

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Testimony in SUPPORT of GM 686
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the State Council on Mental Health,
Gubernatorial Nominee ALFRED ARENSDORF, for a term to expire 6-30-2017

SENATOR JOSH GREEN, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: April 17, 2015, 1:15 PM Room Number: 414

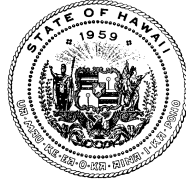
1 The Department of Health, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division, is in strong support of
2 the confirmation of Dr. Alfred Arensdorf to the State Council on Mental Health.

3 Dr. Arensdorf, a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, has served the people of Hawaii, especially
4 children and youth with emotional and/or behavioral challenges for several decades. As a strong and
5 dedicated advocate, he helped shaped the development of Hawaii's nationally recognized children's
6 mental health system of care and its emphasis on evidence-based services. Dr. Arensdorf, affectionally
7 known as "Dr. A", was a major force in defining and developing clinical excellence and psychiatric
8 expertise for Hawaii's children. He served as the Medical Director of the Child and Adolescent Mental
9 Health Division from 1999-2005.

10 As a community-minded volunteer, Dr. A answered the call of the Red Cross for mental health
11 support after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the Gulf Coast. During that time, he provided
12 clinical leadership to the Hawaii contingent, developed systematic protocols, and provided mental health
13 counseling to victims and relief workers.

14 Yet, despite his storied resume and life story, Dr. A has always been a genuine and warm-hearted
15 individual, humble and accepting of all.

16 Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of Dr. Arensdorf's confirmation.



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Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of GM 686
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE STATE
COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
ALFRED ARENSDORF, M.D.

SENATOR JOSH GREEN, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH (HTH)

Hearing Date: April 17, 2015
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1 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) strongly supports the nomination of
2 Alfred Arensdorf, M.D. to serve on the State Council on Mental Health (SCMH) for the term to
3 expire on June 30, 2017.

4 This SCMH nominee will occupy the federal mandated position under Public Law 102-
5 321, Section 1914(c) as the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Maui Service Area Board
6 (MSAB) representative.

7 **Alfred Arensdorf, M.D.** (GM 686), a retired child psychiatrist, continues to participate
8 as a clinical professor in the John A. Burns School of Medicine's Department of Psychiatry,
9 teaching in the residency programs on family and systems' interventions, prevention and
10 protective factors. He is currently a member of the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Maui
11 Service Area Board (MSAB). Dr. Arensdorf worked as the Medical Director at the Child and
12 Adolescent Mental Health Division of the Department of Health for six years where he received
13 numerous awards. In 2004, he was awarded the American Academy of Child and Adolescent

1 Psychiatry's prestigious Rieger Service Program Award for Excellence for his work in Hawaii's
2 system of care. In 2009, he received the Systems of Care Achievement Award, and most
3 recently in 2010, Mental Health America's Outstanding Community Mental Health Leader
4 award. Dr. Arensdorf is American Red Cross trained in disaster mental health and in
5 psychological first aid. He has volunteered on the mainland to work with victims of Hurricanes
6 Katrina and Rita. Dr. Arensdorf's life experiences are extremely relevant to the issues and
7 concerns of the SCMH.

8 As a 49 year Hawaii resident, he had an influencing role in the early development of the
9 John A. Burns School of Medicine, particularly the Department of Psychiatry and its training
10 program in child and adolescent psychiatry. On Maui, he was a prime mover in establishing a
11 comprehensive arrange of County mental health and substance abuse services. As a founding
12 board member of Aloha House and chairman of its Board of Directors while the organization
13 sought its 501(c)(3) status and external funding, he was in a leadership position to help guide and
14 form community-based mental health services. Additionally, he was instrumental in the
15 development of the Maui Youth and Family Services program and in the merger of three major
16 agencies that now includes Aloha House, Maui Youth and Family Services and the Malama
17 Family Recovery Center. In the late 80s and early 90s, Dr. Arensdorf helped Maui Memorial
18 Medical Center set up its inpatient mental health service array including adolescent inpatient
19 treatment. His motivation to continue his involvement within the mental health and substance
20 abuse fields is rooted in his personal belief in the need for access to mental health treatment,
21 when needed, to assist individuals in maintaining and proactively addressing their health and

1 wellness so that they may continue to be productive, competent and contributing members of
2 society. As an SCMH member, Dr. Arensdorf will be an engaging resource for creative
3 solutions and approaches to addressing mental illness and substance abuse including being an
4 articulate historian of mental health and substance abuse services as they have evolved over time.
5 Dr. Arensdorf fulfills the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, MSAB, representative segment
6 on the SCMH.

7 The DOH respectfully requests your favorable consideration in confirming Dr. Alfred
8 Arensdorf to the SCMH.

9 Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this volunteer.