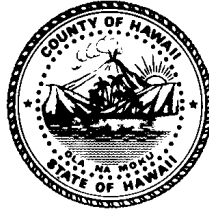


Harry Kim
Mayor



Wil Okabe
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

March 18, 2019

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair
Committee on Higher Education

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members:

RE: SCR 82/SR 59 Teaching Hospital in West Hawai'i

I strongly support SCR 82/SR 59.

The concept of establishing a teaching hospital in West Hawai'i is a masterstroke. It will serve as a focus for recruiting, training and retaining the healthcare workers – physicians, nurses and others – that are so sorely needed on Hawai'i Island. It will be core to the healthcare infrastructure enhancements needed to care for our growing population, predicted by DBEDT to reach 300,000 by 2040.

A West Hawai'i teaching hospital will attract physicians, nurses, physiotherapists, pharmacists, phlebotomists, x-ray technicians, all the ancillary staff needed to run a hospital. It will become the anchor of a robust, coordinated healthcare system, key to sustaining and retaining the healthcare workers currently lacking on the Big Island.

It will enhance and diversify our economy, presently so dependent on tourism. It may have a positive impact on tourism itself, assuring older or medically fragile tourists that West Hawai'i is a safe place to be, and perhaps even bringing "medical tourists" seeking treatment.

Most of all, it will mean that clinical services and medical services presently absent on-island will be available to our residents, allowing local families to receive care and support at home, often a big part of any recovery.

Teaching hospitals are known to raise the standard of care in the communities they serve, providing opportunity and employment, while better addressing everyday healthcare needs of residents and visitors alike.

This Legislature approved a feasibility study once, but the funds lapsed. I sincerely hope that your encouragement of JABSOM to look into the feasibility of a teaching hospital in West Hawai'i can move this project forward.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Kim
MAYOR



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Thursday, March 21, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.

By

Jerris R. Hedges, MD
Dean, John A. Burns School of Medicine

And

Dr. Michael Bruno
Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and
Vice Chancellor for Research
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SCR 82/SR 59 – ENCOURAGING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII JOHN A. BURNS
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE TO STUDY THE IMPACT AND FEASIBILITY OF CREATING
A TEACHING HOSPITAL IN WEST HAWAII

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide **comments** on SCR 82/SR 59. These resolutions seek to have the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) conduct an impact and feasibility study for creating a teaching hospital in West Hawai'i.

There is a growing need for upgrading the health services and related facilities in West Hawai'i in light of the increasing regional population, tourists and Hawai'i residents visiting the county. Collaboration by the University of Hawai'i and the Hawai'i Health Services Corporation (along with other appropriate partners) in the development of a teaching hospital in West Hawai'i would help replace aging healthcare facilities in that region and provide an additional training site for JABSOM medical students and residents in graduate medical education programs (such as family medicine and internal medicine) thus encouraging future practice in West Hawai'i.

While JABSOM agrees that a feasibility study for a teaching hospital in West Hawai'i would be valuable, the study should be undertaken in conjunction with leadership from the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation and include input from other important community partners so that a meaningful outcome may be achieved. Additionally, funding has not been allocated in the resolutions. Without funding, JABSOM would not be able to conduct the type of study contemplated by the resolutions.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.