



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HAWAII

TESTIMONY HB1284 RELATING TO HEALTH.

Appropriates funds in each year of the 2009-2011 fiscal biennium to increase the payments for physician services provided by QUEST and Medicare fee-for-service providers up to 100 per cent of the current Medicare rate. Our testimony relates to funding

Thursday, February 12, 2009
10:00 am
Conference Room 329

Testifier: Joy A Marshall, RN, League of Women Voters Hawaii, Health Care Reform Chair

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Brower, members of the committee

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Nishimoto, members of the committee

TESTIMONY OF HB 1284 increasing funding to Medicaid provider physicians and bring those payments to parity with Medicare precipitants in Hawaii

The current health care system does not provide parity to those physicians who provide services to our needy. This is well reported and documented as it not only reduces the amount of physicians who provide medical services to the poor, but it decreases the patient's access to basic medical care. In fact the present rate of repayment is a contributor to our inability to acquire and maintain a pool of quality physician to care for all in Hawaii. This is unsociable.

The League supports increases in taxes to meet the health care needs of all.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in support of HB1284.



PLEASE DELIVER TO: CR 329
Thursday, February 12, 2009, 10:00 am

To: House Committee on Human Services
Rep. John M. Mizuno, Chair
Rep. Tom Brower, Vice Chair

House Committee on Health
Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

From: Hawaii Medical Association
Gary A. Okamoto, MD, President
Philip Hellreich, MD, Legislative Co-Chair
Linda Rasmussen, MD, Legislative Co-Chair
April Donahue, Executive Director
Richard C. Botti, Government Affairs
Lauren Zirbel, Government Affairs

Re: HB 1284 RELATING TO HEALTH

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Chairs & Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Association supports this measure.

While Medicare rates are low, they are higher than most QUEST plan reimbursements. Increasing QUEST rates would help encourage more needed specialists to accept patients who may not otherwise be able to find a physician to treat them.

This measure is a step in addressing the problem that a physician's overhead continues to rise while fees continue to be capped. The physician needs to meet financial obligations that are no different than any other business, but physicians are not allowed to pass on increasing costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

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OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII

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Testimony by:
Virginia Tully, OTR, MBA
HB1284, Health
House HUS/HLT Hearing – Thurs. Feb. 12, 2009
Room 329 – 10:00 am

Position: Support Intent, With Recommendations

Chairs Mizuno and Yamane, and Members of the House HUS/HLT Committees:

I am Virginia Tully, OTR, and past-president of the Occupational Therapy Association of Hawaii, (OTAH), which represents 507 occupational therapists (OTs) licensed in Hawaii. OT's work in many settings throughout the State, including hospitals, schools, and prisons, to private facilities and community programs. We work with very young children, ages 0-3, as well as school aged children, adults, and the elderly, seeking to restore or develop social-emotional, physical, cognitive, communication and adaptive behavior challenges.

Through understanding of the effect of the consumer's disability, illness and impairment, the occupational therapist develops a program that will promote development and establish needed skills to be independent in daily living activities. Daily living skills include self-care such as bathing, dressing, and skills required for learning, work or social interaction. Often times, OTs must design/fabricate special devices or suggest modification to the home environment.

We support and appreciate the intent of this measure. Currently, many private clinics do not accept Medicaid clients because of the low reimbursement. These consumers are then referred to another clinic, and must wait for approval for medical care. Access to care is compromised, which may escalate the intensity of care needed and preventable use of the emergency room, which is costly. Reimbursement to providers at 100% of Medicare may encourage more providers to accept Medicaid clients.

Recommendations:

In addition to physician care, Medicaid clients often need services provided by other health care professionals such as physical and occupational therapy services as well as speech therapy services. As such we recommend that these services also be included in this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I can be reached at 544-3336 if further information is needed.