

Testimony of the Hawaii Medical Board

**Before the
House Committee on Health**

**Wednesday, March 12, 2025
9:00 a.m.**

Conference Room 329 and Videoconference

On the following measure:

S.B. 1365, RELATING TO THE INTERSTATE MEDICAL LICENSURE COMPACT

Chair Takayama and Members of the Committee:

My name is Chelsea Fukunaga, and I am the Executive Officer of the Hawaii Medical Board (Board). The Board supports this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to authorize the Hawaii Medical Board as the State of Principal License to investigate and request criminal history records of qualified physicians seeking licensing through the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (Compact).

For the Committees' information, partial implementation of the Compact went into effect in Hawaii on January 1, 2025. To date, 202 physicians have been issued licenses to practice in Hawaii through the IMLC. The Board is hopeful that the expedited licensure process the Compact offers will allow physicians to quickly obtain licenses to practice, thereby increasing access to health care within the State.

In order to fully participate in the Compact, authorization to conduct criminal history record checks is required. The ability to conduct criminal history record checks will enable Hawaii to be designated as a state of principal licensure within the Compact, allowing physicians to apply for multi-state licensure through Hawaii. In addition, this would also assist the Board in screening applicants to ensure that licenses are only issued to qualified, safe, and competent physicians.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



**STATE HEALTH PLANNING
AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOHN C. (JACK) LEWIN, M.D.
ADMINISTRATOR

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March 10, 2025

To: House Committee on Health
Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair
Representative Sue Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair; and
Honorable Members

From: John C (Jack) Lewin MD, Administrator, SHPDA; and Senior Advisor to
Governor Green MD on Healthcare Innovation

Re: SB 1365 -- Relating to Interstate Medical Licensure

Position: SUPPORT

Testimony:

SB 1365 authorizes the Hawaii Medical Board to request criminal background checks on all physician seeking licensure through the INTERSTATE Medical Licensure Compact. This oversight must be corrected.

This is a critically important and simple protection for both consumers and the medical profession here that needs to be addressed.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

-- Jack Lewin MD, Administrator, SHPDA



March 12, 2025 at 9:00 am
Conference Room 329

House Committee on Health

To: Chair Gregg Takayama
Vice Chair Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy

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

Re: **Support**
SB 1365, Relating to the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact

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.

We write today in **support** of this measure, which authorizes the Hawaii Medical Board to conduct criminal background checks as required to issue licenses under the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact. This measure is a necessary step to ensure Hawaii's full participation in the compact and to expand access to healthcare across our islands.

This measure ensures that Hawaii can fully implement the compact by authorizing the Hawaii Medical Board to conduct required criminal background checks as part of the licensure process. These background checks are a standard component of physician licensing nationwide and serve as an important safeguard to protect patients and uphold the integrity of our medical system. Without this authority, Hawaii risks being unable to issue licenses under the compact, limiting the benefits that our state sought in joining this national effort.

Hawaii has long faced challenges in recruiting and retaining physicians, particularly in rural and underserved areas. By joining the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, the state has taken a significant step forward in streamlining the licensing process for qualified physicians, allowing them to practice in Hawaii with greater ease. This will help increase the number of available providers and improve timely access to care for our residents.

We appreciate the legislature's continued support of recruiting and retaining physicians and for the opportunity to support this measure.



THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

To: The Honorable Greg Takayama, Chair
The Honorable Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair
Members, House Committee on Health

From: Jace Mikulanec, Director, Government Relations, The Queen's Health Systems

Date: March 12, 2025

Re: Support of SB1365: Relating to the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC)

The Queen's Health Systems (Queen's) is a nonprofit corporation that provides expanded health care capabilities to the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin. Since the founding of the first Queen's hospital in 1859 by Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV, it has been our mission to provide quality health care services in perpetuity for Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i. Over the years, the organization has grown to four hospitals, and more than 10,000 affiliated physicians, caregivers, and dedicated medical staff statewide. As the preeminent health care system in Hawai'i, Queen's strives to provide superior patient care that is constantly advancing through education and research.

Queen's appreciates the opportunity to testify in strong **support** of SB1365, which authorizes the Hawai'i Medical Board (HMB), as the State of Principal License, to investigate and request criminal history records of qualified physicians seeking licensing through the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC). This measure will help modify the existing IMLC statute to ensure that the benefits of entering the compact can be fully realized in our state. We thank the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs for their diligence in implementing Act 112 (2023).

The intent the IMLC is to safely streamline the licensing process for physicians who want to practice in multiple states – including Hawai'i. The compact makes it possible to extend the reach of physicians, improve access to medical specialists, and leverage the use of medical technologies, such as telemedicine. While making it easier for physicians to obtain licenses to practice in multiple states, the compact also has the added benefit of enhancing the ability of partner states to share investigative and disciplinary information.

Thank you for considering our testimony in support of SB1365.

The mission of The Queen's Health System is to fulfill the intent of Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV to provide in perpetuity quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i.



Hawaii Medical Association

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair
Representative Sue Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair

Date: March 12, 2025
From: Hawaii Medical Association (HMA)
Jerald Garcia MD - Chair, HMA Public Policy Committee

Re: SB 1365 RELATING TO THE INTERSTATE MEDICAL LICENSURE COMPACT -
Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; Hawai'i Criminal Justice Data Center;
Hawai'i Medical Board; Interstate Medical Licensure Compact; Criminal History Record
Checks; Appropriation
Position: Support

This measure would authorize the Hawai'i Medical Board as the State of Principal License to investigate and request criminal history records of qualified physicians seeking licensing through the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, and appropriate funds.

The Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC) promotes uniformity in requirements for state licensure and strengthens public protection by facilitating state medical board sharing of investigative and disciplinary information. The ability to check the criminal history record of applicants is necessary for the Hawaii Medical Board to fully comply with the statute, rules, policies, and bylaws of the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact as a state of principal license.

In Hawaii, patient access to necessary medical services has been limited by the severe physician workforce shortages of our state, particularly on the neighbor islands. HMA supports this measure that will allow the Hawaii Medical Board to be in full compliance with the requirements of the IMLC and improve Hawaii healthcare access.

Thank you for allowing the Hawaii Medical Association to testify in support of this measure.

2025 Hawaii Medical Association Officers

Elizabeth Ann Ignacio, MD, President • Nadine Tenn-Salle, MD, President Elect • Angela Pratt, MD, Immediate Past President
Jerris Hedges, MD, Treasurer • Thomas Kosasa, MD, Secretary • Marc Alexander, Executive Director

2025 Hawaii Medical Association Public Policy Coordination Team

Jerald Garcia, MD, Chair
Linda Rosehill, JD, Government Relations • Marc Alexander, Executive Director

REFERENCES AND QUICK LINKS

Interstate Medical Licensure Compact Commission. [A Faster Pathway to Physician Licensure. IMLC.org.](#) Accessed Feb 26 2025.

Withy K et al. [UH System Annual Report to the 2025 Legislature on Findings from the Hawai'i Physician Workforce Assessment Project.](#) Accessed Feb 1 2025.

Lyte B. Hawai'i's Physician Shortage Hits Maui Hardest. [Honolulu Civil Beat. Dec 23 2024.](#) Accessed Feb 1 2025.

Marschall S. Smith; The Interstate Medical Licensure Compact Commission: Growth, Success, and the Future. *Journal of Medical Regulation* 1 October 2020; 106 (3): 22–26. doi: <https://doi.org/10.30770/2572-1852-106.3.22>

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March 12, 2025

The Honorable Gregg Takayama, Chair
The Honorable Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair
House Committee on Health

Re: SB1365 - RELATING TO THE INTERSTATE MEDICAL LICENSURE COMPACT

Dear Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 1365, which authorizes the Hawaii Medical Board as the State of Principal License to investigate and request criminal history records of qualified physicians seeking licensing through the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact and appropriates funds.

Hawaii's participation in the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC) is one of many important pieces of the statewide strategy to address our healthcare workforce shortage. This measure is important to ensure that appropriate background checks can be completed by the Hawaii Medical Board which further strengthens our licensing process and ensures the highest quality care and safety for all of Hawaii. This bill will also allow Hawaii to fully participate as a state of principal license in the IMLC with all reciprocal privileges and help to strengthen our process and streamline the experience particularly for Hawaii providers wishing to participate.

We appreciate the legislatures efforts to ensure that we are addressing strengthening our healthcare workforce in multifaceted ways and your foresight in passing the original IMLC bill in 2023.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

Sincerely,

Dawn Kurisu
Assistant Vice President
Community and Government Relations