to that at Kaiser Permanente Moanalua will live with us forever. There should be no doubt in the minds of any community member that such care is available to them regardless of their own immigration status as they prepare to give birth to, and raise, U.S. citizens.**

**My older daughter, who spent five wonderful, enriching years in Hawai’i with us, was born in Austin, Texas. Her birth was extremely complicated, and she required two weeks in the type of neonatal intensive care unit explicitly referenced in this bill’s text. I cannot imagine another parent being denied the life-affirming care she received when the option to expand Medicaid exists as presented here.**

**It is time that Hawai’i join the other 24 states and the District of Columbia and take this action.**

**Mahalo nui,**

**HB-1349**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 12:38:42 PM

Testimony for HSH on 2/6/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Renee Rabb	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for allowing me to testify in strong support for HB 1349 by Rep. Keohokapa-Lee Loy concerning appropriating funds for Medicaid coverage through CHIP to pregnant people and children regardless of immigration status.

If you really do believe in compassion, you will not refuse health coverage in these most tragic situations.

We have a chance to show what aloha really is. Please pass HB1349.

Renee Rabb

Keaau, HI 96749

Big Island