



## UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM Legislative Testimony

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Written Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Higher Education  
January 29, 2009, 2:00 p.m.

by

Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor  
and

Mary G. Boland, DrPH, RN, FAAN  
Dean and Professor  
School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### HB 124 RELATING TO HEALTH PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Chair Chang, Vice Chair Nakashima, and members of the House Committee on Higher Education, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 124 to address the shortage of health professionals in underserved rural communities in the State through the continued support of the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa supports the intent of the bill only if it does not adversely affect our UH priorities as set in our budget request, most notably in health and safety and repairs and maintenance issues. Addressing these urgent needs is critical to our ability to perform our core mission for the State of Hawaii. We recognize that you have many priorities and issues to weigh for the state, so the following substantive information on this program is provided to assist you in your decision-making process.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) and the UHM School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene is privileged to provide the home for the Hawai'i Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program. The primary purpose of the program is to partner with rural underserved communities, health organizations, and educational institutions to enhance the health of rural communities by identifying relevant health issues and by recruiting students from a variety of disciplines who in the future would provide comprehensive, coordinated, cost-effective, and culturally appropriate services to address the health concerns of rural communities.

The program began in Hawaii as the Quentin N. Burdick Program with funding by a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Bureau of Health Professions, Health Resources and Services Administration. Since Spring 2006, the Hawaii State Legislature has approved funding that allows the program to continue.

The University of Hawai'i Mānoa and the School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene supports a collaborative approach to addressing the healthcare provider needs of Hawai'i and looks forward to our continued partnership with the legislature and community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, we appreciate all interest in the University, and want to emphasize that we will be able to perform better in all arenas and best serve the state with support of the current campus priorities approved by the Board of Regents.

# LATE TESTIMONY

January 29, 2009

To: Representative Jerry L. Chang, Chair  
Representative Mark M. Nakashima, Vice Chair  
HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

From: Amy Hubbard, faculty liaison on Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program

Re: Testimony in Support of HB124  
*RELATING TO HEALTH PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION*  
**Description:** *Appropriate funds to support the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program.*

Thank you Representative Chang, Chair and Vice Chair Nakashima of the HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE and other distinguished members of the committee for considering House Bill 124.

I support HB 124, a bill for an act that will appropriate funds to support the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program. There is a desperate shortage of health care professionals in rural communities across our state and this bill will do much to address this need.

**I urge your support of HB124 and \$400,000 funding for the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Program.** This program has been addressing the shortage of health care professionals in our rural communities in Hawaii since 2000. The program provides the opportunity for University of Hawaii students from a variety of disciplines including medicine, nursing, social work, medical technology, public health, psychology, dental hygiene, nutrition, pharmacy, education and others, to gain experience working on interdisciplinary teams in Hawaii's rural areas.

In the short term these students work with professionals and community members to provide culturally and place appropriate health promotion and disease prevention services for vulnerable rural residents from *keiki* to *kupuna*. In the long term this opportunity encourages students to consider working in rural communities and provides them with opportunities to be recruited to the most underserved areas of Hawaii.

**Participation in the program is a significant way to recruit health professionals to our most underserved rural communities.** Since 2000, 53 teams comprised of a total 168 students from 11 disciplines have participated. As of the last alumni census report dated January 2009, Of the alumni who have graduated, 15 work on the neighbor islands (7 on the Island of Hawaii, 4 on Maui, 2 on Molokai, 1 on Lanai and 1 on Kauai) and 14 work on Oahu (3 in rural areas and 11 with underserved and/or at-risk populations). These alumni include participants from medicine, nursing, social work, education, nutrition and psychology. In addition, one works on the island of Guam and another works in a small rural community in Vermont. Forty-six participants are still in school and 17 are currently finishing their medical residencies. The remaining program

alumni who are still in school have been encouraged by their rural health interdisciplinary training experience to live and work in a rural underserved area upon graduation. A survey of the 2008 students confirmed that their participation in the program had increased their interest in and commitment to living and working in a rural community upon graduation.

For the teams that I directly supervised in Hanalei, Kauai over the past four years, I have seen the immediate benefits of the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program. Not only does this program attract and recruit nursing students and other allied health disciplines to later live and work in rural communities, but during their time in the program, they also directly help these rural communities. For example, in Hanalei, the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program students (or "QBs" as they are affectionately known as in the community), design and implement health education activities for elementary-aged children and teenagers who come from Hanalei, Kilauea, and Anahola at the Hale Halawai Ohana O'Hanalei community center. The children learn about such diverse health topics as ocean safety, bicycle safety, how germs are spread, the effect of germs in the family and in the community, the importance of healthy meals, the size of various organs in our bodies, increasing self-esteem, defense mechanisms in our bodies, and physical fitness. The QBs also mentor the teenagers and enrich their understanding and appreciation of health occupations. I have even heard some teenagers in Hanalei say that they are now considering a career in health. Thus, by investing money into this program, you will not only be providing an avenue for college students to be trained in rural health issues and practices in an interdisciplinary team, but you will also be encouraging future college students to pursue careers in rural health.

This program began in 1988 when Senators Daniel Inouye and Quentin N. Burdick co-wrote and sponsored legislation to fund a rural health interdisciplinary training program to improve access to health care in America's rural communities. The program was funded by the US Department of Health until Congressional budget cuts eliminated the funding in June 2006 and the federal funding has not been restored.

The Hawaii State Legislature has approved funding for the program from July 2006 – June 2009. In order to keep this valuable program in Hawaii, we are looking again to the State for funds to support its continuation in this upcoming biennium (2009-2011).

The funding in this bill for **Hawaii's only rural health interdisciplinary training program** will allow University of Hawaii students from many health disciplines to gain knowledge and experience in working on interdisciplinary teams with professionals and people from rural communities and agencies. **Without this funding there will be NO opportunity for students from the health professions to work on interdisciplinary teams in rural areas of Hawaii.**

Thank you for considering funding for the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Training Program, an **important and proven program that addresses the health care worker shortages in Hawaii's rural areas.**

# LATE TESTIMONY

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**From:** John Casken [casken@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 29, 2009 8:47 AM  
**To:** HEDtestimony  
**Subject:** Bill HB 124 - Testimony in support

January 29, 2009

**To:** Representative Jerry L. Chang, Chair  
Representative Mark M. Nakashima, Vice Chair  
HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**From:** John Casken, Associate Professor  
School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene

**Re:** Testimony in Support of HB124  
*RELATING TO HEALTH PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION*

**Description:** *Appropriate funds to support the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program.*

Thank you Representative Chang, Chair and Vice Chair Nakashima of the HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE and other distinguished members of the committee for considering House Bill 124.

For the last nine years I have been the faculty for the Pahoia Quentin Burdick site and as such have been directly involved in some of the projects directly affecting the people of the Puna District.

For instance – one year the students identified that a number of students who attended summer programs spent the day in the school office because they had no footwear. They were not allowed to eat with other students nor take part in field trips. So the QB students organized a slipper drive. Working with local businesses and local folks, a supply of useable slipper were made available to school principals in the district for students without footwear. This program is still continuing because of the need.

I'm reminded too of another student who took part in the Pahoia program and told me it was her first time to actual live in a rural area and she mentioned that she wasn't sure if she would survive even six weeks. This student has recently completed her PhD and is now a **RESIDENT** psychologist living on Molokai with her husband and child. She told me recently that she couldn't think of working and living anywhere else now. The reason for her change of heart was the Quentin Burdick experience.

A student from last year graduated and is now working in Hilo as a social worker – again because of the life changing experience of Quentin Burdick. She wants to work with this year's students at Pahoia to make sure that they too gain an appreciation for the benefits of living and working in a rural community as a health professional.

I support HB 124, a bill for an act that will appropriate funds to support the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program. There is a desperate shortage of health care professionals in rural communities across our state and this bill will do much to address this need.

**I urge your support of HB124 and \$400,000 funding for the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Program.** This program has been addressing the shortage of health care professionals in our rural communities in Hawaii since 2000. The program provides the opportunity for University of Hawaii students from a variety of disciplines including medicine, nursing, social work, medical technology, public health, psychology, dental hygiene, nutrition, pharmacy, education and others, to gain experience working on interdisciplinary teams in Hawaii's rural areas.

In the short term these students work with professionals and community members to provide culturally and place appropriate health promotion and disease prevention services for vulnerable rural residents from *keiki* to *kupuna*. In the long term this opportunity encourages students to consider working in rural communities and provides them with opportunities to be recruited to the most underserved areas of Hawaii.

**Participation in the program is a significant way to recruit health professionals to our most underserved rural communities.** Since 2000, 53 teams comprised of a total 168 students from 11 disciplines have participated. As of the last alumni census report dated January 2009, Of the alumni who have graduated, 15 work on the neighbor islands (7 on the Island of Hawaii, 4 on Maui, 2 on Molokai, 1 on Lanai and 1 on Kauai) and 14 work on Oahu (3 in rural areas and 11 with underserved and/or at-risk populations). These alumni include participants from medicine, nursing, social work, education, nutrition and psychology. In addition, one works on the island of Guam and another works in a small rural community in Vermont. Forty-six participants are still in school and 17 are currently finishing their medical residencies. The remaining program alumni who are still in school have been encouraged by their rural health interdisciplinary training experience to live and work in a rural underserved area upon graduation. A survey of the 2008 students confirmed that their participation in the program had increased their interest in and commitment to living and working in a rural community upon graduation.

This program began in 1988 when Senators Daniel Inouye and Quentin N. Burdick co-wrote and sponsored legislation to fund a rural health interdisciplinary training program to improve access to health care in America's rural communities. The program was funded by the US Department of Health until Congressional budget cuts eliminated the funding in June 2006 and the federal funding has not been restored.

The Hawaii State Legislature has approved funding for the program from July 2006 – June 2009. In order to keep this valuable program in Hawaii, we are looking again to the State for funds to support its continuation in this upcoming biennium (2009-2011).

The funding in this bill for **Hawaii's only rural health interdisciplinary training program** will allow University of Hawaii students from many health disciplines to gain knowledge and experience in working on interdisciplinary teams with professionals and people from rural communities and agencies. **Without this funding there will be NO opportunity for students from the health professions to work on interdisciplinary teams in rural areas of Hawaii.**

Thank you for considering funding for the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Training Program, an **important and proven program that addresses the health care worker shortages in Hawaii's rural areas.**

John Casken, RN., MPH., PhD  
Associate Specialist (Professor)  
School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene  
University of Hawaii at Manoa

(808) 956-5750

# LATE TESTIMONY

January 29, 2009

To: Representative Jerry L. Chang, Chair  
Representative Mark M. Nakashima, Vice Chair  
HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

From: Jan Shoultz, DrPH  
Program Director, Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary  
Training Program

Re: Testimony in Support of HB124  
*RELATING TO HEALTH PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION*  
**Description:** *Appropriate funds to support the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural  
health interdisciplinary training program.*

Thank you Representative Chang, Chair and Vice Chair Nakashima of the HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE and other distinguished members of the committee for considering House Bill 124.

**Thank you for this opportunity to provide information and seek your support for the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Training Program, I am Dr. Jan Shoultz, the Program Director.**

I support HB 124, a bill for an act that will appropriate funds to support the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Training Program. There is a continuing severe shortage of health care professionals in rural communities across our state and this bill will do much to address this need.

**I urge your support of HB124 and \$400,000 funding for the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Program.** This program has been addressing the shortage of health care professionals in our rural communities in Hawaii since 2000. The program provides the opportunity for University of Hawaii students from a variety of disciplines including medicine, nursing, social work, medical technology, public health, psychology, dental hygiene, nutrition, pharmacy, education and others, to gain experience working on interdisciplinary teams in Hawaii's rural areas.

In the short term these students work with professionals and community members to provide culturally and place appropriate health promotion and disease prevention services for vulnerable rural residents from *keiki* to *kupuna*. In the long term this opportunity encourages students to consider working in rural communities and provides them with opportunities to be recruited to the most underserved areas of Hawaii.

**In addition the program engages high school students from the local community in working with the health science students providing multiple opportunities for mentoring and encouraging the high school students to consider studying to become a health professional.** This mentoring can help to develop the future workforce for the rural community residents by

encouraging these high school students to consider becoming and health care provider and returning to their own community with skills that will improve the health and health care of rural underserved residents.

**Participation in the program is a significant way to recruit health professionals to our most underserved rural communities.** Since 2000, 53 teams comprised of a total 168 students from 11 disciplines have participated. As of the last alumni census report dated January 2009, Of the alumni who have graduated, 15 work on the neighbor islands (7 on the Island of Hawaii, 4 on Maui, 2 on Molokai, 1 on Lanai and 1 on Kauai) and 14 work on Oahu (3 in rural areas and 11 with underserved and/or at-risk populations). These alumni include participants from medicine, nursing, social work, education, nutrition and psychology. In addition, one works on the island of Guam and another works in a small rural community in Vermont. Forty-six participants are still in school and 17 are currently finishing their medical residencies. The remaining program alumni who are still in school have been encouraged by their rural health interdisciplinary training experience to live and work in a rural underserved area upon graduation. A survey of the 2008 students confirmed that their participation in the program had increased their interest in and commitment to living and working in a rural community upon graduation.

This program began in 1988 when Senators Daniel Inouye and Quentin N. Burdick co-wrote and sponsored legislation to fund a rural health interdisciplinary training program to improve access to health care in America's rural communities. The program was funded by the US Department of Health until Congressional budget cuts eliminated the funding in June 2006 and the federal funding has not been restored.

The Hawaii State Legislature has approved funding for the program from July 2006 – June 2009. In order to keep this valuable program in Hawaii, we are looking again to the State for funds to support its continuation in this upcoming biennium (2009-2011).

The funding in this bill for **Hawaii's only rural health interdisciplinary training program** will allow University of Hawaii students from many health disciplines to gain knowledge and experience in working on interdisciplinary teams with professionals and people from rural communities and agencies. **Without this funding there will be NO opportunity for students from the health professions to work on interdisciplinary teams in rural areas of Hawaii.**

Thank you for considering funding for the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Training Program, an **important and proven program that addresses the health care worker shortages in Hawaii's rural areas.**

# LATE TESTIMONY

January 29, 2009

To: Representative Jerry L. Chang, Chair  
Representative Mark M. Nakashima, Vice Chair  
HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

From: Eileen Lovell, MSN, PHN, APRN  
Assistant Professor  
University of Hawai'i at Hilo  
Baccalaureate Nursing Program  
200 West Kawili Street  
Hilo, HI 96720

Re: Testimony in Support of HB124  
*RELATING TO HEALTH PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION*  
**Description:** *Appropriate funds to support the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program.*

Thank you Representative Chang, Chair and Vice Chair Nakashima of the HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE and other distinguished members of the committee for considering House Bill 124.

I am the Site Coordinator for the Quentin Burdick (QB) rural health training program for the Pahoehoe site on the island of Hawaii. I have participated with the QB program for 12 years and can attest to the success of the QB program. I personally know of 10 QB student participants, ranging from social workers, nursing and medical students that have returned to the Big Island upon their graduation to begin their careers. It is wonderful to see the students come back to where they have had their training, to give back to our community and make a difference in the health care provider shortage. The health care provider shortage is still a major issue; this is why I am asking for your support of HB 124.

I support HB 124, a bill for an act that will appropriate funds to support the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program. There is a desperate shortage of health care professionals in rural communities across our state and this bill will do much to address this need.

**I urge your support of HB124 and \$400,000 funding for the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Program.** This program has been addressing the shortage of health care professionals in our rural communities in Hawaii since 2000. The program provides the opportunity for University of Hawaii students from a variety of disciplines including medicine, nursing, social work, medical technology, public health, psychology, dental hygiene, nutrition, pharmacy, education and others, to gain experience working on interdisciplinary teams in Hawaii's rural areas.

In the short term these students work with professionals and community members to provide culturally and place appropriate health promotion and disease prevention services for vulnerable rural residents from *keiki* to *kupuna*. In the long term this opportunity encourages students to consider working in rural communities and provides them with opportunities to be recruited to the most underserved areas of Hawaii.

**Participation in the program is a significant way to recruit health professionals to our most underserved rural communities.** Since 2000, 53 teams comprised of a total 168 students from 11 disciplines have participated. As of the last alumni census report dated January 2009, Of the alumni who have graduated, 15 work on the neighbor islands (7 on the Island of Hawaii, 4 on Maui, 2 on Molokai, 1 on Lanai and 1 on Kauai) and 14 work on Oahu (3 in rural areas and 11 with underserved and/or at-risk populations). These alumni include participants from medicine, nursing, social work, education, nutrition and psychology. In addition, one works on the island of Guam and another works in a small rural community in Vermont. Forty-six participants are still in school and 17 are currently finishing their medical residencies. The remaining program alumni who are still in school have been encouraged by their rural health interdisciplinary training experience to live and work in a rural underserved area upon graduation. A survey of the 2008 students confirmed that their participation in the program had increased their interest in and commitment to living and working in a rural community upon graduation.

This program began in 1988 when Senators Daniel Inouye and Quentin N. Burdick co-wrote and sponsored legislation to fund a rural health interdisciplinary training program to improve access to health care in America's rural communities. The program was funded by the US Department of Health until Congressional budget cuts eliminated the funding in June 2006 and the federal funding has not been restored.

The Hawaii State Legislature has approved funding for the program from July 2006 – June 2009. In order to keep this valuable program in Hawaii, we are looking again to the State for funds to support its continuation in this upcoming biennium (2009-2011).

The funding in this bill for **Hawaii's only rural health interdisciplinary training program** will allow University of Hawaii students from many health disciplines to gain knowledge and experience in working on interdisciplinary teams with professionals and people from rural communities and agencies. **Without this funding there will be NO opportunity for students from the health professions to work on interdisciplinary teams in rural areas of Hawaii.**

Thank you for considering funding for the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Training Program, an **important and proven program that addresses the health care worker shortages in Hawaii's rural areas.**

Sincerely,  
Eileen Lovell, MSN, PHN, APRN

# LATE TESTIMONY

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**From:** Jean McAuliffe [jeanmc@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 28, 2009 10:13 PM  
**To:** HEDtestimony  
**Cc:** June Kunimoto  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB124 1-29-09 Hearing from June Kunimoto  
**Attachments:** June KunimotoTestimony HB124\_1-29-09 Hearing.doc

TO: Representative Mark M. Nakashima  
Vice Chair, Higher Education Committee

Please see attached testimony from June Kunimoto for the 1-29-09 hearing on HB124 at 2pm.

June Kunimoto is the chair of the community advisory board for the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Training Program.

As she is unable to attend the hearing in person, she has asked that I act as her representative during the hearing and present her testimony in person on her behalf.

If you have any questions or have any trouble opening and printing the document, please call me on my cell phone at 352-6641.

I look forward to seeing you at 2pm in Room 309 for the hearing.

Mahalo and Aloha,

Jean McAuliffe  
Program Assistant  
Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Training Program

cc: June Kunimoto

January 29, 2009

## LATE TESTIMONY

To: Representative Jerry L. Chang, Chair  
Representative Mark M. Nakashima, Vice Chair  
HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

From: June T. Kunimoto  
Chair, Community Advisory Board  
Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Training Program

Re: Testimony in Support of HB124  
*RELATING TO HEALTH PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION*  
**Description:** *Appropriate funds to support the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program.*

Thank you Representative Chang, Chair and Vice Chair Nakashima of the HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE and other distinguished members of the committee for considering House Bill 124.

I am June Kunimoto, a long-time resident of Hilo. As chair of the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Training program's community advisory board, I am acutely familiar with the significant need for health care professionals in our rural areas across the state. **The Hawaii Quentin Burdick has a positive impact on recruiting physicians, nurses, social workers, psychologists, nutritionists and other health care workers to work and live in rural underserved communities.**

I support HB 124, a bill for an act that will appropriate funds to support the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program. There is a desperate shortage of health care professionals in rural communities across our state and this bill will do much to address this need.

**I would like to submit at this time a request to include \$400,000 funding for this program.** This program has been addressing the shortage of health care professionals in our rural communities in Hawaii since 2000. The program provides the opportunity for University of Hawaii students from a variety of disciplines including medicine, nursing, social work, medical technology, public health, psychology, dental hygiene, nutrition, pharmacy, education and others, to gain experience working on interdisciplinary teams in Hawaii's rural areas.

In the short term these students work with professionals and community members to provide culturally and place appropriate health promotion and disease prevention services for vulnerable rural residents from *keiki* to *kupuna*. In the long term this opportunity encourages students to consider working in rural communities and provides them with opportunities to be recruited to the most underserved areas of Hawaii.

**Participation in the program is a significant way to recruit health professionals to our most underserved rural communities.** Since 2000, 53 teams comprised of a total 168 students from 11 disciplines have participated. As of the last alumni census report dated January 2009, Of the alumni who have graduated, 15 work on the neighbor islands (7 on the Island of Hawaii, 4 on Maui, 2 on Molokai, 1 on Lanai and 1 on Kauai) and 14 work on Oahu (3 in rural areas and 11 with underserved and/or at-risk populations). These alumni include participants from medicine, nursing, social work, education, nutrition and psychology. In addition, one works on the island of Guam and another

works in a small rural community in Vermont. Forty-six participants are still in school and 17 are currently finishing their medical residencies. The remaining program alumni who are still in school have been encouraged by their rural health interdisciplinary training experience to live and work in a rural underserved area upon graduation. A survey of the 2008 students confirmed that their participation in the program had increased their interest in and commitment to living and working in a rural community upon graduation.

This program began in 1988 when Senators Daniel Inouye and Quentin N. Burdick co-wrote and sponsored legislation to fund a rural health interdisciplinary training program to improve access to health care in America's rural communities. The program was funded by the US Department of Health until Congressional budget cuts eliminated the funding in June 2006 and the federal funding has not been restored.

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Thank you for considering funding for the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Training Program, an **important and proven program that addresses the health care worker shortages in Hawaii's rural areas.**



Na Pu'uwai  
Native Hawaiian Health Care System  
PO Box 130 Kaunakakai, Hawaii 96748  
(808) 560-3653 • Fax (808) 560-3385

**LATE TESTIMONY**

Na Pu'uwai Fitness Center (808) 553-5848 • Na Pu'uwai Clinical Services: (808) 553-8288 • Fax (808) 553-8277  
• Ke Ola Hou O Lana'i • PO Box 630713 Lana'i City, Hawaii 96763 • (808) 565-7204 • Fax (808) 565-9319

January 29, 2009

To: Representative Jerry L. Chang, Chair  
Representative Mark M. Nakashima, Vice Chair  
HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

From: Judith Mikami, RN, MPH and Director of Resource Development  
Na Pu'uwai Native Hawaiian Health Care System, Moloka'i and Lana'i  
Site Coordinator, Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Team Training

Re: Testimony in Support of HB124  
*RELATING TO HEALTH PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION*  
**Description:** *Appropriate funds to support the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program.*

Thank you Representative Chang, Chair and Vice Chair Nakashima of the HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE and other distinguished members of the committee for considering House Bill 124.

On behalf of the communities of Moloka'i and Lana'i who have both benefited from the Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Training Program (QB), I would like to thank you for considering House Bill 124 that would appropriate funds to support and continue the QB program in Hawaii. The rural areas of Hawaii experience a dearth of qualified and committed health care providers and when we are fortunate enough to have any health care provider come to live and work in our communities, we count it a true blessing. The QB program would enable health career students to live and work in rural communities (6 throughout Hawaii) for the summer. Beginning with seminars that address challenges of living and working in rural and remote areas, cultural sensitivity to these challenges and other topics addressing rural health, the program prepares interested health career students representing up to 11 disciplines to experience rural health.

We have supported QB students for over 10 years and our community has embraced these students and the activities they develop and implement for our community. Through the years, there have been sustainable projects such as advance directives for our kupuna, a locally-oriented guide to college preparation and application that includes the ohana responsibility of supporting a student planning to attend college, website development for agencies, and other worthy projects. They have mentored our youth who also express an interest in the health care arena.

More importantly, the QB Program is a forum to recruit and retain qualified health care professionals to the rural areas. On Moloka'i, there have been at least (5) students who have returned to live and work in the community they participated in as QB students. This scenario has happened at the other island sites as well. The loss of funding for the QB Program would negatively impact the opportunities that have been established due to the students living and working here as well as the potential influences these QB students would have on especially our youth who need this type of positive mentoring.

I support HB 124, a bill for an act that will appropriate funds to support the Hawaii Quentin Burdick rural health interdisciplinary training program. There is a desperate shortage of health care professionals in rural communities across our state and in our rural and remote areas, such as Moloka'i and Lana'i, and this bill will do much to address this need.

**Again, I urge your support of HB124 and \$400,000 funding for the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Program.** This program has been addressing the shortage of health care professionals in our rural communities in Hawaii since 2000. The program provides the opportunity for University of Hawaii students from a variety of disciplines including medicine, nursing, social work, medical technology, public health, psychology, dental hygiene, nutrition, pharmacy, education and others, to gain experience working on interdisciplinary teams in Hawaii's rural areas.

To reiterate what I outlined above related to the QB Program in our specific communities on Moloka'i and Lana'i, these students work with professionals and community members to provide culturally and place appropriate health promotion and disease prevention services for vulnerable rural residents from *keiki* to *kupuna*. Ultimately, this opportunity encourages students to consider working in rural communities and provides them with opportunities to be recruited to the most underserved areas of Hawaii.

**Participation in the program is a significant way to recruit health professionals to our most underserved rural communities.** The data collected since 2000 finds that 53 teams comprised of a total 168 students from 11 disciplines have participated. As of the last alumni census report dated January 2009, Of the alumni who have graduated, 15 currently work on the neighbor islands (7 on the Island of Hawaii, 4 on Maui, 2 on Molokai, 1 on Lanai and 1 on Kauai) and 14 work on Oahu (3 in rural areas and 11 with underserved and/or at-risk populations). These alumni include participants from medicine, nursing, social work, education, nutrition and psychology. In addition, one works on the island of Guam and another works in a small rural community in Vermont. Forty-six participants are still in school and 17 are currently finishing their medical residencies. The remaining program alumni who are still in school have been encouraged by their rural health interdisciplinary training experience to live and work in a rural underserved area upon graduation. A survey of the 2008 students confirmed that their participation in the program had increased their interest in and commitment to living and working in a rural community upon graduation.

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The funding in House Bill 124 for **Hawaii's only rural health interdisciplinary training program** will allow University of Hawaii students from many health disciplines to gain knowledge and experience in working on interdisciplinary teams with professionals and people from rural communities and agencies. **Without this funding there will be NO opportunity for students from the health professions to work on interdisciplinary teams in rural areas of Hawaii.**

Thank you for considering funding through HB 124 for the Hawaii Quentin Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Training Program, an **important and proven program that addresses the health care worker shortages in Hawaii's rural areas, such as Moloka'i and Lana'i.**

If there are any questions, please contact me at (808) 560-3653 or via e-mail at [jasmikami@yahoo.com](mailto:jasmikami@yahoo.com).

Mahalo.