

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

Testimony COMMENTING on H.B. 1635 H.D. 2
RELATING TO HEALTH CARE

SENATOR JARRETT KEOHOKALOOLE, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: 3/21/2022

Room Number: 225 and via
Videoconference

1 The Department appreciates the intent of H.B. 1635 H.D. 2, but believes this measure is not
2 necessary as it duplicates current efforts of the Hawaii State Center for Nursing (HSCN). This
3 bill establishes a rural health task force within the DOH to make recommendations on registered
4 nurse recruitment and retention in rural areas of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai. The Department does
5 not have the expertise and/or resources to implement the request as outlined in this measure,
6 which includes a needs assessment at each rural health care facility; managing the ratio of
7 registered nurses to patients in each rural health care facility; recommendations for affordable
8 workforce housing; surveying telehealth demand; identifying travel nurse options; analyzing
9 nurse retention impact on rural health care facilities; researching best practices on retaining
10 registered nurses; and preparation of a legislative report. Additionally, there may be insufficient
11 time to convene the task force, develop actionable recommendations, propose legislation, and
12 complete the report by the end of December 2022.

13 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 20, 2022

TO: The Honorable Senator Jarett Keohokalole, Chair
Senate Committee on Health

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 1635 HD2 – RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.**

Hearing: March 21, 2022, 1:10 p.m.
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the measure's intent, provides comments, and requests an amendment.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to establish the rural health task force within the department of health to prepare and develop solutions and make recommendations on registered nurse recruitment and retention in rural areas of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai. Requires the rural health task force to submit a report of its findings, recommendations, and any proposed legislation to the legislature prior to the regular session of 2023. Effective 7/1/2060. (HD2). The HD1 amended the measure by defecting the effective date and making technical amendments. The HD2 amended the measure by:

- (1) Adding a representative from Malama I Ke Ola Health Center and Molokai Community Health Center to the task force and expanding the scope of the task force's duties to include rural areas of all of Maui; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

The Department recognizes the challenges of rural health care and that nurses provide much of the health care in rural settings. However, while DHS provides access to health care coverage to many Hawaii residents through the State's Medicaid program, QUEST Integration, and participates with hospitals and nursing facilities in fiscal sustainability programs, DHS does not generally have the expertise, nor is it engaged in the recruitment of registered nurses, accountability and management of registered nurse retention, and facility-specific needs. Therefore, DHS respectfully requests an amendment deleting DHS as a member of this task force.

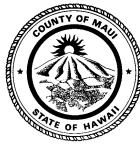
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers
Gabe Johnson
Kelly Takaya King
Michael J. Molina
Tamara Paltin
Shane M. Sinenci
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura



Director of Council Services
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

March 18, 2022

TO: Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senate Committee on Health

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair

DATE: March 18, 2022

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF HB 1635, HD2, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure, with a proposed amendment. The purpose of this measure is to establish the rural health task force within the Department of Health to develop solutions and make recommendations on registered nurse recruitment and retention in rural areas of East Maui, Moloka'i, and Lāna'i.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **SUPPORT** this measure, with a proposed amendment, for the following reasons:

1. There is a vital need for healthcare workers in rural areas of East Maui, Moloka'i, and Lāna'i.
2. These communities will benefit from the implementation of the task force's solutions and recommendations regarding the recruitment and retention of registered nurses in rural areas.
3. The proposed amendment would include representation on the rural health task force from Maui County's four Federally Qualified Health Centers: Mālama I Ke Ola Health Center, Molokai Community Health Center, Lāna'i Community Health Center, and Hāna Health to provide inclusive and comprehensive input.

For the foregoing reasons, I **SUPPORT** this measure, with a proposed amendment.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Health
Monday, March 21, 2022; 1:10 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225
Via Videoconference**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1635, HOUSE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Cheryl Vasconcellos and I am the Executive Director of Hana Health a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) providing essential primary care to patients residing in one of the most remote locations in the state. I am testifying in SUPPORT of this bill.

Hana Health has served the people of Hana, Maui for almost twenty-five years. We are the only primary health care provider in the district requiring that we provide urgent/emergent care 24/7 in addition to routine health, dental and behavioral health services. The majority of our patients are low-income Native Hawaiians. Due to the special needs and challenges facing this population, as well as the difficulties experienced in providing care in this remote, isolated region, Hana Health has also focused on addressing the social determinants of health in order to impact the health care outcomes of our patients.

We experience firsthand how the lack of an adequate supply of competent and trained health care professionals in the State has exacerbated the cost and demands we face in providing essential care for patients.

In Maui County, the four FQHCs work in tandem in support of our mission to service the people of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai. We stand together committed in doing this crucial work and look forward to working with the Rural Health Task Force to address the serious shortage of health care workers in our communities. **Hana Health respectfully asks that this measure be approved.**

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 808-248-7515, extension 26.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Health
Monday, March 21, 2022; 1:10 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225
Via Videoconference**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1635, HOUSE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** House Bill No. 1635, House Draft 2, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would establish a Rural Health Task Force (Task Force) within the Department of Health (DOH) to prepare and develop solutions and make recommendations regarding rural areas of east Maui, Molokai, and Lanai, with specific emphasis on the recruitment and retention of registered nurses.

The bill would take effect on July 1, 2060.

The State of Hawaii is experiencing a severe shortage of health care professionals in the workforce, especially in rural areas. Recent studies note that the current shortage of physicians is at 20% of the total full-time equivalent positions throughout the State. The shortage is especially severe in the fields of primary care, infectious diseases, colorectal surgery, pathology, general surgery, pulmonology, neurology, neurosurgery, orthopedic surgery, family medicine, cardiothoracic surgery, rheumatology, cardiology, hematology/oncology, and pediatric subspecialties of endocrinology, cardiology, neurology, hematology/oncology, and gastroenterology.

Testimony on House Bill No. 1635, House Draft 2
Monday, March 21, 2022; 1:10 p.m.
Page 2

Physicians are not the only professionals in high demand. The same also applies to registered nurses.

This bill would provide the DOH with assistance from the health care providers in east Maui, Molokai, and Lanai in developing tangible action steps to assist with the recruitment and retention of registered nurses in these areas.

We greatly appreciate the amendments made by the House Committee on Finance to include on the Task Force all of the FQHCs that provide primary care to patients in this region. On behalf of Hana Health, Lanai Community Health Center, Malama I Ke Ola Health Center, and Molokai Community Health Center, the HPCA stands committed to assisting in this endeavor.

For this reason, the HPCA urges your favorable consideration of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.



**Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Health
Monday, March 21, 2022 at 1:10 P.M.
via Videoconference**

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

Comments on HB 1635, HD2

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and members of the Senate Committee on Health, thank you for the opportunity for the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing to provide **comments on HB 1635, HD2**. If enacted, this measure would create a task force that includes the directors or designees of health and of human services, representatives of the department of health's public health nursing section and office of primary care and rural health, and representatives of health care facilities from Hāna, Moloka'i, and Lāna'i.

The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing (Center) supports the intent of this measure and recognizes the need for work that focuses on the unique needs of geographically remote areas of our state and commends the community health centers and partners in being champions for nursing workforce development in their communities. The Center for Nursing has prioritized the needs of rural communities in Hawai'i. As such, recent research findings, programs, plans, and strategies for recruitment and retention have focused on increasing the impacts on nurses residing on neighbor islands. The Center will also continue to support the nursing workforce needs in rural areas and statewide, and commends the rural partners in Maui County for highlighting the specific needs of their communities.

Among the many working groups that the Center convenes or participates in, there are representatives from all counties and islands. In addition, the Center actively collaborates with entities including the Department of Health's Office of Primary Care and Rural Health and Public Health Nursing Branch, the MedQUEST division of the Department of Health, the Hawai'i Board of Health, the Hawai'i State Rural Health Association, the Healthcare Association of Hawai'i Health Workforce Initiative, the Hawai'i/Pacific Basin Area Health Education Center, and others.

Recent accomplishments and undertaking of this diverse array of partners, as convened by or in participation with the Center for Nursing, includes, but is not limited to:

- Research:
 - Snapshot of nurses working in rural and underserved areas (2021)
 - Research on intent to leave and wellbeing of nurses (2021)
 - Report and infographics on nursing workforce supply by County (2017 and 2019)
- Recruitment and retention:
 - Increase in nurse residency program participation by neighbor island hospitals by 150% (2021)

The mission of the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing is that through collaborative partnerships, the Center provides accurate nursing workforce data for planning, disseminates nursing knowledge to support excellence in practice and leadership development; promotes a diverse workforce; and advocates for sound health policy to serve the changing health care needs of the people of Hawai'i.

- Expansion of nurse residency program to all counties in the state (2020)
- Secured funding to increase nurse residency program participation by neighbor island and rural nurses (2020)
- Efforts to address delays in recent graduates from nursing programs in accessing the entry-to-practice NCLEX exam due to the pandemic, which included advocacy to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, the Hawai'i State and County travel exemption divisions, and the Governor to create license waivers for new graduates to enable their contribution to nursing practice in the state (2020)
- Collaboration with community partners and education providers which led to first CAN program on Lāna'i since 2016 (2021)
- Convene and facilitate weekly calls with Chief Nursing Officer statewide to address emerging and urgent needs related to nursing workforce recruitment, retention, staffing, and care standards (2021-present)
- Address practice barriers that impede nurses' ability to provide needed care to their patients (2009-present).
- Convene APRN practice and policy taskforce, which includes representatives of each County, with work that includes ensuring nurses understand the history and laws in Hawai'i as it relates to APRNS (2012-present).
- Education capacity
 - Memo to Board of Nursing and literature review on simulation use in education to support nursing education during the pandemic; use of simulation particularly impacted community colleges which are the only in-person nursing education programs on Maui and Kaua'i Counties (2020).
 - Inquiry into faculty and instructor recruiting challenges across all schools of nursing that identified the greatest number of nurses needed, in aggregate, from schools of nursing across the neighbor islands (2019-present)
- Nursing professional development
 - Established first statewide nurse evidence-based practice program in the nation, and convened the first rurally-located workshop and internship in 2016. (2012-present)
 - Launched academic progression in nursing program. Neighbor island nurses have increased their education preparation from 59% in 2017 to 63% in 2021 on Hawai'i County, 45% in 2017 to 61% in 2021 on Kaua'i County, and 49% in 2017 to 63% in 2021 on Maui County (2012-today).
 - Launched a nursing certification program to decrease the costs and incent nurses to become nationally certified in their specialty area; this program targeted neighbor island residents and nurses employed outside of hospitals (2020).

The Center is committed to continuing the collaborative work and efforts to research nursing, and explore recruitment, retention, education, and nursing professional development needs for nurses. We take particular joy in the work that focuses on the rural areas of our state. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information as it relates to your decision making on this measure.

The mission of the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing is that through collaborative partnerships, the Center provides accurate nursing workforce data for planning, disseminates nursing knowledge to support excellence in practice and leadership development; promotes a diverse workforce; and advocates for sound health policy to serve the changing health care needs of the people of Hawai'i.

LĀNA'Ī COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

P. O. Box 630142
Lāna'ī City, HI 96763-0142



Phone: 808-565-6919
Fax: 808-565-9111
dshaw@lanaicommunityhealthcenter.org

The Community is our Patient -- men, women, children, uninsured, insured!

February 22, 2022

Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 24, 2022; 2:00 p.m.

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1635, HD2, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Diana Shaw and I am the Executive Director of Lāna'ī Community Health Center (LCHC), a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) providing essential primary care to patients residing in one of the most remote locations in the state. I am testifying in SUPPORT of this bill and respectfully request an amendment.

LCHC has served the people of Lāna'ī, for over 15 years. Many of our patients are at or below the federal poverty level; in addition, a large number receive health care as Medicaid recipients. Because of the special needs and challenges facing this population, LCHC has had to establish strong links throughout the community to provide for not only their immediate health needs, but also address the social determinants of health that drastically impact the health care outcomes of our patients.

We experience firsthand how the lack of an adequate supply of competent and trained health care professionals in the State has exacerbated the cost and demands we face in providing essential care for patients. Because of this, we want to thank the introducer, newly-appointed Representative Linda Clark for submitting this very important proposal.

E Ola nō Lāna'ī
LIFE, HEALTH, and WELL-BEING FOR LĀNA'Ī

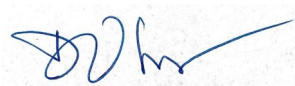
This bill would provide DOH with assistance from the health care providers in East Maui, Molokai, and Lānaʻi in developing tangible action steps to assist with recruitment and retention of registered nurses in these areas.

We greatly appreciate the amendments made by the House Committee on Finance to include on the Task Force all of the FQHCs that provide primary care to patients in this region. On behalf of Hana Health, Lanai Community Health Center, Malama I Ke Ola Health Center, and Molokai Community Health Center, the HPCA stands committed to assisting in this endeavor.

For this reason, LCHC respectfully urges your favorable consideration of his bill.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 808-565-6919 or by email, dshaw@lanaihealth.org.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. M. V. Shaw', is centered below the closing. The signature is fluid and cursive.

D. M. V. Shaw, PhD, MPH, MBA, FACMPE
Executive Director

cc: B.J. Ott, Malama I Ke Ola Health Center
Helen Kekalia, Molokai Community Health Center
Cheryl Vasconcellos, Hana Community Health Center
Representative Linda Clark
Senator Lynn DeCoite



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
HEALTH
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 225
MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2022 AT 1:10 P.M.**

To The Honorable Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
The Honorable Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair
Members of the committee on Health

SUPPORTING HB1635 HD2 RELATING TO HEALTH CARE

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **supports HB1635 HD2** which establishes the rural health task force within the department of health to prepare and develop solutions and make recommendations on registered nurse recruitment and retention in rural areas of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai.

The Chamber would like to thank the legislature for include representation on the rural health taskforce from Maui County's four federally qualified health centers (FQHCs): Malama I Ke Ola Health Center, Molokai Community Health Center, Lāna'i Community Health Center, and Hana Health.

We feel there is a vital need for healthcare workers in rural areas of East Maui, Molokai, and Lanai and these communities will benefit from the implementation of the taskforce's solutions and recommendations regarding the recruitment and retention of registered nurses in rural areas. Since Maui has only one (major) hospital and it attracts most of the healthcare workers on Maui, this taskforce is sorely needed.

For this reason, we **support HB1635 HD2** and request it be passed.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.



THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

To: The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
The Honorable Rosalyn Baker, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Health

From: Janice Kalanihuia, President, Molokai General Hospital – The Queen's Health Systems
Jace Mikulanec, Director, Government Relations, The Queen's Health Systems

Date: March 21, 2022

Re: In support of HB 1635 HD2: Relating to Health Care

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 1,500 affiliated physicians and providers 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 provide testimony in support of HB 1635 HD2, which establishes the rural health task force within the department of health to make recommendations on registered nurse recruitment and retention in rural areas of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai. Since 2019, Hawaii has experienced more than 900 nurses leaving the workforce due to the rise of Covid-19, cost of living, and the lack of affordable housing; this shortage has impacted our rural communities the most. We appreciate the legislature taking this proactive approach to help address our current nursing workforce shortage.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1635 HD2.

The mission of The Queen's Health Systems 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.

LATE



March 21, 2022

Chair Keohokalole
Senate Committee on Health
State Capitol, Conference Room 225
Honolulu, Hawaii. 96813
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1635, HOUSE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee:

Molokai Ohana Health Care, Inc., dba Molokai Community Health Center (MCHC) is the only Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) located on Molokai and one of four FQHC's in Maui County. MCHC provides primary care, dental services, mental health services, and care enabling services to patients on Molokai, regardless of their ability to pay for such services. MCHC is in **SUPPORT House Bill No. 1635, House Draft 2, Relating to Health care.**

MCHC has served the people of Molokai for sixteen years. Over half of our patients are low-income Native Hawaiians and today we proudly serve 40% of the total Molokai population. Due to the special needs and challenges facing this population, as well as the difficulties experienced in providing care in this remote, isolated region, Molokai Community Health Center has also expanded services to addressing the social determinants of health in order to impact the health care outcomes of our patients ranging from the island's largest on-site food pantry to offering mobile in-person primary care and soon specialty care via telehealth services in our mobile unit, complete with our own broadband capabilities, for our most rural neighborhoods.

We experience firsthand how the lack of an adequate supply of competent and trained health care professionals in the State has exacerbated the cost and demands we face in providing essential care for patients. Because of this, we want to thank the introducer, newly-appointed Representative Linda Clark for submitting this very important proposal and appreciate the amendments made by the House Committee on Finance to include on the Task Force all of the FQHC's that provide primary care to patients in this region and are committed to assisting this endeavor together.

For these reasons, MCHC supports HB1635, HD2 and respectfully asks that this measure be approved.

*Mission: To provide and promote accessible comprehensive individual and community health care to the people of Molokai with respect and aloha.
Visit us at <http://molokaicbc.org>*



Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 808-660-2630.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Helen Kekalia Wescoatt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Helen Kekalia Wescoatt
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Representative Linda Clark

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to the people of Molokai with respect and aloha.
Visit us at <http://molokaichc.org>*