



‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAI‘I

Legislative Testimony

Hō‘ike Mana‘o I Mua O Ka ‘Aha‘ōlelo

LATE

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce
Thursday, February 6, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Bonnie Irwin, Chancellor

and

Rae Matsumoto, Dean

Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy

University of Hawai‘i at Hilo

HB 72 HD1 – RELATING TO PHARMACY

Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Chun, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 72 HD1. The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo (UH Hilo) supports HB 72 HD1, which will require the registration of pharmacy technicians through the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. Pharmacy technicians are career professionals working under the supervision of a pharmacist, and have an essential role in the daily operation of pharmacies.

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

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 72 HD1.

Testimony of the Board of Pharmacy

**Before the
House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Thursday, February 6, 2025
2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 329 and Videoconference**

**On the following measure:
H. B. 72, H.D. 1, RELATING TO PHARMACY**

Chair Matayoshi and Members of the Committee:

My name is Christopher Fernandez and I am the Executive Officer of the Board of Pharmacy (Board). The Board will meet on February 20, 2025 and take a position on this measure.

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) require pharmacy technicians to be registered; (2) impose a duty on pharmacists-in-charge to report violations conducted by registered pharmacy technicians; and (3) specify that supervising registered pharmacists are responsible for the actions of registered pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



Testimony presented before the House Committee on Consumer Protection
February 6, 2025

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

Honorable Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Chun, and Members of the Committee,

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

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

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

HPhA believes that HB72 is a crucial step toward strengthening Hawai'i's healthcare infrastructure. **We feel strongly given the current roles and responsibilities of pharmacy technicians, to include vaccine administration starting January of 2025, that this bill be swiftly implemented to ensure pharmacy technicians can continue to serve patients with the highest level of professionalism and safety.**

We suggest the following minor amendment:

-Removal of 'continuing education requirements' in Section 5 as requirements are not specified elsewhere within the bill.

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

Very Respectfully,

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



SanHi

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

DATE: February 5, 2025

TO: Representative Scot Matayoshi
Chair, House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Representative Cory Chun
Vice Chair, House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

FROM: Tiffany Yajima

RE: **H.B. 72, H.D.1 - Relating to Pharmacy**
Hearing Date: Thursday, February 6, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room: 329

Dear Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Chun, and Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce:

Walgreens submits this testimony in **support** of H.B. 72, H.D.1, which requires pharmacy technicians to be registered with the state. Walgreen Co. (“Walgreens”) operates stores at more than 9,000 locations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. In Hawaii, Walgreens has 13 stores on the islands of Oahu and Maui.

Walgreens supports the amendments made in the H.D.1 to 1) adopt a definition of “auxiliary personnel” for personnel such as cashiers whose responsibilities are purely clerical in nature; 2) clarify the specific duties of a pharmacy technician; 3) clarify pharmacist supervision of a technician; and 4) establish the specific functions of a pharmacy technician by statute versus by administrative rule.

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

The 2024 Legislature passed Act 104 that allows, in part, pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns the ability to administer immunizations and vaccinations to persons three years and older under the direct supervision of a pharmacist. This measure builds upon Act 104 to require that pharmacy technicians are registered by the state. This important measure will bring a regulatory framework to the critical role that pharmacy technicians fill, which Walgreens supports.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.



LATE *Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

50 EAST PUAINAKO STREET
HILO, HAWAII 96720

PHONE: 808-959-4575

Testimony for HB72: A bill to mandate pharmacy technician registration within the DCCA
House Committee on Health
Thursday, February 6, 2025
Testimony in SUPPORT of HB72

LATE

To the Honorable Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Chun, and Members of the Committee,

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

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



MOLOKA'I DRUGS, INC.
EST. 1935

LATE

January 30, 2025

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB72: RELATING TO PHARMACY

Dear Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Chun, and Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection:

As a rural healthcare provider, access to comprehensive, high-quality healthcare services is our mission at Moloka'i Drugs. On behalf of our employees and patients, I am testifying in favor of HB72, which will create necessary regulations for pharmacy technicians in our state.

At Moloka'i Drugs, now celebrating 90 years of service, our pharmacy technicians are essential in workflow management – from data entry, to helping confirm inventory management, to contacting providers on-island and off-island, to product dispensing, to giving the prescription to the verifying pharmacist, to returning the final medicine to the patient at point-of-sale

Hawai'i is the only state in the United States without an active, managed list of practicing pharmacy technicians. Beyond enhancing our Moloka'i patients' safety, this measure will lay the foundation for pharmacy technicians in Hawai'i to expand their scope of practice in the future. Across the country, pharmacy technicians are taking on advanced roles, such as administering immunizations and assisting with medication management. Right now, our pharmacy technicians administer over 50 percent of our immunizations.

Without regulation, Hawai'i risks falling behind in providing the best possible care to our communities, especially rural communities like Moloka'i with limited medical resources. Many of our people, especially our *kupuna*, have challenges getting on-island healthcare. With only one airline and no ferry providing transportation, our people have even more challenges getting to O'ahu, Maui, and the mainland for medical services and procedures.

HB72 comes at a very reasonable pricetag, and even small pharmacies such as Moloka'i Drugs are willing to pay for these regulations. On behalf of our 7,000 full-time residents, we ask that you support HB72 and help Hawai'i become the 50th state of fifty to finally align our pharmacy technicians with national standards. Our Moloka'i-based pharmacy technicians live full-time on our island and know our people. They work hand-in-hand with our licensed pharmacists. Our pharmacy technicians are essential healthcare employees and they help keep "Moloka'ians" healthy and thriving. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Mikami Svetin /s/

Kimberly Mikami Svetin
President
Moloka'i Drugs, Inc.
P.O. Box 558
Kaunakakai, HI 96748
Work 808-553-5790

Testimony for HB72: A bill to mandate pharmacy technician registration within the DCCA
House Committee on Health
February 4, 2025

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB72

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

As a pharmacist practicing in Hawai'i, I strongly support HB72, which seeks to establish critical regulations for pharmacy technicians in our state. Pharmacy technicians are essential in performing the following tasks that are critical to the workflow of the pharmacy

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

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

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

Lara Gomez, PharmD

HB-72-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 5:01:52 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/6/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony for HB72: A bill to mandate pharmacy technician registration within the DCCA

House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Thursday, February 6, 2025

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB72

To the Honorable Chair Scot Matayoshi, Vice Chair Cory Chun, and Members of the Committee,

As a pharmacist practicing in Hawai‘i, I strongly support HB72, which seeks to establish critical regulations for pharmacy technicians in our state. In my practice, pharmacy technicians are essential in performing the tasks that are critical to the workflow of the pharmacy, such as compound medications.

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Nicole Young, PharmD

Associate Professor of Pharmacy Practice and Critical Care Pharmacist

HB-72-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 5:10:54 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/6/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I am in full support of HB72 HD1. Mahalo

Testimony for HB72-HD1: A bill to mandate pharmacy technician registration within the DCCA
House Committee on Health
Wednesday Feb 4, 2025

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB72-HD1

To the Honorable Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Chun and Members of the Committee on
Consumer Protection & Commerce,

As a health economist in Hawai'i, I strongly support HB72-HD1, which seeks to establish critical regulations for pharmacy technicians in our state. Pharmacy technicians are essential in performing tasks that are critical to the workflow of the pharmacy.

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

Beyond enhancing patient safety, HB72-HD1 will lay the foundation for pharmacy technicians in Hawai'i to expand their scope of practice in the future. Across the country, pharmacy technicians are taking on advanced roles, such as administering immunizations and assisting with medication management. Without regulation, Hawai'i cannot adapt to these changes and risks falling behind in providing the best possible care to our communities. This initiative comes at a reasonable cost and represents a prudent investment in ensuring the safety, efficiency, and adaptability of our pharmacy workforce.

I urge the Committee to support HB72-HD1 and help Hawai'i align with national pharmacy technician regulation standards to strengthen pharmacy practice in our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deborah A. Taira', written over a rectangular box.

Deborah A. Taira, ScD

Health Economist

Date: February 5, 2025

To: The Honorable Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair
The Honorable Cory M. Chun, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: **Support for HB72 HD1**, Relating to Pharmacy

Hrg: Thursday February 6, 2025 at 2:00 pm via Videoconference Conference Room 329

Aloha House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce.

As a licensed Hawai'i pharmacist and retired Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy faculty, I am writing in **strong support of HB72 HD1**, which beginning 1/1/2026, requires pharmacy technicians to be registered; imposes a duty on pharmacists-in-charge to report violations conducted by registered pharmacy technicians; specifies that supervising registered pharmacists are responsible for the actions of registered pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns.

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

Hawai'i is the only state in the nation without an active, managed list of practicing pharmacy technicians, leaving a significant gap in oversight that can impact patient safety. **HB72 HD1** aligns with national pharmacy technician regulation standards to strengthen pharmacy practice in Hawai'i.

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

Beyond enhancing patient safety, **HB72 HD1** lays the foundation for pharmacy technicians in Hawai'i to expand their scope of practice in the future. Across the country, registered pharmacy technicians are taking on advanced roles. Without regulation, Hawai'i cannot adopt these changes and risks falling behind in providing the best possible care to our communities.

HB72 HD1 represents a prudent investment in the safety, efficiency, and adaptability of our pharmacy workforce into the future.

I **strongly support HB72 HD1**, respectfully ask you to pass it out of committee.

Many thanks for your consideration,

Forrest Batz, PharmD
Keaau, HI

Testimony for HB72-HD1: A bill to mandate pharmacy technician registration within the DCCA
House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce
Thursday, February 6, 2025
Testimony in SUPPORT of HB72-HD1

To the Honorable Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Chun, and Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce,

As a pharmacist practicing in Hawai'i, I strongly support HB72-HD1, which seeks to establish critical regulations for pharmacy technicians in our state. In my practice, pharmacy technicians are essential in performing the following tasks that are critical to the workflow of the pharmacy. Without quality technicians, the pharmacy cannot operate efficiently and effectively for the patients in the communities we serve.

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

Beyond enhancing patient safety, HB72-HD1 will lay the foundation for pharmacy technicians in Hawai'i to expand their scope of practice in the future. Across the country, pharmacy technicians are taking on advanced roles, such as administering immunizations and assisting with medication management. Without regulation, Hawai'i cannot adapt to these changes and risks falling behind in providing the best possible care to our communities. This initiative comes at a reasonable cost and represents a prudent investment in ensuring the safety, efficiency, and adaptability of our pharmacy workforce.

I urge the Committee to support HB72-HD1 and help Hawai'i align with national pharmacy technician regulation standards to strengthen pharmacy practice in our state.

Sincerely,

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

Faith Hicks, Pharm D.

Relief Pharmacist, KTA Pharmacy

HB-72-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 1:15:27 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/6/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beverly Zilonis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Beverly Zilonis CPhT-Adv and I fully support HB 72. I have been a pharmacy technician with an advanced pharmacy technician certification since 2006. I started my career in the Bay area of Northern California and moved to Hawai'i in 2011. In the state of California, pharmacy technicians are required to either go to school or take the national exam (PTCB) to get licensed in that state including doing a background check that includes fingerprinting. I have had the privilege of working in a pharmacy technician registered state and a non-pharmacy technician registered State and have seen very clear differences. For almost 14 years I worked for Walgreens. I started working for them in California and transferred to their new branch on the Big Island of Hawai'i. After I transferred, my experience as a senior technician for them changed drastically. I was tasked with training the technician staff for the store. Unfortunately, there is no requirement for pharmacy technicians in the State of Hawai'i. My new technicians had no pharmacy background and no prior knowledge of pharmaceuticals. Training in a retail setting is already difficult and demanding due to hours and workload, but it was overwhelming to train someone that I not only had to teach how to do this job, I had to teach them what a pharmacy technician is supposed to know and the sense of responsibility that you should have towards patient safety. Many technicians unfortunately here didn't understand the lack of job opportunities and the professional recognition from fellow staff. Most people in the public do not realize how much the pharmacy technicians contribute to patient safety and pharmacy compliance. Pharmacists are there to double check us and ensure patient safety, but pharmacy technicians are the first line. Pharmacy technicians need to have the tools to make the best judgment when they are taking in prescriptions. Pharmacists have a heavy workload. Some pharmacies are just one pharmacist on duty and that pharmacist needs to be able to count on their technicians. In addition to this legislature HB 72 there is another piece of legislation being proposed, SB 324 which mandates reimbursement for services provided by participating registered pharmacists practicing within their scope of practice by private and public health plans. Having a registry for pharmacy technicians will help ensure not only patient safety but that the pharmacists feel supported in knowing they have knowledgeable staff.

Best Regards,
Beverly Zilonis CPhT-Adv
mana8311@gmail.com