



# Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc.

... a non-profit organization with a mission to address the global nursing shortage by providing guidance and assistance for nursing colleagues to obtain their professional license in nursing.

P.O. Box 2034 Aiea, HI 96701  
E-mail: [bramosrazon@aol.com](mailto:bramosrazon@aol.com)

## LATE TESTIMONY

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## TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 811 RELATING TO REGISTERED NURSES

February 3, 2009

House Conference Room 329

Report Title: Registered Nurses; Foreign Graduates; Licensure Requirements

Description: Removes, for a foreign nursing school graduate applying for a licensure by examination for Registered Nurse in Hawaii, the requirement of obtaining a certification from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS)

To: Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice-Chair  
Honorable Health Committee Members

From: Beatrice Ramos-Razon, RN, FACDONA  
President, Nursing Advocates and Mentors, Inc. (NAMI)

My name is Beatrice Ramos Razon. As the founder and president of NAMI (Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc.), we are in strong support of this bill. NAMI's membership is comprised of over 75 volunteer nurses, instructors, allied health care professionals, and Filipino leaders, who are dedicated to improve the health of Hawai'i's people by addressing not only a statewide, but worldwide nursing shortage through the training and mentoring of foreign medical graduate nurses, many of whom come from underprivileged backgrounds, to pass Hawai'i's nurses board exams.

A requirement for a foreign school graduate who is applying for a licensure by examination is obtaining a certification from the CGFNS-Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools. This process not only delays the application process but imposes additional costs of about \$400 to the applicant. Most states like California only require a Transcript of Record and a Breakdown of the Educational Program from the nursing school. Thus, we have advised most of the foreign graduates to apply to the California Board of Nursing. They take the national exam in Hawaii and when they are issued a California RN license, they go to Hawaii Board of Nursing for a license by reciprocity.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide support for this bill.

Sincerely,

Beatrice Ramos-Razon, RN, FACDONA

President, Nursing Advocates and Mentors, Inc.



## The Philippine Nurses Association Hawaii

<http://www.pnahawaii.org>

E-mail: [pna\\_hawaii@yahoo.com](mailto:pna_hawaii@yahoo.com) or  
[president@pnahawaii.org](mailto:president@pnahawaii.org)

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TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 811  
RELATING TO REGISTERED NURSES  
DATE: FEBRUARY 3, 2009, 0830 AM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 329

LATE TESTIMONY

February 2, 2009

To: Honorable Representative Ryan Yamane  
Chairman, Committee on Health  
Honorable Committee Member

Dear Sir:

My name is Jose Jacob, President of PNA Hawaii. PNA Hawaii is a local Filipino-American nursing and civic organization in support of the Hawaii House Bill 811 to remove the requirements of obtaining certification from CGFNS (Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools).

As a foreign nurse graduate, lacking resources, these eligible nurses will incur more financial difficulty applying both CGFNS and NCLEX thus will apply directly to California or other states that do not necessitate this requirement.

A January 2007 study by the Center for Nursing estimates that in 2006, the state was short the equivalent of 960 registered-nurse positions. That's more than all of the nurse positions at the state's largest private hospital, the 533-bed Queen's Medical Center, according to Sandra Le-Vasseur, nursing center associate director and author of the study. In the next several years, the nursing gap will widen. The center's study projects a shortage of 2,669 nurses in 2020 (Honolulu Advertiser, 2007).

If CGFNS requirement is eliminated, eligible foreign nursing applicants who wish to take the NCLEX examination can directly apply to the Hawaii Board of Nursing and will generate a revenue for the local government.

Sincerely yours,

Jose G. Jacob  
President, PNA Hawaii

H.B. No. 811. Report Title: Registered Nurses; Foreign Graduates; Licensure Requirements.

**Correct Description:** Removes, for a foreign nursing school graduate applying for a licensure by examination for Registered Nurse in Hawaii, the requirement of obtaining a certification from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS). Requires the board of nursing to adopt rules requiring submission of the Breakdown of Educational Program for International Nursing Programs and Transcript of Records from the nursing school.



# UNITED FILIPINO COUNCIL OF HAWAII

P.O. BOX 498, Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0498

## LATE TESTIMONY

### TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 811

House Committee on Health

Feb. 3, 2009, 8:30 a.m. · Hawai'i State Legislature · House Conference Rm. 329

**To:** Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice-Chair  
Honorable Health Committee Members

**From:** Eddie Agas, President, United Filipino Council of Hawaii

**Measure Title:** RELATING TO REGISTERED NURSES

**Report Title:** Registered Nurses; Foreign Graduates; Licensure Requirements

**Description:**

Removes, for an unlicensed foreign nursing school graduate applying for a registered nurse license in Hawaii, the requirement for a school transcript to be evaluated. Requires board of nursing to adopt rules requiring submission of the breakdown of educational program for international nursing programs form.

My name is Eddie Agas. I am the president of the United Filipino Council of Hawaii (UFCH). I submit this testimony to strongly support this bill on behalf of UFCH, an umbrella organization with member organizations from six islands. UFCH membership is comprised of nearly 5,000 individual members.

This bill is important because it benefits not only members of our Filipino community, but also all of Hawaii's people. First of all, a correction to the bill's description is needed. Please replace it with: "Removes, for a foreign nursing school graduate applying for licensure by examination for Registered Nurse in Hawaii, the requirement of obtaining a certification from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS). Requires the board of nursing to adopt rules requiring submission of the Breakdown of Educational Program for International Nursing Programs and Transcript of Records from the nursing school."

Lastly, in spite of a statewide and global nursing shortage, outdated and unnecessarily high certification program fees and regulations are obstructing timely testing and vetting of qualified, internationally educated registered nurses. States like California are removing such roadblocks to fill nursing positions. We humbly ask your help to do the same and vote yes. Thank you for the opportunity to present our testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Eddie Agas, President, United Filipino Council of Hawaii



# FILIPINO NURSES' ORGANIZATION OF HAWAII

FNOH: *Members Having Fun.....while Enhancing Health in Hawaii*  
*"Nurses Thinking Globally.....Acting Locally"*

## PROGRAMS / EVENTS AND FUN

FNOH - SCHOLARSHIPS  
FNOH - CONTINUING EDUCATION  
FNOH - SEMINARS / CONVENTIONS  
FNOH - SPECIAL / ANNUAL EVENTS

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## Testimony in Support of HB 811

February 3, 2009

8:30 am, Tuesday

Hawai'i State Capitol Conference Room 329

### Committee

Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair

Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice-Chair

House Health Committee Members

# LATE TESTIMONY

Relating to Registered Nurses : Abolishment of CGFNS Requirement Prior to RN-NCLEX Exam for Foreign Graduate Nurses

Dear Chair Ryan I. Yamane, Vice-Chair Scott Y. Nishimoto, and Members of the House Health Committee,

I am Nancy Atmospera-Walch, president-elect of the Filipino Nurses Organization of Hawaii (FNOH). FNOH is the oldest organization of Filipino Nurses in Hawaii, and possibly the nation. Filipino Nurses Club of Hawaii was founded in 1931, reorganized, and renamed to FNOH in 1973 by Mrs. Ines Cayaban. She is the first Filipino Registered Nurse in Hawaii, who was trained and graduated in the Philippines.

Since FNOH's inception, it has been coordinating FREE NCLEX RN Review Classes. At first, these classes were just offered to immigrant Filipino Nurses and it was later changed to include all Foreign Immigrant Graduate Nurses. However, we found out that these graduate nurses were not able to take the RN-NCLEX exam after the review class, because of the lengthy wait for the **Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS)** requirements and evaluation results. Some of them waited as long as one year and some were even longer. As a result, by the time that they took the RN-NCLEX exam, they have already forgotten what they have learned during the review class and possibly resulted to failing the exam.

Although I am not a foreign graduate nurse, I have worked with many foreign graduate Registered Nurses, and they are one of the most compassionate and caring nurses I have worked with. Therefore, I strongly support HB 811, which removes, for an unlicensed foreign nursing school graduate applying for a registered nurse licenses in Hawaii, the requirement for a school transcript to be evaluated. This action will expedite the process for these foreign graduate nurses to take their RN-NCLEX exam, the real evaluation if an individual has learned and retained his/her knowledge of nursing, and be able to work as a nurse, if he/she passes the exam.



The State of Hawaii is not the first state asking for this action. Currently, there are 23 states that do not require transcript evaluation by CGFNS - California, Oregon, Minnesota, North Carolina, Arkansas, New York, Nevada, Illinois, Vermont, Arizona, Kentucky, New Jersey, Colorado, Ohio, Maryland, New Mexico, Florida, Massachusetts, Kansas, Georgia, Texas, South Carolina and Michigan. This means that any foreign graduate nurse who really wants to take the RN-NCLEX exam, can just go to one of these states to take his/her RN Board exam. However, if this happens, most likely these nurses might not come back to Hawaii to work after passing the exam, especially a lot of the states like NY, NJ, IL and FL offer hire salaries for nurses. As a result, we lost the opportunity to have these nurses to take care for our sick population, nurses that we really need due to the nationwide nursing shortage.

Therefore, I urge you strongly to pass this HB 811, for it benefits all of us that live in Hawaii and I appreciate your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Electronically signed

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Nancy Atmospera-Walch, *RN, BSN, MPH, CHES, LNHA, CCHN, CMC*  
President-Elect

Cc. Josie Rojas, President, FNOH  
Luanne Long, President, HNA



# Filipino Coalition for Solidarity

A HAWAII RIGHTS ADVOCACY GROUP • FOUNDED IN 1990

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TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 811

LATE TESTIMONY

House Committee on Health

Feb. 3, 2009, 8:30 a.m. | Hawai'i State Legislature | House Conference Room 329

To: Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair, and Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice-Chair  
Honorable Health Committee Members

From: Charlene Cuaresma, MPH, President, Filipino Coalition For Solidarity

Measure Title: RELATING TO REGISTERED NURSES

Report Title: Registered Nurses; Foreign Graduates; Licensure Requirements

Description: Removes, for an unlicensed foreign nursing school graduate applying for a registered nurse license in Hawaii, the requirement for a school transcript to be evaluated. Requires board of nursing to adopt rules requiring submission of the breakdown of educational program for international nursing programs form.

My name is Charlene Cuaresma. As president of the Filipino Coalition for Solidarity, I want to express appreciation to you for hearing this important bill. Since its inception in 1990, the Coalition has represented more than 50 Filipino community leaders, whose aim is to work for social justice issues to empower Filipinos to make socially responsible contributions to Hawai'i and our global neighbors through education, advocacy, and social action.

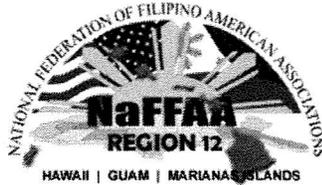
I am submitting testimony in strong support of this bill with an amendment to correct an error in the description. Please change the bill's description above to:

Removes, for a foreign nursing school graduate applying for licensure by examination for Registered Nurse in Hawaii, the requirement of obtaining a certification from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS). Requires the board of nursing to adopt rules requiring submission of the Breakdown of Educational Program for International Nursing Programs and Transcript of Records from the nursing school.

As U.S. schools of nursing and health care systems across the country are failing to meet the demands of training and certifying enough nurses to deliver America's health care needs, internationally educated registered nurses have been sought out for decades to fill this gaping void. The purpose of this bill is to streamline the certification program process, while at the same time safeguarding high nursing standards. This bill is modeled after best management practices of reducing red tape and exorbitant certification fees by a simple updating of board of nursing rules that has been increasingly adopted by the majority of states, including California. The resulting certification process not only retains accountability of credentials and professional nursing skills, but also fast tracks qualified nurses into Hawaii's health care labor force.

Respectfully,

Charlene Cuaresma, MPH  
President, Filipino Coalition for Solidarity



**LATE TESTIMONY**

## **TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 811**

House Committee on Health

Feb. 3, 2009, 8:30 a.m. | Hawai'i State Legislature | House Conference Room 329

Measure Title: RELATING TO REGISTERED NURSES

Report Title: Registered Nurses; Foreign Graduates; Licensure Requirements

Description: Removes, for an unlicensed foreign nursing school graduate applying for a registered nurse license in Hawaii, the requirement for a school transcript to be evaluated. Requires board of nursing to adopt rules requiring submission of the breakdown of educational program for international nursing programs form.

To: Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair, and Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice-Chair  
Honorable Health Committee Members

My name is Amy Agbayani and I strongly support HB 811 with a correction to an error in the bill's description. It should read: *Removes, for a foreign nursing school graduate applying for licensure by examination for Registered Nurse in Hawaii, the requirement of obtaining a certification from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS). Requires the board of nursing to adopt rules requiring submission of the Breakdown of Educational Program for International Nursing Programs and Transcript of Records from the nursing school.*

The intent of this bill is to facilitate, not slow down, the licensing requirements for international nursing school graduates to meet Hawaii's, as well as the nation's, work force shortage of qualified and certified nurses. Most states, including California, have already removed this requirement to meet the growing pressures and demands of health care delivery systems.

As Vice Chair of the National Federation of Filipino American Associations Region XII, which represents the interests of Filipinos in Hawai'i, Guam, and the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands, we support the significant contributions of Filipino nurses in America's health care systems. NaFFAA Region XII is an affiliate of the National NaFFAA. Washington policy-makers, private industry and national advocacy groups recognize NaFFAA as the Voice of Filipinos and Filipino Americans throughout the United States. We are a non-partisan, non-profit national affiliation of more than five hundred Filipino-American institutions and umbrella organizations that span twelve regions throughout the continental United States and U.S. Pacific territories.

Sincerely,

Amy Agbayani, Ph.D., Vice Chair, NaFFAA Region XII

# Filipino American Citizens League

Jake Manegdeg, President  
P. O. Box 270126 ★ Honolulu, Hawai'i 96827

## TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 811

LATE TESTIMONY

### House Committee on Health

Feb. 3, 2009, 8:30 a.m. · Hawai'i State Legislature · House Conference Rm. 329

To:

Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair & Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice-Chair  
Honorable Health Committee Members

From:

Jake Manegdeg, President, Filipino American Citizens League

Measure Title: RELATING TO REGISTERED NURSES

Report Title: Registered Nurses; Foreign Graduates; Licensure Requirements

Description: Removes, for an unlicensed foreign nursing school graduate applying for a registered nurse license in Hawaii, the requirement for a school transcript to be evaluated. Requires board of nursing to adopt rules requiring submission of the breakdown of educational program for international nursing programs form.

My name is Jake Manegdeg. I am the president of the Filipino American Citizens League. The Filipino American Citizens League was formed over ten years ago to contribute to the advancement of civil rights and social justice for minority groups, underserved populations, and vulnerable communities through education, advocacy, and social action.

I submit this testimony to strongly support this bill with the following revision to the entire description above: "Removes, for a foreign nursing school graduate applying for licensure by examination for Registered Nurse in Hawaii, the requirement of obtaining a certification from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS). Requires the board of nursing to adopt rules requiring submission of the Breakdown of Educational Program for International Nursing Programs and Transcript of Records from the nursing school."

Supporting these proposed changes to the nursing certification requirements still upholds standards and credentials that are essential to practice nursing in Hawaii. These changes are also necessary to address Hawaii's serious nursing shortage. Thank you for the chance to provide support for this bill. Your help in its passage is greatly appreciated.

Very Sincerely,

Jake Manegdeg  
President, Filipino American Citizens League



## OAHU FILIPINO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

P.O. Box 17531 • Honolulu • Hawaii 96817

### Unit Organizations

Alliance of Residential  
Carehome Administrators  
Aloha Saguibsib Cultural  
Foundation, Inc.  
Annac ti Bado iti Hawaii  
Annac ti Batac  
Annac ti Caoayan 2002  
Annak ti Kailokuan iti  
America  
Annak ti Sinait iti Hawaii  
Asingan Organization of  
Hawaii  
Badoc-Pinili Aid  
Association of Hawaii  
Banna Association of  
Hawaii  
Bannatiran Association of  
Hawaii  
Batangas Association of  
Hawaii  
Bulacan Circle of Hawaii  
Caballeros de Dimasalang  
Cabugao Sons & Daughters  
of Hawaii  
Candonians of Hawaii  
Caoayan ISAH  
Cavitenians of Hawaii  
Dingras Association of  
Hawaii  
Divine Word College  
Alumni Association  
FilAm Sports USA  
Fil American Citizens  
League  
Filipino Business Women's  
Club  
Filipino Nurses Organization  
of Hawaii  
Filipino Women's Civic  
Club  
GUMIL Hawaii  
GUMIL Oahu  
Hawaii Filipino Women's  
Club  
Hawaii Council of Bilingual  
Educators  
ILAH  
Ilocos Nortenians of  
America  
INCAT Alumni Association  
of Hawaii  
International Filipino  
Society of Hawaii  
Kalayaan Phil.-Hi. Int.  
La Union Circle of  
Hawaii  
Lingayen Gulf Club of  
Hawaii

### TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 811

House Committee on Health

Feb. 3, 2009, 8:30 a.m.  
Hawai'i State Legislature  
House Conference Room 329

To:

Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice-Chair  
Honorable Health Committee Members

From:

Cirvalina Longboy, President  
Oahu Filipino Community Council

My name is Cirvalina Longboy, president of the Oahu Filipino Community Council. OFCC is an umbrella organization that represents a network of non-profit civic groups with a unified vision to improve the lives of our Filipino communities.

I submit this testimony to strongly support this bill with the following correction to the description, which states:  
"Removes, for a foreign nursing school graduate applying for licensure by examination for Registered Nurse in Hawaii, the requirement of obtaining a certification from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS). Requires the board of nursing to adopt rules requiring submission of the Breakdown of Educational Program for International Nursing Programs and Transcript of Records from the nursing school."

The majority of internationally registered nurses affected by this well-intentioned, but impractical and expensive certification process is from the Philippines. With your help in the passage of this bill, qualified nurses can be of service sooner to address Hawaii's nursing shortage.

Sincerely,

Cirvalina Longboy, President  
Oahu Filipino Community Council

### Unit Organizations

Magsingal Association of  
Hawaii  
Narvacan/San Antonio Club of  
Hawaii  
Nueva Vizcaya Association of  
Hawaii  
Pasuquinos Association of  
Hawaii  
Philippine Cultural Foundation  
Philippine Nurses  
Association of Hawaii  
Pidtig Association of Hawaii  
Sanchez Mira Association of  
Hawaii  
San Manuel Pangasinan  
Association of Hawaii  
San Nicolaneos USA  
San Nicolas Goodwill  
Foundation  
San Nicolas Teachers of  
Hawaii  
Santa Lucia Association of  
Hawaii  
Sarrat Association of Hawaii  
Sarrat International Inc.  
Sinait Nt. High School Alumni  
of Hawaii  
Solsona of Hawaii  
Tarlac Mutual Club of Hawaii  
TPCP  
Kalihii Ballroom, Inc.  
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Samar Leyte Association of  
Hawaii  
Sampaguita/Sunflower Club of  
Hawaii  
San Juan Association of  
Hawaii  
San Nicolas Nat. High  
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Santa Nicolas Nat. High  
School Bingao Annex  
Tagalog Association of Oahu  
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United Group of Home  
Operators  
United Pangasinan of Hawaii  
United Urdaneta Club of  
Hawaii  
United Vintarinians of Hawaii  
Vigan Association of Hawaii

# LATE TESTIMONY

2 February 2009

Representative Ryan Yamane, Chair of Committee on Health & Committee Members

Dear Chair Yamane & Health Committee Members:

My name is Clementina D. Ceria-Ulep, a registered nurse and call-in nursing supervisor at Hawaii Medical Center-East and a faculty at the University of Hawaii School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene, Department of Nursing. I would like to support HB 811 which would remove for a foreign registered nurse (RN) graduate applying for licensure the requirement of first obtaining a certification from the Commission on Graduate of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) before taking the NCLEX-RN examination. The NCLEX-RN Examination is the U.S. Registered Nurse Licensing Exam. Reason: This process of first obtaining the CGFNS certification before being able to sit for the NCLEX-RN examination can be a lengthy process and a barrier in times of nursing shortage when United States depend on foreign RN graduates to alleviate the nursing workforce demand.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Sincerely,

*Clementina D. Ceria-Ulep*

Clementina D. Ceria-Ulep, PhD, RN

# LATE TESTIMONY

To: Honorable Representative Ryan Yamane,

Honorable Health Committee Members:

Reference: **TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT FOR BILL # HB 811**

**RELATING TO REGISTERED NURSES**

**DATE: FEB. 3, 2009 8:30 AM Room # 329**

**My name is Liza J. Cabaccang a US citizen and a resident of Hawaii. I am affiliated with Philippine Nurses Association Hawaii and the incumbent 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of the Organization. I am currently employed as an RN.**

**The correct description of the Bill is to remove CGFNS from a foreign nursing school graduate applying a licensure by examination for Registered Nurse in the State of Hawaii, the requirement of obtaining certification from the Commission of graduate nursing school. This is an obstacle and delay in the application process in obtaining licensure (NCLEX).**

TO: The House of Representatives Committee on Health Hearing  
Tuesday, February 03, 2009 at 8:30a.m.  
Conference Room 329, Hawaii State Capital

FROM: Dr. Linda Beechinor, DNP, APRN  
Foreign Nurse Recruiter in Hawaii

**LATE TESTIMONY**

Re: HB 811 Relating to Registered Nurses

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in strong opposition to this bill and in support of the Board of Nursing's prior testimony. Since I have recruited foreign-educated nurses to Hawaii for over 20 years, I am involved every day in this issue of these licensing nurses to work in Hawaii.

I believe this legislation serves to benefit a few while removing a safeguard that substantially protects the public, and in addition would cost the State of Hawaii a great deal of time and funds to implement. Please let me explain.

Foreign-educated nurses who want to work in the USA must pass NCLEX-RN, to work as a licensed RN anywhere in the USA. To be eligible to sit the NCLEX exam, the candidate must apply to any Board of Nursing in a state or territory, and prove they have graduated from a school of nursing that meets American standards of education for RN's. The purpose of the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) in this process, is to evaluate those education transcripts from any school in the

world that professes to educate professional nurses, and decide if that education meets American standards. It is not in the interest of the consumers of nursing care in this country to have 51+ bodies doing those evaluations and deciding if documents are authentic, if transcripts are translated accurately, if each course is equivalent to the required American course, etc., etc. CGFNS has the history and the staff who are well educated and skilled in this process, to provide a uniformly fair and accurate evaluation of the candidate's education from anywhere in the world, who want to become licensed in the USA.

If we are talking about nurses who want to come from other countries to work as nurses in the USA, US Immigration requires that any candidate coming to the US to work as a nurse have the following: a state license obtained by NCLEX success, a job offer as an RN in that state, AND a VisaScreen certificate from CGFNS. That VisaScreen certificate attests not only to the nursing education, but also to written and spoken language skills, and the certainty of unencumbered licensing in every place the candidate has ever practiced as a nurse anywhere in the world. This last part screens for nurses who are changing venues to avoid disciplinary action against any nursing license held anywhere in the world. Just to be clear, this

process applies to Canadian nurses, to nurses from the Philippines, from Ireland, South Africa, wherever.

This process however does NOT apply to any foreign-educated nurse who immigrates to the USA in a category other than as a nurse, e.g. as a sponsored family member of a US citizen. That candidate for licensure does not need to meet the above Immigration requirements for nurses. If they have acquired a family-sponsored "green card", they have work authorization from Immigration for any job. If they have been educated as a nurse in a foreign country, they can directly apply for a license from the state board of nursing of their choosing. It is up to the state Board of Nursing to set the rules to screen these candidates' education credentials, language skills, and any history of licensing/practice problems in other venues. CGFNS provides this screening to the State Board, to fully protect the consumer from nurses who would not meet American standards.

House Bill 811 cites the cost of education certification by CGFNS as \$378-\$418. It is expensive because it is thorough and accurate. It is time-consuming and requires a background of expertise to decipher and compare foreign-prepared documents to determine equivalency and validity for the purpose of meeting nursing standards in the USA. I have no doubt that the costs to the state of Hawaii Board of Nursing to replicate this service for a

small group of candidates, would be much higher initially in staff time and education to gear up for meeting HB 811 requirements.

What alternatives do these residents of Hawaii have then, who are educated in foreign countries as nurses, to become licensed in Hawaii as an RN? I counsel these candidates every day and I know exactly what their options are, none of which by-pass these safeguards for our communities. Currently, if a candidate successfully applies to ANY state board of nursing in the US or its territories for the NCLEX-RN exam, and that state attests to their evaluation of the foreign nursing education as equivalent to American standards, as well as successful completion of the NCLEX\_RN exam, the Board in Hawaii will license them. So I am left asking why is this bill being offered? It will save a small group of foreign-educated nurses several hundred dollars that it costs to safeguard the public. It opens the public to risk and the state to liability and costs it currently does not have. And it purports to reduce barriers to licensure that simply are not there.

I am happy to answer questions at anytime about this issue.

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**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2009  
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

**Public Hearing  
Tuesday, February 3, 2009  
8:30 AM Room 329, State Capitol**

**LATE TESTIMONY**

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT of HB211  
Relating to Registered Nurses**

**The Honorable Ryan Yamane, Chair; Honorable Scott Nishimoto, Vice-Chair  
and members of the committee:**

I am Tony L. Sagayadoro, I am submitting my testimony in strong support of HB 811 –  
Relating to Registered Nurses.

HB 811 if enacted will streamline the examination requirements and eliminate the duplicative application procedure for foreign-trained nurses who are now permanently living in Hawaii. If the CGFNS requirements is not repealed a foreign trained nurse in Hawaii maybe force to move to other states to become licensed. A foreign-trained nurse can go to other states like California, Oregon, Minnesota, North Carolina, Arkansas, New York, Nevada, Illinois, Vermont, Arizona, Kentucky, New Jersey, Colorado, Ohio, Maryland, New Mexico, Florida, Massachusetts, Kansas, Georgia, Texas, South Carolina and Michigan , where the applicant **need not present** the CGFNS certificate to take the NCLEX-RN, pass the test, have their licenses issued in these states and then return to Hawaii and have a Hawaii license issued by endorsement. Unfortunately, most foreign-trained nurses who take this route to becoming licensed do not return to Hawaii.

The bill proposed changes to the nursing licensure process that will make it easier for qualified candidates to attain licenses without compromising any standards and will help alleviate the nursing shortage in Hawaii. The test of nursing skill remains the NCLEX-RN, the licensure examination.

I fully believe in HB 811 will produce positive results like other 23 states that had enacted the same legislation.

**We urge that you give HB811 your favorable consideration. Thank you.**

**Tony L. Sagayadoro**

**1734 S King St., Honolulu, Hawaii 96826**

**From:** Dr Gracie [drgracie@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 02, 2009 4:09 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** HB #811

**LATE TESTIMONY**

To the Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair House Committee on Health and Committe Members:

My name is Grace Blodgett. I am the president of a small healthcare company on Oahu, and former VP of the Univesity of Phoenix, Hawaii Campus for 14 years. I have been a nurse for over 40 years, 16 of which have been in Hawaii. As I am also a foreign graduate having been prepared as a R.N.in England, I feel I am more than prepared to comment and offer my OPPOSITION to HB # 811.

When I applied to nurse in New York (40+ years ago) and Utah approximately 32 years ago, I was required to take the State Boards examination, as well as complete a number of required courses. I had to demonstrate sound competencies and knowledge base in order to nurse in those states, and I did so willingly, fully understanding that patient safety and quality care is always at stake with less than optimally prepared nurses.

I strongly support the Hawaii State Board of Nursing in its opposition to this Bill, and strongly support its quest to ensure that patient care that is provided by nurses who are equally prepared to practice under the laws of Hawaii.

Consistency of standards for knowledge and clinical skills across the United States contributes to to consistency in licensure requirements, an essential component in any profession.

I believe this is a "bandaid" approach to expedite the entry of foreign nurses into Hawaii. It is an approach that while well-intended does not fully consider either the immediate or long-term ramifications of "unleashing" nurses who at best can barely speak English and at worst have the potential to do harm.

I believe passage of HB # 811 would be a travesty.

Sincerely,  
Grace Blodgett  
MSN MBA PhD

THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
Tuesday, February 3, 2009 Conference  
Room 329  
8:30 a.m.

LATE

**TESTIMONY In OPPOSITION on HOUSE BILL NO. 811  
RELATING TO REGISTERED NURSES.**

TO: THE HONORABLE RYAN I. YAMANE, CHAIR,  
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Amy Stone Murai. I have been an RN for 35 years, and a Nurse Practitioner for 32. I testify as a concerned private citizen in opposition to House Bill No. 811 Relating To Registered Nurses, which seeks to remove, for unlicensed foreign nursing school graduates applying for a registered nurse ("RN") license in Hawaii, the requirement to have the applicant's educational credentials evaluated by a professional evaluator.

An article about the quality of nursing education in the January 28, 2008 edition of the Philippine Star (Manila) exemplifies the importance of meticulous evaluation of a foreign graduate's qualifications.

In a consolidated interim audit report of the Commission on Higher Education's 2007 operations, the Commission on Audit (COA) has expressed concern over the agency's failure to close down nursing schools whose nursing graduates have consistently performed miserably in the licensure examinations of the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). ... COA auditors said that for the past years, there were 19 schools that did not even have one nursing graduate who passed the board exams.

"From 2001 to 2005, only 111 out of 263 nursing schools nationwide managed to have at least 50 percent of their graduates pass the PRC licensure examinations, with 19 or 7.22 percent of these schools failing to have even a single passer," the COA *audit* report said.

The Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools International (CGFNS) is the designated evaluation organization for the Hawaii Board of Nursing and for most others across the country. CGFNS protects the public by ensuring that healthcare professionals educated in other countries are eligible and qualified to meet licensure, immigration and other practice requirements in the United States. It uses uniform standards in evaluating programs, credentials and foreign licensure attainment to ensure that applicants arrive with comparable background and reasonable success in achieving licensure in the United States. CGFNS relieves regulatory boards of a critical but onerous and time-consuming task that few state boards are staffed to undertake. I refer committee members the excellent testimony submitted By Kathleen Yokouchi, Executive Officer of the Hawaii Board of Nursing, for further details.

Hawaii's current regulatory requirements allow well-qualified foreign nursing graduates two cost and time-effective pathways to licensure. The safety and protection of our citizens and visitors must outweigh any urge to value quantity over quality where health care is concerned.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.



Amy Stone Murai, RN, MS, APRN-c