



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, April 9, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

By

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

SCR 50 – URGING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF REGENTS TO ESTABLISH A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII MAUI CAMPUS

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

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports the intent of SCR 50 which urges the University of Hawai'i to establish a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program at the University of Hawai'i - Maui College (UHMC).

The UH recognizes the existing workforce shortages in healthcare and the high demand for nurses in the state. Additionally, the [UH Regents Policy 4.207](#) Community College System acknowledges the need for the neighbor island community colleges to continue to provide a comprehensive set of courses and programs to make the university accessible to every Hawai'i resident who wants and can benefit from the opportunities and experiences provided by the community colleges. The UH is also cognizant of the importance of using our budget resources wisely and being careful not to duplicate existing programs.

The UH concurs with the legislature that there is a pressing need for highly qualified nursing professionals to meet the healthcare needs of the County of Maui due to a growing and aging population. The UHMC has created a pathway for students to earn a Certified Nurse Assistant, Licensed Practical Nurse Certificate of Achievement, and an Associate in Science in Nursing degree. Adding the last year for a Bachelor of Science in Nursing would provide the County of Maui with more highly qualified nurses and allow students to complete the degree in Maui.

The UHMC has received approval to submit an Authorization to Plan for the BSN at UHMC to the Council of Chief Academic Officers as a part of the academic program actions process.

In addition to our support for the intent of SCR 50, we also acknowledge and appreciate the parallel effort reflected in SB 119 SD1 HD1, which also aims to establish a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and appropriate funds at UHMC. The legislative measure further underscores the shared commitment to address the critical nursing shortage on Maui.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SCR 50.



**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

1177 Alakea St., #402, Honolulu, HI 96813 Phone: 587-0788 Fax: 587-0783 www.shpda.org

April 8, 2025

To: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Representative Andrew T. Garrett, Chair
Representative Terez Amato, Vice Chair, and
Honorable Members

From: John C (Jack) Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA

Re: **SCR 50 - URGING THE UH PRESIDENT AND BOARD TO ESTABLISH A
BACHELOR OF NURSING DEGREE AT UH MAUI**

Hearing: Friday, April 11, 2025 at 10:00 am; Conference Room 309

Position: SUPPORT

Testimony:

Hawaii's nursing shortage is alarming and contributes to contribute to a serious ongoing lack of healthcare access to care for many citizens, particularly on the neighbor islands, in rural communities, but even in urban Honolulu. Maui County has been severely affected after the wildfires in terms of healthcare workforce shortages, including nurses. Hawai'i statewide is over 3000 nurses short.

Creating a bachelor's degree in nursing at UH Maui is critically needed. And it will be an economic stimulus for the state in the future as we train more highly paid nurses who are more likely to remain in Hawai'i than nurses who are recruited from the mainland. This will be an excellent investment in Hawaii's future.

Please support this SCR and, moreover, find a way in the conference committee process to fund it.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



April 9, 2025 at 2:00 pm
Conference Room 309

House Committee on Higher Education

To: Chair Andrew Takuya Garrett
Vice Chair Terez Amazo

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

Re: Support
SCR 50, Urging the University of Hawaii President and Board of Regents to establish a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at the University of Hawaii Maui campus

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 resolution, which urges the establishment of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program at the University of Hawaii Maui College. Hawaii faces a critical nursing shortage that is exacerbated in neighbor island and rural communities. The recent Healthcare Workforce Demand Survey underscores the urgent need for additional nursing professionals on Maui, where healthcare facilities continue to experience difficult-to-fill vacancies and an aging workforce. The report highlights significant challenges in recruitment and retention, particularly for registered nurses with advanced education and training.

The existing pathways to a BSN require Maui-based nurses to either relocate to Oahu or pursue online degrees from out-of-state institutions, both of which present financial and logistical barriers that discourage further education. The establishment of a BSN program at the University of Hawaii Maui College would provide opportunities for individuals to enter or advance in their nursing careers within the Maui community. This program would also help alleviate workforce shortages by increasing the number of highly qualified nurses prepared for leadership roles, specialized care, and clinical instruction.

By investing in a BSN program at the University of Hawaii Maui College, the state can strengthen its healthcare workforce, improve patient outcomes, and create new opportunities for Maui residents seeking career advancement in nursing. We appreciate the legislature's continued support for

developing the healthcare workforce in the state, and for the opportunity to support this resolution.