



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

By

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

SB 119 SD1 – RELATING TO NURSING

Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee:

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

The UH recognizes the pressing and growing workforce shortages in health care across the state, particularly in nursing, where demand consistently outpaces supply. As the state's healthcare needs evolve, it is crucial to address this shortage proactively, especially in underserved areas like Maui. Expanding the capacity of nursing programs is essential to providing the skilled healthcare professionals necessary to meet these demands and ensure the health and well-being of our communities.

The [UH Regents Policy 4.207](#), Community College System acknowledges the critical role that neighbor island community colleges play in providing accessible education and career pathways. However, the absence of a BSN program on Maui has created a barrier for local students who must currently leave the island to pursue this advanced degree, limiting their educational and professional opportunities. By offering a BSN program at UH Maui College, the Community Colleges can directly respond to this gap and reduce the need for students to relocate, which may lead to fewer returning to Maui after completing their studies. This would help keep talented nurses in the community, providing a more sustainable workforce and better meeting local healthcare needs. The UH is also cognizant of the importance of using our budget resources wisely and being careful not to duplicate existing programs.

SB 119 SD1 clearly states “[t]he legislature believes that offering a bachelor of science in nursing program at the university of Hawaii Maui college can help to increase the supply of nurse graduates, reduce the nursing workforce shortage, and allow Maui nursing students to remain on Maui during their entire course of study.” The UH concurs with the legislature's assessment and believes that providing a local BSN program will not only address workforce shortages but will also support the professional growth of our nursing students who are invested in serving their home communities. The lack of a BSN program on Maui is not only a local concern but a matter of statewide significance,

as it limits access to higher education for nursing students in a critical area of health care.

In alignment with this vision, the Authorization to Plan for the BSN at UH Maui College has been submitted to the Council of Chief Academic Officers as part of the academic program actions process. This is a step toward ensuring that we can offer a fully comprehensive nursing education program that meets both the local needs of Maui residents and the long-term goals of the state's health care system.

The funding from SB 119 SD1 is essential for establishing this program, which will support students taking the new BSN prerequisites and enable the hiring of additional faculty to ensure the program's success. This funding will allow us to provide a high-quality, locally accessible nursing education while also supporting workforce retention in Maui's healthcare sector. By creating this opportunity on Maui, we will not only address the immediate need for more nurses but will also lay the foundation for a more resilient and sustainable healthcare system in Hawai'i.

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

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

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



**Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 2:00 PM
Conference Room 309 and videoconference**

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

Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 119, S.D. 1

Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and members of the committee:

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

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

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

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

There is demand for BSN education on Maui:

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

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

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

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



OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 119 SD 1
RELATING TO NURSING**

House Committee on Higher Education
Hawai'i State Capitol

March 12, 2025

2:00PM

Room 309

Dear Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the House Committee on Higher Education:

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

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

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

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

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

To improve both educational opportunities for our neighbor island residents and access for Native Hawaiian to culturally competent, community-centered care, OHA urges this committee to **PASS SB 119 SD 1**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



Rosalee Agas Yuu, RN
President

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Honolulu, HI 96815

Tel: (808) 531-1628
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The Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawai'i
House Committee on Higher Education

Testimony by
Hawaii Nurses Association

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB119 SD1 – RELATING TO ESTABLISH A
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAM AT UH HAWAII MAUI
COLLEGE**

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

March 12, 2025 2:00 PM

Conference Room 309, Hawaii State Capitol

Aloha Chair Garrett and Vice Chair Amatoi, and Honorable Members of the house Committee on Higher Education:

The Hawai'i Nurses Association – OPEIU Local 50 is affiliated with the AFL-CIO, was founded in 1917, and represents 4,000 nurses in the State of Hawai'i. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of SB 119 SD1.

The Hawai'i Nurses' Association strongly supports SB119 SD1, which appropriates funds to establish a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program at the University of Hawai'i Maui College. Nurses play a critical role in Hawai'i's healthcare system, providing essential, hands-on care that directly impacts patient outcomes. However, the ongoing nursing shortage makes it increasingly difficult to maintain safe staffing levels, placing a strain on both nurses and the patients they serve. By expanding access to a BSN program on Maui, we can strengthen our local workforce and ensure that Hawai'i residents receive the high-quality care they deserve.

When there are not enough nurses, patient care suffers, leading to increased wait times, higher rates of medical complications, and burnout among healthcare workers. Locally educated nurses are more likely to remain in their communities, helping to stabilize staffing levels and reduce turnover. Additionally, Hawai'i nurses bring a deep understanding of the culture, values, and unique health needs of our residents, allowing them to provide compassionate, culturally competent care. Patients benefit from caregivers who share their background and can communicate with them in ways that foster trust and healing.

Establishing a BSN program at UH Maui College is an investment in the future of healthcare in Hawai'i. By creating opportunities for local students to pursue nursing careers without leaving home, we can build a stronger, more resilient healthcare system. The passage of SB119 SD1 will

help address the nursing shortage and ensure that our communities receive the safe, high-quality care they need. We urge the Legislature to support this critical initiative.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Philips". The ink is dark and the signature is centered on the page.

Carol Philips
Legislative Liaison
Hawai'i Nurses' Association



March 12, 2025 at 2:00 pm
Conference Room 309

House Committee on Higher Education

To: Chair Andrew Takuya Garrett
Vice Chair Terez Amato

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

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

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), established in 1939, serves as the leading voice of healthcare on behalf of 170 member organizations who represent almost every aspect of the health care continuum in Hawaii. Members include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities and durable medical equipment suppliers. In addition to providing access to appropriate, affordable, high-quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 30,000 people statewide.

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

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

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

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



March 10, 2025

To: COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Andrew Takuya Garrett, Chair
Rep. Terez Amato, Vice Chair

Re: SUPPORT OF SB119 SD1 RELATING TO NURSING

Hrg: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 2pm

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

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

The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing conducts research on the nursing workforce at the time of nursing license renewal. The survey questions include inquiry into demographics, licensure, certifications, positions, hours worked, educational history, and more. In 2023, survey responses from nurses in Maui indicated the following:

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

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

There is demand for BSN education on Maui:

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

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

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

Respectfully submitted,

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

Holly Kessler
Executive Director

**Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education**

HEARING: Wednesday March 12, 2:00P.M.

PLACE: Room 309 State Capital and via videoconference



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

SB119SD1 – Relating to Nursing

Chair Rep. Andrew Takuya Garrett, Vice Chair Rep. Terez Amato, and members of the House Committee on Higher Education thank you for providing this opportunity for Hawai'i - American Nurses Association (Hawai'i-ANA) to provide testimony **in strong support of SB119, SD1** that seeks to appropriate funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program at the University of Hawai'i Maui College.

Hawai'i-ANA is the state's premier professional nursing organization that fosters high standards of professional nursing practice, promotes safe and ethical work environments, and advocates on health care issues that affect nurses and the public.

We stand in strong support of this bill appropriating funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program at the University of Hawai'i Maui College (UHMC).

Currently, UHMC educates registered nurses (RNs) for an associates degree in nursing, whereas the preference of facilities in Hawai'i, including Maui, seeking to hire RNs is for

those prepared with a bachelor's degree. We need well-prepared nurses who understand and know the culture of Hawai'i, who do not need to leave their home island to achieve their dreams of a job and further education. We strongly support and promote education programs such as the BSN being offered on Maui to increase the number of graduating nurses in our state with a bachelor's degree, whom we can retain in the islands.

Hawai'i-ANA respectfully asks the committee to pass SB119SD1 through your committee. We thank your committee for its commitment to the people of Hawai'i, in ensuring that we educate and retain local nurses throughout the state to care for all of us. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

Contact information for Hawai'i – American Nurses Association:

President: Dr. Denise Cohen, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, president@hawaii-ana.org

Executive Director: Elizabeth M. Kahakua, BSN executivedirector@hawaii-ana.org

phone (808) 779-3001 500 Lunalilo Home Road, #27-E, Honolulu HI 96825



ALOHACARE

To: The Honorable Andrew Takuya Garrett, Chair
The Honorable Terez Amato, Vice Chair
House Committee on Higher Education

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

Hearing: Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 2:00 p.m., Conference room 309

RE: **SB 119 SD1 Relating to Nursing**

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of SB119 SD1**, which appropriates funds to the UH system for a nursing program.

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.

AlohaCare is committed to improving access to care. We support this measure as a critical and effective way to address chronic healthcare workforce shortages and expand the pipeline of nurses and other allied professions.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in **support of SB119 SD1**.

TESTIMONY OF DR. ALLAN WEILAND

HB 617 AND SB 119

Good morning. I am Dr. Allan Weiland, a retired Medical Administrator for Kaiser Permanente and Assistant Governor for Rotary on Maui. I am testifying in favor of creating a 4-year Bachelor's of Nursing degree program at UH Maui College.

Maui has a substantial shortage of nurses and other health personnel. The only nursing training program on our island currently is at UH Maui College. They offer both a Certificate and an Associate's Degree program for nurses, but not a 4-year Bachelor's degree. The students in the program are mostly older, with a family. They are less mobile than younger students, and often are sole family support. There are lots of job opportunities, and so after graduation, these students are able to get work here. Very few go on to get a more advanced degree at a school off-island that would open the door to a large array of nursing careers.

After the fires of August 8, 2023, Maui has a shortage of housing. It is difficult to bring in trained nursing staff to fill the gaps in care that exist. It would be more effective to train our own on Maui, by allowing UH Maui College to offer the advanced nursing degrees.

The need exists; there are jobs available; many students would take advantage of a local advanced degree program if it existed here.

Thank you for your time.

Allan Weiland, MD

Rotary Assistant Governor for
Maui Coastal Clubs

SB-119-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 5:45:04 PM

Testimony for HED on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Garrett and Vice Chair Amato and Members of the House of Representatives Committee on Higher Education,

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

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

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

Kathleen Hagan, Adult Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Educator

Paia, Hawaii

SB-119-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 11:02:04 PM

Testimony for HED on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Desiree Constance De La Espriella	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Desiree De La Espriella, and I am writing to express my strong support for the appropriation of funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program at the University of Hawai‘i Maui College. As a current student and future nursing professional, I can attest to the growing need for more advanced nursing education in our community, and the UHMC BSN program would directly address this need.

Maui, and the surrounding islands, are facing significant healthcare challenges, particularly in rural areas where there is a shortage of skilled nurses. The creation of a BSN program would not only help bridge this gap but also enhance the quality of care provided to our residents. Currently, students must leave the island to pursue higher-level nursing education, which can be both financially and emotionally burdensome. By establishing a BSN program here at UHMC, we can retain local talent and produce highly skilled nurses who are deeply connected to the community they serve.

Furthermore, the healthcare industry increasingly demands nurses with a BSN due to the advanced clinical skills and leadership abilities that the degree imparts. By offering this program at UHMC, we would be equipping local nursing students with the knowledge and tools necessary to excel in a rapidly evolving healthcare landscape, ensuring that they are ready to take on leadership roles in the future.

The UHMC BSN program would also benefit the broader economy by providing more opportunities for local employment, reducing the reliance on mainland-trained nurses, and strengthening Maui's healthcare infrastructure. This program would align with the state's commitment to addressing healthcare disparities, especially in underserved communities, and would be a key investment in the health and well-being of our entire population.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to support the appropriation of funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at UHMC. This program will not only provide much-needed educational opportunities for our students but will also help build a more sustainable and resilient healthcare workforce for Hawai'i's future.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Desiree De La Espriella

954-397-9355

UHMC Nursing Student

Written Testimony Presented Before the

Hawai'i Senate

Committee on Higher Education

HEARING: Wednesday, March 12, 2025,

PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Conference Room 229

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

SB119 – RELATING TO NURSING

Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education, and Chair Woodlson, Vice Chair La Chica, members of the Committee on Education, thank you for the opportunity to testify **in strong support of HB 617**, appropriating funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program at the University of Hawai'i Maui College (UHMC).

As background I am an alumnus of Maui Community College (MCC) and graduated with an LPN in 1981. Since then I have obtained my Associate in Nursing in 1983, my Bachelor's in Nursing in 1991, my Master's in Nursing in 1999. and finally my PhD in Nursing in 2013. I started teaching at MCC in January 1992 and retired from UHMC in December 2020. Since I started nursing school in 1980 I have seen all healthcare professions raise their educational basic requirements with the exception of nursing, because the complexity of healthcare increases. This is despite the fact that Magnet hospitals such as Queen's Medical Center must have at least 80% of their workforce be a Bachelor's prepared nurse. Currently at UHMC in order to obtain

an Associate in Nursing students must complete 4.5 semesters while with only 1.5 more they would obtain a Bachelor's degree. This isn't fair to the student nor to the faculty. As one faculty member noted years ago we are trying to shove 4 years of education into two and expect our students to take the exact same license exams. Make no mistake, I am proud to be an alumnus of MCC/UHMC, but we need to do better for our students and keep up with the times. Our students are at a disadvantage when they have to compete for jobs with Bachelor-prepared nurses from other islands or the mainland. We need well prepared nurses who understand and know the culture of Hawai'i. We need well-prepared nurses who do not need to leave home to achieve their dreams.

I strongly support and promote education programs such as the BSN being offered on Maui to increase the number of graduating nurses in our state to attract and retain local applicants for our nursing positions caring for our community.

I respectfully ask the committee to pass HB 617 through your committee. I thank your committee for it's commitment to the people of Hawai'i, in ensuring that we educate and retain high quality nurses throughout the state.

Denise Cohen, PhD, RN, APRN, FNP-BC
Email: denisecohen@mac.com
Cell: 808-283-5414

Testimony in Support of SB119: Relating to Nursing Education

Submitted by: Marian Horikawa-Barth, Chief Nurse Executive, Maui Health

Date: March 11, 2025

To: The Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Legislature

Subject: Support for SB119 – Nursing Education

My name is Marian T Horikawa-barth, Chief Nurse Executive at Maui Health System. **I strongly support SB119**, which proposes establishing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program at the University of Hawai'i Maui College (UHMC) and appropriating the necessary funds for this initiative.

Importance of Nursing Education

The demand for BSN-prepared nurses is increasing locally and nationally. A BSN degree equips nurses with critical thinking, leadership, and clinical skills necessary to meet evolving healthcare demands and improve patient outcomes. Establishing a BSN program at UHMC will address the shortage of highly skilled nurses in Maui County and Hawai'i.

Benefits to the Community

- **Improved Healthcare Services:** More BSN-prepared nurses will lead to higher quality care and better patient outcomes.
- **Economic Growth:** The program will attract students from across the state and beyond, contributing to the local economy.
- **Job Creation:** The program will create faculty and administrative positions, addressing the need for nursing instructors.
- **Educational Opportunities:** Offering a BSN program locally allows Maui residents to pursue advanced nursing education without relocating.

Conclusion

I urge the Committees to pass SB119. Establishing a BSN program at UHMC is a vital investment in the future of healthcare in Maui and Hawai'i. By supporting this bill, we can ensure our community has access to highly skilled and educated nurses equipped to meet modern healthcare challenges.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Marian Horikawa-Barth DNP RN CPHQ CENP
Chief Nurse Executive
Maui Health System
808-269-2029 (cell)