

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

TRISTA SPEER
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

February 6, 2024

To: The Honorable Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

The Honorable Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2783 – RELATING TO MEDICAID.**

Hearing: February 7, 2024, 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 225, State Capitol & Video Conference

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this bill as long as it does not reduce or replace the priorities identified in the Governor's budget.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds to the Department of Human Services for Medicaid coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program for income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status, and declares that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded.

DHS believes there is a clear benefit to the state to ensure all residents, regardless of immigration status, have access to health care. DHS supports the increase in appropriation detailed in this bill as long as it does not reduce or replace the priorities identified in the Governor's budget. For reference, DHS prefers that the increase be included in the executive budget bill as a recurring appropriation so that the coverage will be ongoing. Per [Senate](#)

February 6, 2024

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[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.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF S.B. 2783

Wednesday, February 7, 2024 @ 1pm
Rm 225
Committee on Health and Human Services
Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

Testimony in Strong Support of SB 2783 Relating to Medicaid
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 S.B. 2783**.

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.

In 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.¹ 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.² 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 \$1,364,000.³

Long-standing medical consensus also holds that healthcare services for children are fundamental to their well-being and development. Nevertheless, even in bona fide emergencies, undocumented immigrants in Hawai'i hesitate to utilize emergency rooms to access healthcare for their undocumented immigrant children. Their fears that they and their uninsured children may be reported to the United States are not unfounded. The Med-Quest Division, Department of Human Services estimates coverage for approximately 4,000 income-qualified undocumented children will range from \$2,976,000 to \$9,600,000 in state funds.

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

¹ Annual Report on Child Death Review and Maternal Mortality Review Activities, State of Hawaii Department of Health, December 2023.

² Key Facts on Health Coverage of Immigrants, Kaiser Family Foundation, September 2003.

³ A Report on Providing Certain Health Insurance Coverage for All Children and Pregnant Persons Who Would Otherwise Qualify for Coverage If Not for Their Immigration Status, Relating to Senate Concurrent Resolution 183, House Draft 3 (2003), Med-Quest Division, Department of Human Services, December 2003.

recognize the substantial federal and state tax contributions made by Hawai'i's undocumented residents, reported at \$65.3 million and \$47.6 million respectively in 2018.⁴

⁴ American Immigration Council, 2020



To: The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
The Honorable Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
The Honorable Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

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

Hearing: Wednesday, February 7, 2024, 1:00 p.m., Conference Room 225

RE: **SB2783 Relating to Medicaid**

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of SB2783**. This measure would provide Medicaid coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for children and pregnant persons who would otherwise qualify for coverage if not for their immigration status.

Founded in 1994 by Hawai'i's community health centers, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving over 80,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members on all islands. Approximately 40 percent of our membership 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.

AlohaCare is committed to ensuring and advocating for access to quality health care for all, regardless of immigration status. While estimates range, according to Pew Research Center estimates, in 2016, Hawai'i was home to 45,000 undocumented immigrants, making up 17% of the state's immigrant population and 3% of the state's total population. The same study estimates that undocumented workers are overrepresented in the state's labor force at 4.5% primarily in the leisure/hospitality and agriculture industries.¹ According to the American Immigration Council, using 2021 American Community Survey data, millions of undocumented immigrants across the nation are working, contributing billions of dollars to the U.S. economy. In Hawai'i in 2021, the American Immigration Council

¹ [Pew Research Center. "U.S. unauthorized immigrant population estimates by state, 2016." February 5, 2019.](#)

estimates the number of undocumented immigrants at 30,977 paying \$69.5 million in federal taxes and \$43.9 million in state and local taxes.²

According to testimony from Hawai`i Friends of Civil Rights to the Senate Health & Human Services Committee on SB842, many of the 45,000 undocumented persons in Hawai`i secure health care insurance through the Hawaii 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—and are unable to access the health care they need to live healthy, stable lives and be fully participating members of our communities.

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.

AlohaCare supports this measure to ensure access to preventive and comprehensive care for all, regardless of immigration status, and to strengthen the Medicaid program. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in **support of SB2783**.

² [American Immigration Council, Map The Impact: "New Americans in Hawaii," accessed February 5, 2024.](#)



**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB2783
RELATING TO MEDICAID**

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE COMMERCE & CONSUMER PROTECTION

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair

Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: February 7, 2024

Dear Chairs San Buenaventura and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Aquino and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights (HCIR) fully **supports SB2783**, which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services for Medicaid coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program for income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status.

Access to high-quality healthcare is a fundamental right. Approximately five hundred pregnant persons and four thousand income-qualified children in our state are harshly denied access to affordable healthcare simply due to their immigration status. Denial of access to health care creates cycles of disadvantage through poorer health outcomes and greater economic hardships for our immigrant families. This is an unacceptable injustice that demands immediate correction.

This investment in preventive care and early intervention not only saves lives but also saves the state money in the long-term. By detecting and addressing health issues early, the bill reduces the need for expensive treatments and emergency room visits. This strategic action, furthermore, mitigates the cost of treating complications related to pregnancy, childbirth, and childhood illnesses, ultimately leading to healthier communities and decreased healthcare expenses associated with managing chronic conditions and disabilities in the future.

The evidence-based studies recognized in the bill paint a distressing picture of the consequences of limited access to healthcare for pregnant persons and children. Pregnant immigrants without prenatal care face significantly higher risks of premature birth and neonatal death. These risks are not just statistics; they represent real lives, real families, and real communities.

Thank you for your support and consideration,
Maria Rallojay
Policy and Communications Coordinator



February 1, 2024

To: COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
COMMITTEE COMMERCE & CONSUMER PROTECTION
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

Re: SUPPORT of SB2783 - Relating to Medicaid

Hrg: Wednesday, February 7, 2024, 1:00 PM, Conference room 225

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 450 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. Our mission is to promote public health in Hawai'i through leadership, collaboration, education and advocacy. Additionally, HPHA aims to call attention to issues around social justice and equity in areas that extend beyond the traditional context of health (e.g., education, digital equity, cultural sensitivity), which can have profound impacts on health equity and well-being. Therefore, as stewards of public health, HPHA is also advocating for equity in all policies.

HPHA supports SB2783 as the bill aims to appropriate funds to the Department of Human Services for Medicaid coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program for income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status. Access to high-quality healthcare is a fundamental right. Approximately five hundred pregnant persons and four thousand income-qualified children in our state face the harsh reality of being denied affordable healthcare simply due to their immigration status. This is an unacceptable injustice that demands immediate correction.

The evidence-based studies presented in the bill paint a distressing picture of the consequences of limited access to healthcare for pregnant persons and children. Pregnant immigrants without prenatal care face significantly higher risks of premature birth and neonatal death. These risks are not just statistics; they represent real lives, real families, and real communities.

HPHA strongly supports SB2783 and respectfully asks that you pass this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important public health issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Kessler
Executive Director



Hawaii Medical Association

1360 South Beretania Street, Suite 200 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Phone: 808.536.7702 • Fax: 808.528.2376 • hawaiimedicalassociation.org

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

Date: February 7, 2024
From: Hawaii Medical Association
Elizabeth England, MD
Chair, HMA Public Policy Committee

Re: SB2783, RELATING TO MEDICAID
Position: Support

Dear Chairs San Buenaventura and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Aquino and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT of SB2783**, which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services for Medicaid coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program for income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status.

Approximately five hundred pregnant persons and four thousand income-qualified children in our state face the harsh reality of being denied affordable healthcare simply due to their immigration status. Improving access to healthcare has a profound impact on short and long-term outcomes for these patients. Children born to undocumented immigrant mothers without insurance coverage are more likely to have negative health outcomes^{1,2}. Conversely, those with Medicaid coverage are less likely to be born premature or with a low birthweight. Furthermore, these children are more likely to have receive higher education and require fewer public services in their future³. Investments for our patients are not only a moral obligation, but a financially prudent one. A recent study in the National Bureau of Economic Research found that “over the long-run, the government more than recoups the cost of its initial investment of providing Medicaid coverage to these families”³.

To improve outcomes for all of our patients, the HMA stands in strong support of this measure.

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2024 Hawaii Medical Association Public Policy Coordination Team

Beth England, MD, Chair
Linda Rosehill, JD, Government Relations • Marc Alexander, Executive Director

REFERENCES

1. Committee on Health Care for Underserved Women. “Health Care for Immigrants.” *Www.acog.org*, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 19 Jan. 2023, www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-statement/articles/2023/01/health-care-for-immigrants.
2. Miller, Sarah, et al. “Covering Undocumented Immigrants: The Effects of a Large-Scale Prenatal Care Intervention.” *NBER*, 1 Aug. 2022, www.nber.org/papers/w30299.
3. *Undocumented Immigrants in the United States: Access to Prenatal Care – Undocumented Immigrants and Health Care Access in the United States*. undocumented.thehastingscenter.org/issuebrief/undocumented-immigrants-in-the-united-states-access-to-prenatal-care/.

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Helping Hawai'i Live Well

Testimony to the Committee on Health & Human Services

Friday, February 7th, 2024, 1:00 p.m.

Videoconference

SB2783, Relating to Medicaid

ADVISORY BOARD

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Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga, and members of the Senate Committee on Health & Human Services!

We write in strong support of SB2783, which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services for Medicaid coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program for income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status.

PRO BONO LEGAL COUNSEL

Paul Alston

Mental Health America of Hawai'i (MHAH), an affiliate of the renowned national organization, is a highly regarded 501(c)(3) non-profit organization serving the State of Hawai'i. For nearly 80 years, MHAH has been fulfilling its mission "to promote mental health & wellness through education, advocacy, service, and access to care" through its vision of 'mental wellness for all.' We endeavor to reduce the shame and stigma of mental illness and improve the overall care, treatment, and empowerment of those with or at risk for mental health challenges across all stages of life in Hawai'i.

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Access to affordable high-quality healthcare is a human right and critical to successful health outcomes for all people in Hawai'i. According to the American Immigration Council, undocumented immigrants make up 17% of Hawai'i's immigrant population. Evidence shows that undocumented immigrants are less likely to be insured, and many fear accessing assistance programs, including health coverage, especially with the current national political climate. Enhanced access for this community is especially important considering the ongoing youth mental health crisis and advancing traumatic impacts of the Maui fires.

We strongly urge you to pass this legislation, and we are grateful for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

Respectfully,



Bryan L. Talisayan
Executive Director

Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
RE: SB2783 in strong support
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 225
February 7, 2024; 1:00pm

Dear Chairs San Buenaventura and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Aquino and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT of Senate Bill 2783** relating to Medicaid.

SB2783 appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services for Medicaid coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status.

Access to high-quality healthcare is a fundamental right. Approximately five hundred pregnant persons and four thousand income-qualified children in our state face the harsh reality of being denied affordable healthcare simply due to their immigration status. This is an unacceptable injustice that demands immediate correction. The evidence-based studies presented in the bill paint a distressing picture of the consequences of limited access to healthcare for pregnant persons and children.

Currently, [twelve states](#) plus the District of Columbia allow income-eligible children to enroll in Medicaid or CHIP regardless of their immigration status. Hawai'i should join the growing number of states that are considering such coverage.

Keiki with health insurance coverage have better health outcomes compared to those without coverage. [Poor health](#) can adversely affect children's academic achievement, which in turn can undermine their health and financial security into adulthood. When children have health insurance, their parents can use more of their income on other basic needs, such as food and housing.

Extending coverage is both compassionate and smart. It is hard to accept that some children are deprived of health care in the Aloha State. In addition, the pandemic has taught us the important public health lesson that having a healthy population, regardless of people's immigration status, is a benefit to the entire state and economy. Let us support our most vulnerable populations, our young keiki.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Mai Hall, M.Ed.
Children's Health Coordinator



ACOG
The American College of
Obstetricians and Gynecologists

*American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
Hawai'i, Guam & American Samoa Section*

TO: Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

DATE: Wednesday, February 7, 2024

FROM: ACOG Hawai'i Section
Angel Willey, MD, FACOG, Chair
Reni Soon, MD, FACOG, Legislative Chair

**Re: SB 2783 – Relating to Medicaid
Position: SUPPORT**

As a section of the Nation's leading group of physicians dedicated to improving reproductive health care, the Hawai'i Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (HI ACOG) **strongly supports SB 2783**. This legislation would provide appropriations to the Department of Human Services to authorize Medicaid coverage to income-qualified pregnant persons and children regardless of immigration status, and would **promote access to safe, high-quality maternity and infant healthcare** for all of Hawai'i's families.

As OBGYNs, we know the importance of prenatal care. Without prenatal care, critical maternal conditions can be missed and evidence shows a higher occurrence of premature and low-birth weight babies. Preventing these conditions makes prenatal care cost effective as well. We have all experienced the frustration of taking care of a patient with a complication that was preventable if only she had had prenatal care, but had been unable to access that essential basic healthcare solely because of her immigration status. This denial of healthcare access can have long-term consequences on both mother and baby.

Approximately five hundred pregnant persons and four thousand income-qualified children in our state are denied affordable healthcare simply due to their immigration status. This is an unacceptable injustice that demands immediate correction. These risks are not just statistics; they represent real lives, real families, and real communities here in Hawai'i.

HI ACOG thanks the Hawai'i State Legislature for showing its commitment to improving maternal health in Hawai'i by recently approving funds to extend Medicaid postpartum coverage to 12 months. It is time to join 20 other states in expanding this access to health care to ALL of Hawaii's pregnant people and children regardless of immigration status. For these reasons, HI ACOG supports SB 2783 and we respectfully urge you to pass this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry Aquino, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: February 7, 2024

ACS CAN SUPPORTS SB 2783 – RELATING TO MEDICAID.

Cynthia Au, Government Relations Director – Hawaii Guam
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

Thank you for the opportunity to **SUPPORT** SB 2783 – RELATING TO MEDICAID which appropriates funds for the Department of Human Services to purchase health care services for certain low-income, uninsured immigrants.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), the nonprofit, non-partisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society advocates for public policies that reduce death and suffering from cancer. ACS CAN works with federal, state, and local government bodies to support evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) expanded health insurance coverage to millions of Americans. However, despite these coverage gains, twelve years after the law was enacted approximately 27 million people in the United States remain uninsured.ⁱ Data shows that noncitizens are more likely to be uninsured. In 2020, 26% of lawfully present individuals and 42% of undocumented immigrants were uninsured, compared to only 8 percent of U.S. citizens.ⁱⁱ

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network believes that everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer. Cancer impacts everyone and key to eliminating disparities and ensuring health equity is to guarantee that all individuals have access to affordable coverage. Access to care for those who are undocumented not only ensures that serious diseases like cancer can be detected and treated earlier but also often means better patient outcomes and less costs to the individual and the system.

This position is an extension of ACS CAN's existing work to advocate for access to affordable, comprehensive coverage to better prevent, treat and survive cancer regardless of citizenship status thereby ending cancer as we know it for everyone.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT on this important matter. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Government Relations Director Cynthia Au at 808.460.6109, or Cynthia.Au@Cancer.org.

ⁱ United States Census Bureau. Health insurance coverage in the United States: 2021. Sept. 13, 2022. Available at <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2022/demo/p60-278.html#:~:text=In%202021%2C%208.3%20percent%20of,8.6%20percent%20or%2028.3%20million>).

ⁱⁱ Kaiser Family Foundation. Health coverage of immigrants. Apr. 6, 2022. Available at <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/fact-sheet/health-coverage-of-immigrants/>.

LATE



Testimony in SUPPORT of SB2783 - RELATING TO MEDICAID

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair

Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

February 7, 2024 | 1:00pm | Conference Room 225

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,

The Legal Clinic (“TLC”) submits testimony in **SUPPORT of SB2783**, advocating for the fundamental right to equitable healthcare access for all individuals, regardless of immigration status. Recognizing healthcare as pivotal to public health, SB2783 addresses the current denial of affordable healthcare to approximately 500 pregnant individuals and 4,000 income-qualified children in the state. Evidence-based studies highlight the heightened risks associated with limited healthcare access for pregnant individuals and their newborns. While twenty states provide Medicaid coverage to income-qualified pregnant residents, Hawai‘i encounters challenges related to the high cost of neonatal care. The proposed Act seeks to allocate funds to the Department of Human Services to authorize Medicaid coverage for income-qualified pregnant individuals and children, irrespective of immigration status. Babies born in Hawai‘i will, by definition, be born U.S. citizens. If the parent is undocumented, or awaiting documentation, the parent may be fearful to request hospital or other medical assistance, before, during, or after giving birth. This legislation aligns with TLC’s core values of human rights and access to justice. By supporting SB2783, we aim to contribute to a more inclusive and healthier community, ensuring that vulnerable populations receive the essential healthcare services they need.

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration,

Bettina Mok

Executive Director, The Legal Clinic

director@tlchawaii.org

SB-2783

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 6:21:35 AM

Testimony for HHS on 2/7/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ronnie Texeira	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB2783

RELATING TO MEDICAID

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE COMMERCE & CONSUMER PROTECTION

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair

Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: February 7, 2024

Dear Chairs San Buenaventura and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Aquino and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing in support of SB2783, which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services for Medicaid coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program for income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status.

Access to high-quality healthcare is a fundamental right. Approximately five hundred pregnant persons and four thousand income-qualified children in our state face the harsh reality of being denied affordable healthcare simply due to their immigration status. This is an unacceptable injustice that demands immediate correction.

The evidence-based studies presented in the bill paint a distressing picture of the consequences of limited access to healthcare for pregnant persons and children. Pregnant immigrants without prenatal care face significantly higher risks of premature birth and neonatal death. These risks are not just statistics; they represent real lives, real families, and real communities.

Thank you for your support and consideration,

Ronnie Texeira, MD

SB-2783

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 2:33:09 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/7/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Avery Olson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an OBGYN in Hawaii, I am consistently seeing patients covered under Medicaid. Medicaid already insures about 50% of pregnant patients in the nation, but it does not provide coverage to one crucial group in Hawaii. That group is recent immigrants. I recently was caring for a patient in our free clinic who is a recent immigrant to Hawaii. She just delivered a baby without prenatal care, and now was struggling with postpartum depression. While she was able to get postnatal care (although the clinic was not reimbursed), she was unable to get in person behavioral health services. She struggled for months to figure out her immigration status, all the while struggling with a new infant and severe postpartum depression. This bill would have changed the support she was able to receive in a crucial period.

I think of those who are affected by the Maui fires, and the associated depressive disorders that have followed. Not unlike my patient, those who are working on their immigration status will not be able to receive care. Maui is already a place with limited providers, and those providers are unlikely to take someone who is not covered by Medicaid when they are already overburdened.

Please vote yes on SB2783 to provide care coverage to every member of our community.
Mahalo.

SB-2783

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 9:16:58 AM

Testimony for HHS on 2/7/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia J. Goto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

SB-2783

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 11:25:25 AM

Testimony for HHS on 2/7/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Genesis Gil	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairs San Buenaventura and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Aquino and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing in support of SB2783, which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services for Medicaid coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program for income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status.

Access to high-quality healthcare is a fundamental right. Approximately five hundred pregnant persons and four thousand income-qualified children in our state face the harsh reality of being denied affordable healthcare simply due to their immigration status. This is an unacceptable injustice that demands immediate correction.

Healthcare is a human right and it deserves to be treated as such despite status. Since the overturn of Roe v Wade, women and children deserve more protection. As a mother I want all children and women to receive equitable and just care. Please consider supporting this bill, as it will ensure a healthy life for a marginalized group of individuals.

The evidence-based studies presented in the bill paint a distressing picture of the consequences of limited access to healthcare for pregnant persons and children. Pregnant immigrants without prenatal care face significantly higher risks of premature birth and neonatal death. These risks are not just statistics; they represent real lives, real families, and real communities.

Thank you for your support and consideration,

Genesis Gil

SB-2783

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 7:55:48 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/7/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
M. Maykin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a Maternal-Fetal Medicine physician in Hawai‘i and part of my job entails diagnosing devastating fetal malformations. I'll always remember a particular case of a young woman who was getting her first ultrasound late in pregnancy. Rather than joyful news, I had to tell her that her baby had a major congenital defect and may not survive long after birth. Moreover, the baby's condition could make her critically ill as well. This family needed such intensive care for the pregnancy including referrals to specialists, additional specialized ultrasound exams, and monitoring of the baby to prepare for delivery. Due to her immigration status and inability to obtain medicaid, we could not even schedule her next appointment let alone provide any of the additional services she needed. If our aim is to dismantle barriers to healthcare and limit perinatal morbidity, we must care for pregnant people regardless of their immigration status. I support SB 2783 which would provide medicaid coverage to income-qualified pregnant persons and children regardless of immigration status.

SB-2783

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 10:34:56 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/7/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Yang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm an OBGYN on Oahu, and I have cared for many patients who could not obtain insurance due to their immigration status. I recall one patient who was flown to Oahu emergently from Maui for very preterm labor, and spontaneously delivered her nonviable pregnancy soon after. She didn't speak English, and through an interpreter she told me that she did not seek prenatal care because she did not have immigration status. She relocated with her partner to Maui for construction work. Immigrants have always been part of Hawai'i's community and deserve the right to affordable health care without fear of repercussions of their immigration status or inability to pay. I myself was an immigrant and recall how hard my parents worked to afford health care for us, and how we had to scrape by. I strongly support SB2783 so that I can care for all of my patients equally.

SB-2783

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 2:04:39 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/7/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimberly Nagamine, MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am an OBGYN in Hawaii, and I take care of patients who have struggled to obtain prenatal care because they do not qualify for medicaid insurance solely because of immigration status. We know the importance of prenatal care, and this is unjust. Please pass this measure.

SB-2783

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 9:06:52 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/7/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Harris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB2783

RELATING TO MEDICAID

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE COMMERCE & CONSUMER PROTECTION

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair

Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: February 7, 2024

Dear Chairs San Buenaventura and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Aquino and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing in support of SB2783, which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services for Medicaid coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program for income-qualified pregnant persons and children, regardless of immigration status.

Access to high-quality healthcare is a fundamental right. Approximately five hundred pregnant persons and four thousand income-qualified children in our state face the harsh reality of being denied affordable healthcare simply due to their immigration status. This is an unacceptable injustice that demands immediate correction.

I am currently a practicing OBGYN in Central Oahu but when I did my training through the University of Hawai'i, I took care of patients at Kokua Kalihi Valley. There I saw several patients who were uninsured due to their immigration status. They needed ultrasounds and lab testing which they often did not complete as they could not afford them without insurance coverage.

The evidence-based studies presented in the bill paint a distressing picture of the consequences of limited access to healthcare for pregnant persons and children. Pregnant immigrants without prenatal care face significantly higher risks of premature birth and neonatal death. These risks are not just statistics; they represent real lives, real families, and real communities.

Thank you for your support and consideration,

Sara Harris, MD

SB-2783

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 7:09:48 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/7/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shandhini Raidoo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am an ob/gyn and I strongly support this bill. I have seen many patients who are unable to obtain Medicaid insurance because of their immigration status. This is unjust and results in people not getting the care that they need and having poorer health outcomes. I strongly urge you to support this bill.

Sincerely,

Shandhini Raidoo, MD MPH

SB-2783

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 8:54:53 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/7/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kareem Khozaim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am an OBGYN in Hawaii, and I take care of patients who have struggled to obtain prenatal care because they do not qualify for medicaid insurance solely because of immigration status. We know the importance of prenatal care, and this is unjust. Please pass this measure.