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Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

**Before the
House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
and
House Committee on Judiciary
Wednesday, February 12, 2020
2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**On the following measure:
H.B. 1609, H.D. 1, RELATING TO PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGERS**

Chair Takumi, Chair Lee, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Colin Hayashida, and I am the Insurance Commissioner of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' (Department) Insurance Division. The Department offers comments on this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to establish business practice and transparency reporting requirements for pharmacy benefit managers, replace the registration requirement for pharmacy benefit managers with a licensing requirement, and increase penalties for violations of the pharmacy benefit managers law.

Section 2 of the bill purports to regulate the conduct of "covered entities" (page 3, line 16 to page 4, line 16); however, the applicable definition of "covered entities" in Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) section 431S-1 includes entities over which the Insurance Division does not exercise jurisdiction, such as employers and labor unions. In addition, the bill requires pharmacy benefit managers to comply with unknown and

overly broad requirements of other federal or state entities (page 3, lines 11 to 15). Compliance may not be enforceable, as these entities may not be under the jurisdiction of the Insurance Division.

In section 3, the proposed amendments to the definition of “pharmacy benefit manager” may result in a definition that is overly broad.

Implementation of section 5 of this bill will be difficult, as the Insurance Division currently lacks staff expertise to assess pharmacy benefit managers under the licensing standards set forth in that section. In addition, licensing fees and the renewal framework are inconsistent with requirements for licensing other entities under the Insurance Division’s jurisdiction.

Section 5 also appears inconsistent with section 6, insofar as section 5 indicates that licenses “shall be valid for a period of three calendar years from the date of issuance or renewal” (page 10, lines 9 to 11), while section 6 amends HRS section 431S-4(a) to require an annual license renewal (page 12, lines 5 to 7).

Significantly, section 5 changes the registration of pharmacy benefit managers to a licensure requirement and provides only broad criteria for the Insurance Commissioner to consider in determining whether to grant a license (page 11, lines 13 to 20). However, this bill does not require applicants to provide proof that they possess the “necessary organization, background expertise, and financial integrity to supply the services sought to be offered.”

Further, section 5 authorizes the issuance of a restricted or limited license (page 11, lines 13 to 16), but section 7 (page 13, lines 1 to 16) does not give the Insurance Commissioner those same remedies as disciplinary sanctions for HRS chapter 431S violations. Lastly, there is no option to impose fines for violations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE, 2020**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 1609, H.D. 1, RELATING TO PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGERS.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEES ON CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE
AND ON JUDICIARY

DATE: Wednesday, February 12, 2020 **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 325

TESTIFIER(S): Clare E. Connors, Attorney General, or
Daniel K. Jacob, Deputy Attorney General

Chairs Takumi and Lee and Members of the Committees:

The Department of the Attorney General makes the following comments about the bill.

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) establish business practice and transparency reporting requirements for pharmacy benefit managers; (2) replace the registration requirement for pharmacy benefit managers with a licensing requirement; and (3) increase penalties for violations of the pharmacy benefit managers law.

The portion of the bill that establishes business practices and transparency reporting requirements for pharmacy benefit managers may be subject to an Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) preemption challenge. ERISA is a comprehensive federal legislative scheme that “supersede[s] any and all State laws insofar as they may now or hereafter relate to any employee benefit plan.” 29 U.S.C.A. § 1144(a).¹ A state law relates to an ERISA plan and is preempted if it has a prohibited connection with or reference to an ERISA plan. A state law has an impermissible

¹ 29 U.S.C.A. § 1144(a), in full, provides as follows:

Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the provisions of this subchapter and subchapter III of this chapter shall supersede any and all State laws insofar as they may now or hereafter relate to any employee benefit plan described in section 1003(a) of this title and not exempt under section 1003(b) of this title. This section shall take effect on January 1, 1975.

connection with ERISA plans when it governs a central matter of plan administration or interferes with nationally uniform plan administration. *Egelhoff v. Egelhoff*, 532 U.S. 141, 148, 121 S.Ct. 1322, 149 L.Ed.2d 264 (2001).

With respect to the regulation of pharmacy benefit managers, there is a split among the circuits as to the extent of regulation that may be permissible. The United States Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit has not issued a decision regarding the regulation of pharmacy benefit managers.

In *Pharm. Care Mgmt. Ass'n v. Rowe*, 429 F.3d 294 (1st Cir. 2005), the United States Court of Appeals, First Circuit, held that Maine's Unfair Prescription Drug Practices Act was not preempted by ERISA. The Unfair Prescription Drug Practices Act imposed a number of requirements on pharmacy benefit managers that entered into contracts with covered entities. In the *Rowe* Court's analysis, although the regulation may prompt ERISA plans to re-evaluate their working relations with the pharmacy benefit managers, nothing in the Unfair Prescription Drug Practices Act compelled them to do so, and ERISA plans still had a free hand to structure the plans as they wish. 429 F.3d at 303.

In *Pharm. Care Mgmt. Ass'n v. D.C.*, 613 F.3d 179 (D.C. Cir. 2010), the United States Court of Appeals, District of Columbia, reviewed the District of Columbia's Access RX Act, which was similar to Maine's Unfair Prescription Drug Practices Act. The United States Courts of Appeal, D.C. Circuit reached an opposite conclusion, finding that D.C.'s Access RX Act was preempted due to an improper "connection to" an ERISA plan. Rejecting the holding in *Rowe*, that the regulation of pharmacy benefit managers left ERISA plans with a free hand to structure the plans as they wish, the *D.C.* Court found that the Access RX Act binds plan administrator because the economies of scale, purchasing leverage, and network of pharmacies could only be offered by a pharmacy benefit manager. 613 F.3d at 188.

In this case, similar to both Maine's Unfair Prescription Drug Practices Act and D.C.'s Access RX Act, the bill would compel pharmacy benefit managers to act as a fiduciary when providing services to a covered entity, disclose conflicts of interest to

covered entities, and file “transparency reports” with the Insurance Commissioner. Accordingly, there is a split in jurisdictions as to whether one or more of these mandates may implicate areas central to plan administration and therefore be preempted.

In addition, an impermissible “express reference” and an “implicit reference” to an ERISA plan within the bill may also be an issue. A state law has a prohibited “reference to” ERISA or ERISA plans where it acts immediately and exclusively upon ERISA plans. *Gobelle v. Liberty Mutual Insurance Company*, 136 S. Ct. 936, 943 194 L. Ed. 2d 20 (2016). An “express reference” to an ERISA plan can be found on page 9, line 13 in the use of the words “self-insured plan.” In order to avoid the possibility of preemption due to an “express reference” to an ERISA plan, we suggest removing the words “a self-insured plan” from page 9, line 13. The removal should not substantively change the proposed bill.

In *Pharm. Care Mgmt. Ass’n v. Gerhart*, 852 F.3d 722 (8th Cir. 2017), the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit found that an Iowa law contained an “implicit reference” to ERISA through regulation of pharmacy benefit managers who administer benefits for “covered entities,” which by definition included entities that are necessarily subject to ERISA regulations. Because the benefits affected by the Iowa law were provided by ERISA covered programs, the requirements imposed on the management and administration of these benefits were found to be preempted. The use of the term “covered entity” on page 3, line 16, and page 4, line 9, might be an implicit reference pursuant to the decision in *Gerhart*. We note, however, that the United States Supreme Court has granted certiorari in this case and, therefore, there is no final decision.

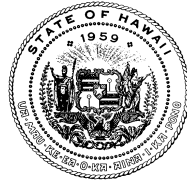
Finally, we note two technical concerns. First the current bill contains two different definitions of “pharmacy benefit manager.” See page 6, lines 10 through 17, and page 9, line 7, through page 10, line 2. Unless there is a purpose behind the different definitions, we recommend that the committee select a single definition.

Second, we recommend removing the words “or under an employment relationship” from page 9, line 12, to avoid unintended consequences. As written, the

bill would define an employee of a self insured plan as a pharmacy benefit manager.
We do not believe that is the intent of this bill.

If the Committee wants to address the preemption concern we will be happy to
work with the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
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**Testimony COMMENTING on HB1609 HD1
RELATING TO PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGERS.**

REP. ROY M. TAKUMI, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: February 12, 2020

Room Number: 329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** N/A.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) takes no position on HB1609 HD1
3 but requests amendments that repeal section 328-106, Hawaii Revised Statutes to improve
4 consistency and conformity.

5 Background

6 Act 175, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2015 (HB252 HD1 SD1 CD1 Relating to Pharmacy
7 Benefit Managers) established requirements for a pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) that
8 reimburses a contracting pharmacy for a drug on a maximum allowable cost basis to have a
9 clearly defined process for a contracting pharmacy to appeal the maximum allowable cost for a
10 drug on a maximum allowable cost list. Act 175 SLH 2015 was codified largely as section 328-
11 106, HRS.

12 This section contains definitions inconsistent with HB1609 HD1 and established a parallel and
13 ineffective regulatory scheme.

14 Unenforceable Regulatory Powers

15 Section 328-106 is generally unenforceable. The appeal and rebilling/repayment mechanism is
16 based on individual customer transactions, which would number in the hundreds or thousands

per week. DOH does not possess the expertise or staff to follow up on a volume of complaints of this scale.

Interference with Private Contracts

The appeal mechanism for MAC billings provided by section 328-106 requires the department to intervene in contractual arrangements between private entities, the remedy for which is generally considered the Judiciary. It is inappropriate for the Department of Health to interfere in private commercial transactions when there is no public health threat.

Insufficient Authority

Lastly, the amendments of Act 175 SLH 2015 are inconsistent with the purpose of part VI, chapter 328 "Drug Product Selection," which is to assure that less expensive generically equivalent prescription pharmaceuticals are offered to the consumer. DOH has insufficient authority pursuant to chapter 328 to enforce reimbursements on a maximum allowable cost basis between a PBM and a retail pharmacy, which would involve the right to inspect/copy/seize data from private claims processing systems and financial systems. A PBM may simply refuse to comply with a request for records and the department has no legal recourse. Furthermore, the department does not have forensic accounting staff with which to conduct the enforcement action.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Offered Amendments:

SECTION . Section 329-91, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended as follows:

By repealing the definition of "maximum allowable cost":

~~["Maximum allowable cost" means the maximum amount that a pharmacy benefit manager shall reimburse a pharmacy for the cost of a drug."]~~

By repealing the definition of "maximum allowable cost list":

~~["Maximum allowable cost list" means a list of drugs for which a maximum allowable cost has been established by a pharmacy benefit manager."]~~

By repealing the definition of "obsolete":

~~["Obsolete" means a drug that may be listed in a national drug pricing compendia but cannot be dispensed based on the expiration date of the last lot manufactured."]~~

SECTION . Section 328-106, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is repealed.

~~"[**S328-106**] Pharmacy benefit manager; maximum allowable cost. (a) A pharmacy benefit manager that reimburses a contracting pharmacy for a drug on a maximum allowable cost basis shall comply with the requirements of this section.~~

~~(b) The pharmacy benefit manager shall include the following in the contract information with a contracting pharmacy:~~

~~(1) Information identifying any national drug pricing compendia; or~~

~~(2) Other data sources for the maximum allowable cost list.~~

~~(c) The pharmacy benefit manager shall make available to a contracting pharmacy, upon request, the most up-to-date maximum allowable cost price or prices used by the pharmacy benefit manager for patients served by the pharmacy in a readily accessible, secure, and usable web-based or other comparable format.~~

~~(d) A drug shall not be included on a maximum allowable cost list or reimbursed on a maximum allowable cost basis unless all of the following apply:~~

~~(1) The drug is listed as "A" or "B" rated in the most recent version of the Orange Book or has a rating of "NR", "NA", or similar rating by a nationally recognized reference;~~

~~(2) The drug is generally available for purchase in this State from a national or regional wholesaler; and~~

~~(3) The drug is not obsolete.~~

~~(e) The pharmacy benefit manager shall review and make necessary adjustments to the maximum allowable cost of each drug~~

1 ~~on a maximum allowable cost list at least once every seven days~~
2 ~~using the most recent data sources available, and shall apply~~
3 ~~the updated maximum allowable cost list beginning that same day~~
4 ~~to reimburse the contracted pharmacy until the pharmacy benefit~~
5 ~~manager next updates the maximum allowable cost list in~~
6 ~~accordance with this section.~~

7 ~~(f) The pharmacy benefit manager shall have a clearly~~
8 ~~defined process for a contracting pharmacy to appeal the maximum~~
9 ~~allowable cost for a drug on a maximum allowable cost list that~~
10 ~~complies with all of the following:~~

11 ~~(1) A contracting pharmacy may base its appeal on one or~~
12 ~~more of the following:~~

13 ~~(A) The maximum allowable cost for a drug is below~~
14 ~~the cost at which the drug is available for~~
15 ~~purchase by similarly situated pharmacies in this~~
16 ~~State from a national or regional wholesaler; or~~

17 ~~(B) The drug does not meet the requirements of~~
18 ~~subsection (d);~~

19 ~~(2) A contracting pharmacy shall be provided no less than~~
20 ~~fourteen business days following receipt of payment for a claim~~
21 ~~to file the appeal with the pharmacy benefit manager;~~

1 ~~(3) The pharmacy benefit manager shall make a final~~
2 ~~determination on the contracting pharmacy's appeal no later than~~
3 ~~fourteen business days after the pharmacy benefit manager's~~
4 ~~receipt of the appeal;~~

5 ~~(4) If the maximum allowable cost is upheld on appeal, the~~
6 ~~pharmacy benefit manager shall provide to the contracting~~
7 ~~pharmacy the reason therefor and the national drug code of an~~
8 ~~equivalent drug that may be purchased by a similarly situated~~
9 ~~pharmacy at a price that is equal to or less than the maximum~~
10 ~~allowable cost of the drug that is the subject of the appeal;~~
11 ~~and~~

12 ~~(5) If the maximum allowable cost is not upheld on appeal,~~
13 ~~the pharmacy benefit manager shall adjust, for the appealing~~
14 ~~contracting pharmacy, the maximum allowable cost of the drug~~
15 ~~that is the subject of the appeal, within one calendar day of~~
16 ~~the date of the decision on the appeal and allow the contracting~~
17 ~~pharmacy to reverse and rebill the appealed claim.~~

18 ~~(g) A contracting pharmacy shall not disclose to any third~~
19 ~~party the maximum allowable cost list and any related~~
20 ~~information it receives, either directly from a pharmacy benefit~~
21 ~~manager or through a pharmacy services administrative~~

~~organization or similar entity with which the pharmacy has a~~
~~contract to provide administrative services for that pharmacy.] "~~

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2020 8:47:32 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Paige Kurosawa | Foodland Pharmacy | Support | No |

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB1609, which would help control drug costs in Hawaii, provide greater protections for patients regarding their prescription drug benefits programs, and provide greater oversight over the pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) that administer those benefits.

Community pharmacies have long been concerned with PBMs operating as largely unregulated middlemen in the drug supply chain. While PBMs claim to keep drug costs low, we believe PBM practices are often anti-competitive and ultimately drive up healthcare costs for consumers and plan sponsors while reducing payments to pharmacies. PBMs determine which pharmacies patients may choose by creating provider networks, determine which drugs patients can be prescribed by creating drug formularies, and determine how much patients pay at the pharmacy counter for their medications. The patient's choice of pharmacy should be left to the patient and is informed by what's in the patient's best interest, instead of what's in the PBM's best interest. Despite their authority over patients' health care options, PBMs enjoy little regulatory oversight by the state.

There is little to no standardization in the industry for the criteria or the methodology used by PBMs to determine prescription drug reimbursement rates. This gives PBMs the ability to gain significant revenues through questionable business practices at the expense of patients, pharmacies, and plan sponsors.

To protect local businesses and patient access to vital Pharmacy services, we respectfully request your support HB1609.



**Testimony to the House Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce, and
Judiciary
Wednesday, February 12, 2020; 2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1609, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGERS.

Chair Takumi, Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS THE INTENT** of House Bill No. 1609, House Draft 1, RELATING TO PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGERS., and offers **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS** for your consideration.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would:

- (1) Establish business practice and transparency reporting requirements for pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs);
- (2) Replace registration requirements for PBMs pursuant to Chapter 431S, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), with licensure requirements; and
- (3) Increase penalties for violations of the PBM law.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

The federal 340B Drug Pricing Program (340B Program) provides eligible health care providers, such as FQHCs, the ability to purchase outpatient drugs for patients at significantly reduced costs. By purchasing medications at a much lower cost, FQHCs are able to pass the savings on to their patients through reduced drug prices and the expansion of access and service to underserved populations. The discounts provided in the Program are financed by the drug manufacturers, not the government.

In recent years, a growing number of outside organizations called PBMs have determined how to access the 340B savings intended to accrue to FQHCs and other 340B providers. Among other things, PBMs have structured their contracts with FQHCs to retain part or all of the 340B savings. Examples of this include:

- A third party insurer determines that the FQHC is 340B eligible, but reduces reimbursement to the estimated 340B ceiling price;
- A retail pharmacy requests a sizeable percentage of the "spread" between the 340B purchase price and the insurance reimbursement of a higher dispensing fee than they charge for non-340B drugs; and
- A claims processor charges a higher fee for the 340B drugs (more than is justified by higher administrative costs) on the grounds that the health center is paying less for these drugs.

At this time, the federal 340B statute does not prohibit outside groups from accessing 340B savings intended for safety net providers and their patients. While the Congressional Record is clear that the 340B Program was intended to assist safety net providers to "stretch scarce federal resources", the statute does not explicitly prohibit the types of contracting arrangements described above. As such, FQHCs cannot reject these contracts on the grounds that they are illegal under law.

The practices of PBMs have had an enormous impact on limited State resources as well. In late 2018, the Ohio State Department of Medicaid required its five managed care plans to terminate contracts with PBMs after the State Auditor found that PBMs had been skimming hundreds of millions of dollars from the Ohio Medicaid Program through previously-hidden spread pricing tactics.

The HPCA notes that many of the concepts in this bill mirror laws enacted in Ohio (transparency), and West Virginia (fiduciary responsibility). However, other states have specifically included statutory protections for the 340B Program, which this bill, in its current form, does not have. These states include Oregon, Montana, and South Dakota.

Because of this, the HPCA supports any and all legislative efforts to protect the 340B Program, including House Bill No. 1609, House Draft 1. To further strengthen these protections, we recommend that the bill be amended to include language found in Ohio statutes to specifically reference the 340B Program.

On page 4, lines 9 through 16, we ask that the following language be added so that subsection (e) will appear as follows:

(e) A covered entity or pharmacy benefit manager shall be prohibited from penalizing, requiring, or providing financial incentives, including variations in premiums, deductibles, copayments, or coinsurance, to covered persons as incentives to use a specific retail pharmacy, mail order pharmacy, or other network pharmacy provider in which a pharmacy benefit manager has an ownership interest or that has an ownership interest in a pharmacy benefit manager. In addition, a pharmacy benefit manager shall not reimburse a 340B pharmacy differently than any other network pharmacy based on its status as a 340B pharmacy; provided that for purposes of this section, 340B pharmacy means a pharmacy that is authorized to purchase drugs at a discount under 42 U.S.C. 256b. [New material is highlighted.]

Regarding the penalty provisions, one could argue that the spread-pricing tactics of PBMs constitute an unfair method of competition and unfair or deceptive acts or practices in the conduct of a trade or commerce. If it is the desire of this Committee to conform the penalty provisions with Chapter 480, HRS, we suggest that the following language be added to page 13, line 16, to establish a new subsection (c) to Section 431S-5, HRS:

(c) Notwithstanding section 480-11, or any other law to the contrary, in addition to any penalty authorized pursuant to this section, each violation of this chapter shall also be a violation of chapter 480 and subject to any penalty authorized thereunder. [New material is highlighted.]

By cross-referencing Chapter 480, HRS, to Chapter 431S, HRS, this language would subject persons who violate this law with criminal and civil penalties, and allow injured persons to sue in tort and be eligible to receive, among other things, treble damages, and attorneys fees. Chapter 480, HRS, also allows for class actions by private persons.

Also, if this Committee is inclined to take a similar approach as did the Ohio Medicaid Program, we offer the following language to be added to page 13, line 17, for your consideration:

SECTION 8 (a) No contract for managed care entered into pursuant to Part II of Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, after December 31, 2020, shall contain a provision that authorizes a pharmacy benefit manager to reimburse a contracting pharmacy on a maximum allowable cost basis in accordance with Section 328-106, Hawaii Revised Statutes, or Chapter 431S, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

(b) Any provision of a contract for managed care authorized pursuant to Part II of Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to reimburse a contracting pharmacy for a drug on a maximum allowable cost basis in accordance with Section 328-106, Hawaii Revised Statutes, or Chapter 431S, Hawaii Revised

Statutes, that was in effect on or before December 31, 2020, shall be null and void. [New material is highlighted.]

This provision would establish a moratorium to allow the Legislature (and the State Auditor if this Committee is so inclined) to investigate whether the spread-pricing tactics of PBMs had resulted in overpayments by the Department of Human Services in Hawaii's Medicaid Program. The length of the moratorium would be indicated by clarifying the effective date to require SECTION 8 be repealed on a date certain. For example, if the Legislature was inclined to make the moratorium last for five years, the effective date on page 14, line 5 would be amended to read:

SECTION . This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2021; provided that SECTION 8 shall be repealed on December 31, 2026. [New material is highlighted.]

Lastly, from a technical perspective, we note that Section 328-106, HRS, provides the Department of Health with regulatory authority over PBMs. If it is the desire of this Committee to transfer all regulatory authority to the Insurance Commissioner under Chapter 431S, HRS, the Committee may want to review that statute to determine whether there are any elements of that law that should be transferred to Chapter 431S, HRS, and repeal Section 328-106, HRS.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2020 2:17:00 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Ashok Kota | Foodland | Support | No |

Comments:

Aloha Honorable committee members:

I am writing to you on behalf of Foodland Pharmacies in support of HB1609, which would help control drug costs in Hawaii, provide greater protections for patients regarding their prescription drug benefits programs, and provide greater oversight over the pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) that administer those benefits.

Community pharmacies have long been concerned with PBMs operating as largely unregulated middlemen in the drug supply chain. While PBMs claim to keep drug costs low, we believe PBM practices are often anti-competitive and ultimately drive up healthcare costs for consumers and plan sponsors while reducing payments to pharmacies. PBMs determine which pharmacies patients may choose by creating provider networks, determine which drugs patients can be prescribed by creating drug formularies, and determine how much patients pay at the pharmacy counter for their medications. The patient's choice of pharmacy should be left to the patient and is informed by what's in the patient's best interest, instead of what's in the PBM's best interest. Despite their authority over patients' health care options, PBMs enjoy little regulatory oversight by the state.

There is little to no standardization in the industry for the criteria or methodology used by PBMs to determine prescription drug reimbursement rates. This gives PBMs the ability to gain significant revenues through questionable business practices at the expense of patients, pharmacies, and plan sponsors.

To protect local businesses and patient access to vital Pharmacy services, we respectfully request your support HB1609.

Thank you for the opportunity.

Ashok Kota

Director of Pharmacy

Foodland

February 11, 2020

Representative Roy Takumi, Chair
Representative Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair
Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Representative Chris Lee, Chair
Representative Joy San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: HB 1609 HD1 Relating to Pharmacy Benefit Managers
February 12, 2020; 2:00 p.m., conference room 325

Aloha Chairs Takumi and Lee, Vice Chairs Ichiyama and San Buenaventura and members of the committees:

CVS Health is writing to share with you our concerns regarding HB 1609 HD1, relating to pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs). This bill seeks to regulate private business contracts between PBMs, their clients, including employers and health plans, and pharmacies. We believe that provisions in this bill would compromise safety protections for patients who take specialty medications, interfere in private contracting, and greatly increase costs for Hawaii employers and health plans.

CVS Health is the nation's premier health innovation company helping people on their path to better health. Whether in one of its pharmacies or through its health services and plans, CVS Health is pioneering a bold new approach to total health by making quality care more affordable, accessible, simple, and seamless. CVS Health is community-based and locally focused, engaging consumers with the care they need when and where they need it. The Company has more than 9,800 retail locations, approximately 1,100 walk-in medical clinics, a leading pharmacy benefits manager with approximately 93 million plan members, a dedicated senior pharmacy care business serving more than one million patients per year, expanding specialty pharmacy services, and a leading stand-alone Medicare Part D prescription drug plan. CVS Health also serves an estimated 39 million people through traditional, voluntary, and consumer-directed health insurance products and related services, including a rapidly expanding Medicare Advantage offering. This innovative health care model increases access to quality care, delivers better health outcomes and lowers overall health care costs.

Fiduciary Duty

At the outset, this bill requires a PBM to have a fiduciary duty to its clients. CVS Health is very concerned with the inclusion of this provision in the bill. Historically, the concept of a fiduciary duty related to a PBM's contractual relationship with its clients was first raised and considered by federal courts in the early 2000s. ERISA defines the term "fiduciary" as a person who (i) exercises any discretionary control respecting management of such plan or exercises any authority or control respecting management or disposition of its assets or (ii) has any discretionary authority or discretionary responsibility in the administration of such plan."¹

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that a person is a fiduciary for an ERISA plan only "to the extent" a person has or exercises such discretionary authority or control on behalf of a plan.² Following this decision, multiple federal courts have ruled that the PBM was not acting in a fiduciary capacity in managing its PBM-

¹ 29 U.S.C. § 1002(21)(A).

² Pegram, 530 U.S. at 223, 120 S. Ct. 2143.

related services (e.g., negotiating with drug manufacturers or retail pharmacies or managing its formulary), but rather managing its own business which did not involve the discretionary control of plan assets.³

In light of this well settled law, there are many concerns about the effect that imposing a fiduciary duty on PBMs on behalf of the ultimate payer would have on the PBMs' ability to negotiate drug prices. Such a requirement may impact how PBMs interact with their clients and their beneficiaries depending upon how the fiduciary duty is defined, and who it applies to (sponsor or beneficiary). Overall, imposing a fiduciary duty on a PBM would pose a challenge for payers trying to control costs while the payer is providing a sustainable benefit to their plan members in an era of rising launch prices for drugs and ongoing, annual increases in drug prices.

The imposition of a fiduciary duty may reduce the flexibility that a plan sponsor has with regards to structuring their financial arrangement with their PBM and could lead to one-size-fits-all solutions. There may be only one way of contracting that would meet the definition of a fiduciary without some potential for incurring legal liability. Additionally, it could restrict payers' ability to uniquely design their benefit to meet their beneficiaries' specific needs while implementing ways to provide cost savings, including formulary preferences, exclusions, and utilization management techniques. There is also the possibility that it would prevent payers from having their PBM obtain better pricing from retail pharmacies through use of managed networks. The reality of the marketplace is that one-size-fits-all plan designs would not work for everyone because not all payers have the same level of economic resources or the same size and type of patient populations.

Accreditation and Certification

HB 1609 HD1 would limit Hawaii employers' and health plans' ability to provide their employees and members with high quality, affordable care by prohibiting the use of accreditation and certification standards for network pharmacies that helps ensure quality and safety. Certification standards are the foundational requirements that health plans, employers, and their PBMs use to validate pharmacy providers prior to enrollment and network contracting. State licensure evaluations by the Board of Pharmacy do not include measures to validate a pharmacy's ability to comply with contractual provisions and regulatory requirements, such as inventory control for claim payment audits, quality management, liability, patient compliance and adherence, safety, clinical programs, etc. HB 1609 HD1 would restrict the ability of health plans and employers to ensure that pharmacies are meeting such critical requirements through their network contracts.

Additionally, the Board of Pharmacy is charged with overseeing pharmacy practice and does not have expertise or visibility in managing a pharmacy benefit or creating provider networks. Certification of pharmacies is an important part of establishing a high quality pharmacy network and necessarily goes beyond a standard pharmacy license requirement.

With regard to specialty pharmacy, this legislation would allow any pharmacy to dispense specialty medications to patients without being required to meet the accreditation and certification standards used to ensure quality and patient safety. Accreditation and certification are designations that demonstrate a pharmacy's commitment to safety by adhering to required, proper patient care standards that must be met to ensure appropriate dispensing of highly complex specialty drugs.

Allowing any pharmacy to dispense highly complex specialty medications would not only lead to patient safety issues that would result in increased costs, but it would also interfere with the use of pharmacy networks comprised of pharmacies with the necessary expertise and service level, which health plans and employers use to help lower costs while providing a robust pharmacy benefit.

³ See Chicago District Council of Carpenters Welfare Fund. v. Caremark, 474 F.3d 463, (7th Cir. 2007); see also Moeckel v. Caremark, Inc., 622 F. Supp. 2d 663 (M.D. Tenn. 2007), and In re Express Scripts/Anthem ERISA Litigation, 2018 WL 339346 (S.D.N.Y. Jan. 5, 2018).

Spread Pricing

HB 1609 HD1 seeks to prohibit the use of spread pricing arrangements. CVS Health offers PBM clients a variety of contractual options to pay for our PBM services and they choose the one that is best for them based on the services they need and their plan membership. Each employer and plan sponsor evaluates and determines the financial arrangement that meets its needs for PBM services.

One option for clients is to elect a pass-through pricing arrangement for pharmacy reimbursement. Under a pass-through contract, the reimbursement negotiated with the retail pharmacies is passed along to the client to pay and the PBM collects fees from the client to pay for all of the services it performs for the client. In this case, there would be no difference between what the client pays the PBM and what the pharmacy is reimbursed by the PBM. This approach may involve more variation in cost along with drug price fluctuation due to drug shortages, patent expirations, and other market pressures.

Another option for clients is spread pricing. In spread pricing, clients choose a financial arrangement for pharmacy reimbursement where the price paid to the pharmacy by the PBM may not equal the price billed to them. In this case, the difference in the amount paid by the client to the PBM and the amount the PBM reimburses a pharmacy is how the PBM is paid for the services it provides to the client. Many clients choose a spread pricing arrangement because it achieves a pricing level guaranteed to the client. It provides clients with more certainty in their pharmacy costs and allows them to budget in a more predictable manner. Employers and plans sponsors often want to maintain this option in the marketplace because they do not want to have to pay per member or per claim fees for the services provided to them by the PBM. Reducing options in the marketplace that employer and plan sponsors are currently choosing will ultimately harm employers and plan sponsors by taking away their flexibility to contract in the best way to suit their needs.

Transparency Report

HB 1609 HD1 would require the disclosure of competitively sensitive information. CVS Health believes that it is important to keep the competitive marketplace among drug manufacturers in place in order to drive down the cost of prescription medications. Any public disclosure of rebate information could allow manufacturers to learn what type of price concessions other manufacturers are giving and could disincentivize them from offering deeper discounts, which benefit plan sponsors and their beneficiaries. Mandating the disclosure of competitive pricing information will not lead to better health care or lower health care costs.

The FTC has reviewed a number of state legislative proposals that would have required the public disclosure of competitive rebate information and opined that, “[i]f pharmaceutical manufacturers learn the exact amount of rebates offered by their competitors, then tacit collusion among them is more feasible” and that such knowledge of competitors’ pricing information would dilute incentives for manufacturers to bid aggressively “which leads to higher prices.”⁴ The FTC also concluded that “[a]ny such cost increases are likely to undermine the ability of some consumers to obtain the pharmaceuticals and health insurance they need at a price they can afford.”⁵

While the bill includes provisions to attempt to protect confidential, trade secret, or sensitive information provided to the state, we believe the risk of any disclosure at all of proprietary competitive information is too great. If this information were to be in the public sphere, using basic enrollment and coverage market information, manufacturers could easily figure out what price concessions their competitors are providing which eliminates their incentive to lower the cost of their medications. This will lead to increased costs for plan sponsors and their beneficiaries in Hawaii.

⁴ Letter from FTC to Rep. Patrick T McHenry, U.S. Congress, Jul. 15, 2005.

⁵ Id.

Additional Concerns

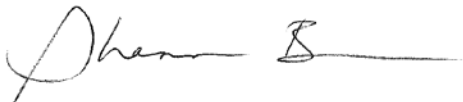
With regard to the provisions in HB 1609 HD1 that address patient cost sharing, we have some concerns with the way the bill is drafted but are happy to further discuss the issue and provide some amendments. Our contracts with all dispensing pharmacies in our network require that CVS Caremark members always get the benefit of at least the lower of the pharmacy's cash price (i.e., the price the consumer would pay out of pocket without insurance coverage) and the plan's copayment. We believe the language in the bill should more closely reflect this practice.

We believe that the provision prohibiting a PBM from penalizing, requiring, or providing financial incentives to members to use a specific pharmacy is already extensively covered by existing law and is unnecessary. Please see Haw. Rev. Stat. § 431R-3 (2020).

Lastly, we believe the new licensure requirements are unnecessary. Existing code already requires PBMs to register with the Insurance Commissioner. Additionally, this section doesn't take into account that not only are we already registered as a PBM, but we have applied for a third party administrator license as well. CVS Caremark is currently registered and significantly regulated by the Insurance Commissioner and we do not see a justification for amending existing law as is proposed in this legislation.

On behalf of CVS Health, I thank you for allowing us to provide our concerns and amendments for consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shannon B.", followed by a horizontal line.

Shannon Butler
Senior Director of State Government Affairs
CVS Health

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2020 11:30:13 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Patrick Uyemoto | Times Pharmacy | Support | No |

Comments:

Times Pharmacy Strongly Supports HB1609 HD1

Aloha Chair Takumi, Chair Lee, and Respected Members of the Committees,

A number of local independent pharmacies have been forced to close their doors or sell to large mainland corporations. The few local independent pharmacies that remain are struggling to survive due to predatory practices employed by pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs). Pharmacies are being reimbursed below the cost of acquiring certain medications, sometimes losing up to hundreds of dollars per prescription. PBMs determine how much a pharmacy is reimbursed through a very opaque and confusing system and are not willing to justify or adjust their reimbursement rates when questioned. Meeting with PBMs has not done anything to solve this problem and yet local independent pharmacies continue to do everything they can to provide the best care for patients in their communities including dispensing medications at a loss.

If the current pharmacy reimbursement model remains the same and PBMs are not regulated or held accountable, it will only be a matter of time until all local independent pharmacies are forced to close or sell. Local pharmacies are not the only victims, PBM's also contract with health plans, employers, and government entities to manage their prescription drug coverage. Nationally a number a states have found that PBMs have been overcharging health plans and underpaying pharmacies and keeping the difference also known as "spread pricing." They have also been found to keep manufacturer rebates instead of passing the savings onto consumers. PBMs could potentially be making hundreds of millions of dollars a year at Hawaii's expense.

We humbly request that as legislatures you consider the larger picture and how this affects our state as a whole. PBMs are profiting from local plans, pharmacies, and your constituents. Where does that revenue go? Does it stay in Hawaii? Do PBMs help our local economy, communities, or residents? As a local independent pharmacy chain, we have more insight and understanding on PBM practices because we have been their victim for years. We are trying to warn you in hopes that you will help protect our state and our residents. We urge you to look at the facts and do your due diligence because the future and quality of Hawaii's healthcare will rest in the decision you make.

Times Pharmacy strongly supports HB1609 HD1 because this bill will bring much needed transparency and accountability to PBMs in the State of Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2020 9:29:06 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| joni tominaga | foodland pharmacy | Support | No |

Comments:

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2020 2:51:19 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| sharon lowrie | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

I strongly support HB1609. A transparent Healthcare system is key to evaluate and control drug costs and will definitely benefit the state and taxpayers while protecting consumers. HB1609 will provide a fair playing field for local businesses to compete with larger companies and will benefit the Hawaii state residents' access to Healthcare.

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2020 5:24:22 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Kevin Glick | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Thank you for taking the time and making an effort to correct the rapidly destruction of community in Hawaii. I have been a pharmacist in Hawaii since 1982 and never before has the profession been in such a state. In any other economic model the legislature would be outraged! Pharmacy benefit managers have free rein to set the reimbursement at a level that leaves all but the top three viable. More than 5 years ago the Hawaii Legislature passed MAC legislation, and yet today I have a less than 1% chance of a successful challenge to an underpaid claim. On average my three pharmacies suffer 800, (eight-hundred) or more underpaid claims PER MONTH. Clearly the PBM's have no intention of having a level playing field. Using co-payments, days supply of medication or restrictive networks are all prohibited under Hawaii law. Yet here we are again asking for a fair chance to provide care to patients as their pharmacy of choice. I am losing faith that the state has the will power to manage this issue. Other states have seen their resources flow out to the PBM's Will Hawaii see through the fog of deceptive rhetoric and make sure that our states resources are used for patient care and not to provide another revenue stream to a megacorporation?

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2020 9:27:14 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Kawika Dela Sierra | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Aloha,

I work in a retail pharmacy and it is clearly evident that the PBMs are not fair. By reducing reimbursements (sometimes below the cost of the medication) and other practices, they force pharmacies to cut labor and unnecessarily increase volume (on hopefully profitable transactions). This puts a stress on pharmacy staff that does lead to errors and harming the patients. Please regulate the PBMs so that pharmacies can operate safely.

Mahalo

The Honorable Representative Roy M. Takumi
Hawaii State Capitol
Room 325
415 S Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Representative Roy M. Takumi,

My name is Leia Nu and I am writing to you today to voice my support for HB1609, legislation to help control prescription drug costs, protect patients, and establish greater oversight of pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs).

I have been employed within the community pharmacy industry for more than 21 years and have witnessed locally owned community pharmacies negatively impacted by PBM practices, threatening to put each one out of business. Over the past several years, PBMs have engaged in aggressive anti-competitive tactics that have reduced payments to pharmacies and significantly disadvantaged our community members. Because PBMs enjoy near monopolistic power over pharmacy reimbursement, PBMs are able to determine which pharmacies patients may choose by creating provider networks. In addition, PBMs determine which drugs patients can be prescribed by creating drug formularies and determining how much patients pay at the pharmacy counter for their medications. Yet, despite their broad authority over patients' healthcare options, PBMs enjoy little regulatory oversight by the state.

PBMs claim to keep drug costs low, however, experience and evidence shows that PBM practices increase healthcare costs for patients and health plans while reducing payments to pharmacies. The New York Senate Committee on Investigations & Government Operations recently found that "PBMs often employ controversial utilization and management tools to generate revenue for themselves in a way that is detrimental to health plan sponsors patients, and pharmacies."¹ CMS Administrator Seema Verma echoed these concerns when she said "I am concerned that spread pricing is inflating prescription drug costs that are borne by beneficiaries and by taxpayers."²

To date, at least 40 states have enacted legislation with provisions similar to those contained in HB 1609. Passing HB 1609 will help put an end to the lack of transparency, oversight, and accountability that has allowed PBMs "to engage in anticompetitive practices at the detriment of consumers and pharmacists."³ To protect patient access, and ensure that community pharmacies are able to continue operating in the state of Hawaii, I respectfully ask that you support HB 1609.

Sincerely,

Leia Nu CPhT

¹ New York Senate Committee on Investigations and Government Operations, *Final Investigative Report: Pharmacy Benefit Managers in New York*, (May 31, 2019), available at https://www.nysenate.gov/sites/default/files/article/attachment/final_investigatory_report_pharmacy_benefit_managers_in_new_york.pdf.

² CMS Issues New Guidance Addressing Spread Pricing in Medicaid, Ensures Pharmacy Benefit Managers are not Up-Charging Taxpayers, (May 15, 2019), <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/cms-issues-new-guidance-addressing-spread-pricing-medicaid-ensures-pharmacy-benefit-managers-are-not>.

³ New York Senate Committee, *supra* note 1.

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2020 8:27:06 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Aaron Chun | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB1609, which would help control drug costs in Hawaii, provide greater protections for patients regarding their prescription drug benefits programs, and provide greater oversight over the pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) that administer those benefits.

Community pharmacies have long been concerned with PBMs operating as largely unregulated middlemen in the drug supply chain. While PBMs claim to keep drug costs low, we believe PBM practices are often anti-competitive and ultimately drive up healthcare costs for consumers and plan sponsors while reducing payments to pharmacies. PBMs determine which pharmacies patients may choose by creating provider networks, determine which drugs patients can be prescribed by creating drug formularies, and determine how much patients pay at the pharmacy counter for their medications. The patient's choice of pharmacy should be left to the patient and is informed by what's in the patient's best interest, instead of what's in the PBM's best interest. Despite their authority over patients' health care options, PBMs enjoy little regulatory oversight by the state.

There is little to no standardization in the industry for the criteria or the methodology used by PBMs to determine prescription drug reimbursement rates. This gives PBMs the ability to gain significant revenues through questionable business practices at the expense of patients, pharmacies, and plan sponsors.

To protect local businesses and patient access to vital Pharmacy services, we respectfully request your support HB1609.

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2020 7:51:25 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Seul Ki Villoria | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB1609, which would help control drug costs in Hawaii, provide greater protections for patients regarding their prescription drug benefits programs, and provide greater oversight over the pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) that administer those benefits.

Community pharmacies have long been concerned with PBMs operating as largely unregulated middlemen in the drug supply chain. While PBMs claim to keep drug costs low, we believe PBM practices are often anti-competitive and ultimately drive up healthcare costs for consumers and plan sponsors while reducing payments to pharmacies. PBMs determine which pharmacies patients may choose by creating provider networks, determine which drugs patients can be prescribed by creating drug formularies, and determine how much patients pay at the pharmacy counter for their medications. The patient's choice of pharmacy should be left to the patient and is informed by what's in the patient's best interest, instead of what's in the PBM's best interest. Despite their authority over patients' health care options, PBMs enjoy little regulatory oversight by the state.

There is little to no standardization in the industry for the criteria or the methodology used by PBMs to determine prescription drug reimbursement rates. This gives PBMs the ability to gain significant revenues through questionable business practices at the expense of patients, pharmacies, and plan sponsors.

To protect local businesses and patient access to vital Pharmacy services, we respectfully request your support HB1609.

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2020 11:26:23 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Ronald Taniguchi, Pharm.D. | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

The time is long overdue to control if not remove the brokers who stand between the providers of care and their patients, and who rig the system for their benefit at the expense of providers and patients.

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2020 1:18:39 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| DANICA | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB1609, which would help control drug costs in Hawaii, provide greater protections for patients regarding their prescription drug benefits programs, and provide greater oversight over the pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) that administer those benefits.

Community pharmacies have long been concerned with PBMs operating as largely unregulated middlemen in the drug supply chain. While PBMs claim to keep drug costs low, we believe PBM practices are often anti-competitive and ultimately drive up healthcare costs for consumers and plan sponsors while reducing payments to pharmacies. PBMs determine which pharmacies patients may choose by creating provider networks, determine which drugs patients can be prescribed by creating drug formularies, and determine how much patients pay at the pharmacy counter for their medications. The patient's choice of pharmacy should be left to the patient and is informed by what's in the patient's best interest, instead of what's in the PBM's best interest. Despite their authority over patients' health care options, PBMs enjoy little regulatory oversight by the state.

There is little to no standardization in the industry for the criteria or the methodology used by PBMs to determine prescription drug reimbursement rates. This gives PBMs the ability to gain significant revenues through questionable business practices at the expense of patients, pharmacies, and plan sponsors.

To protect local businesses and patient access to vital Pharmacy services, we respectfully request your support HB1609.



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND

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TESTIMONY BY DEREK MIZUNO
ADMINISTRATOR, HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE AND
JUDICIARY
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 1609 H.D. 1

February 12, 2020
2:00 p.m.
Room 325

RELATING TO PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGERS

Chairs Takumi and Lee, Vice Chairs Ichiyama and San Buenaventura, and Members of the Committees:

The Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund (EUTF) Board of Trustees has not been able to take a position on this bill. Their next meeting is scheduled for February 18, 2020. EUTF staff would like to provide comments.

The EUTF staff is concerned that the section (e) under "Business practices," could have negative financial impact on the EUTF prescription drug plan by prohibiting financial copayment incentives to use mail order or pharmacies with an ownership relationship to the pharmacy benefit manager. For the EUTF prescription drug plans, offered to active employees and non-Medicare retirees, where CVS is the pharmacy benefit manager, if a 90-day prescription is filled at a CVS Retail 90 network pharmacy or mail order the member's copayment is two times the 30-day copayment. If the 90-day prescription is filled at a non-Retail 90 network pharmacy the copayment is three times the 30-day

copayment. The CVS Retail 90 network is a sub-network of the CVS national network which includes major chains such as CVS (Longs), Walgreens, Safeway, and Costco as well as local pharmacies. The CVS national network is open to all pharmacies that meet the requirements (e.g. proper licensing) and the CVS Retail 90 network is open to all CVS national network pharmacies. Over 90% of CVS national network Hawaii based pharmacies are also members of the CVS Retail 90 network.

The prescription drug costs charged under pass-through pricing to the EUTF plan are lower for prescriptions filled at Retail 90 pharmacies and mail order than at non-Retail 90 pharmacies. The Retail 90 pharmacies benefit through higher volume as copayments for members are less, in some cases by \$50 per prescription. It's estimated that the EUTF active employee and non-Medicare plans will experience higher annual drug costs of \$2.5 million and \$2.4 million, respectively, which will be passed on to the members, State and counties through higher premiums. The increase in non-Medicare retiree prescription drug costs is estimated to increase the OPEB unfunded liability by \$67 million.

The EUTF staff would like to propose the following change to language in the bill:

“§431S- **Business practices.** A covered entity or pharmacy benefit manager shall be prohibited from penalizing, requiring, or providing financial incentives, including variations in premiums, deductibles, copayments, or coinsurance, to covered persons as incentives to use a specific retail pharmacy, ~~mail order pharmacy,~~ or other network pharmacy provider in which a pharmacy benefit manager has an ownership interest or that has an ownership interest in a pharmacy benefit manager. However, financial

incentives are allowed if such financial incentives are also available at other network pharmacies."

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRACTICES

STATE OF HAWAII
NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT BUILDING
250 SOUTH HOTEL STREET, SUITE 107
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: 808-586-1400 FAX: 808-586-1412
EMAIL: oip@hawaii.gov

To: House Committees on Consumer Protection & Commerce and on Judiciary

From: Cheryl Kakazu Park, Director

Date: February 12, 2020, 2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Re: Testimony on H.B. No. 1609
Relating to Pharmacy Benefit Managers

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this bill, which would establish business practice and transparency requirements for pharmacy benefit managers. The Office of Information Practices (OIP) takes no position on the substance of this bill, but seeks clarification of proposed section 431S-__, HRS, regarding transparency reporting, on bill pages 4 to 6.

As written, this section requires a licensed pharmacy benefit manager to annually report listed information to the Insurance Commissioner, who is required to publish the reports online “in a way that does not violate chapter 482B,” *i.e.*, that does not disclose a trade secret as defined in that chapter. (Later in the bill, “trade secret” is defined as having the same meaning as defined in section 482B-2, HRS.) The “transparency report” section also allows a pharmacy benefit manager to designate information in the report as a

trade secret; provided that disclosure may be ordered by a court of this State for good cause shown or made in a court filing.

It is not clear how a pharmacy benefit manager’s designation of information as a trade secret is intended to interact with chapter 92F, HRS, the Uniform Information Practices Act (Modified) (UIPA). The provision as written

does not actually say that any information so designated is confidential or is exempt from public disclosure under the UIPA. Of course, if the designated information really is a trade secret as defined in section 482B-2 it can be withheld from disclosure under the UIPA's exceptions for information made confidential by law (based on the confidentiality provided by chapter 482B, HRS) and for information whose disclosure would frustrate a legitimate government function. If the information does not actually meet the definition of a trade secret, though, the mere fact that a pharmacy benefit manager designated it as such would not automatically require it to be withheld in response to a UIPA response – the Insurance Commissioner, as the agency maintaining the records, would instead need to assert that one or more of the UIPA's exceptions to disclosure applied.

The clause on bill page 6 allowing a court to order disclosure of information designated as a trade secret “for good cause shown” just adds to the confusion, because the UIPA already allows a person to challenge a denial of access to government records by appealing either to OIP or to court. Given the UIPA's pre-existing mechanism to challenge a denial of access to information, it is not clear what additional purpose is served by specifying that a court can order disclosure – is this intended to allow a court challenge even when no record request has been made? Or to supersede the UIPA's normal appeal process? Or is it simply an additional and possibly superfluous way for a member of the public to challenge the “trade secret” designation?

Finally, OIP notes that the definition of a “trade secret” in section 482B-2, HRS, encompasses information with its own economic value, such as a secret formula, recipe, or client list, and this definition seems generally inapplicable to the sort of information the bill is requiring be reported, which is financial or business information that would be more appropriately described as being

confidential business information. Confidential business information whose disclosure would frustrate a legitimate government function could be withheld from public disclosure under the UIPA.

Assuming that the intent of this provision was to ensure that a pharmacy benefit manager would have the opportunity to flag reported business information it considered confidential to prevent it from being automatically posted online, while still allowing members of the public to challenge whether that information should truly be withheld, **OIP recommends amending this bill to remove the references to trade secrets and instead refer to “confidential business information” that can be withheld under the UIPA’s frustration exception, and to provide that any person can appeal a denial of access to reported information as provided in the UIPA.** Specifically, **OIP recommends (1) deleting the definition of “trade secret” on bill page 9 and (2) replacing proposed subsections 431S-__(c) and (d) on bill pages 5-6 with the following language:**

(c) A pharmacy benefit manager that provides information under this section may designate that material as confidential business information whose disclosure would frustrate a legitimate government function as provided in section 92F-13; provided that any person may appeal a denial of access to information so designated in the manner set forth in part II of chapter 92F.

(d) Within sixty calendar days of receipt, the commissioner shall publish the transparency report of each pharmacy benefit manager on the official website of the insurance division in a way that does not disclose information designated by a pharmacy benefit manager as confidential business information; provided that if a court or the office of information practices has determined that information is required to be publicly disclosed, the commissioner shall include that information in the published transparency report.

Thank you for considering OIP’s suggestions.



February 10, 2020

The Honorable Roy M. Takumi, Chair
The Honorable Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair
House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

Re: HB 1609, HD1 – Relating to Pharmacy Benefit Managers

Dear Chair Takumi, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and
Members of both Committees:

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify expressing our serious concerns on HB 1609, HD1, which establishes business practice and transparency reporting requirements for pharmacy benefit managers. It also replaces the registration requirement for pharmacy benefit managers with a licensing requirement and increases penalties for violations of the pharmacy benefit managers law. Effective 7/1/2050.

HMSA opposes this bill. HMSA utilizes a Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) to manage our drug benefit plans, which helps us and our members to control escalating drug costs. We believe this bill increases administrative burden and costs for our PBM, which will lead to increased costs for our members.

We also believe that the “trade secret” protections should be strengthened in this bill to protect any confidential or proprietary information and that, to the extent the information a PBM must disclose belongs to a third party, that the third party be afforded an opportunity to object to the disclosure and show cause to the Insurance Commissioner as to why it should not be published.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure. Your consideration of our concerns is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Diesman
Senior Vice-President Government Relations



Hawaii Association of Health Plans

February 11, 2020

The Honorable Roy M. Takumi, Chair
The Honorable Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair
House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

House Bill 1609, HD1 – Relating to Pharmacy Benefit Managers

Dear Chair Takumi, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair San Buenaventura and Members of both Committees:

The Hawaii Association of Health Plans (HAHP) appreciates the opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 1609, HD1.

Pharmacy Benefit Managers help health plans to control drug costs on behalf of their members. We believe that this bill will create more administrative burden and increase costs for Pharmacy Benefit Managers and health plans, which in turn will affect premiums for consumers. As this bill will increase costs to our members, we ask that it be deferred.

Should this bill move forward, we respectfully request amendments be made to §431S-Transparency report (c) which prevents unauthorized disclosure of any Pharmacy Benefit Manager “trade secrets.” We believe that the “trade secret” protections be broadened to include any “confidential or proprietary information” and that, to the extent the information a PBM must disclose belongs to a third party, that the third party be afforded an opportunity to object to the disclosure and show cause to the Insurance Commissioner as to why it should not be published.

Thank you for allowing us to testify expressing concerns on HB 1609, HD1.

Sincerely,

HAHP Public Policy Committee

cc: HAHP Board Members



You're Someone Special

February 11, 2020

To the Honorable Representative Roy Takumi, Representative Linda Ichiyama, Representative Sylvia Luke, Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection, and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce:

I am writing to you today to voice my **support** for HB1609, legislation to help control prescription drug costs, protect patients, and establish greater oversight of pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs).

KTA Super Stores operates 4 pharmacies on the Island of Hawaii. Our pharmacies are located in Hilo, Waimea, Waikoloa and Keauhou.

Our pharmacies have been negatively impacted by PBM practices which threaten to put independent, community pharmacies, out of business. PBMs have engaged in aggressive anti-competitive tactics that have reduced payments to pharmacies and significantly affected patient care. Because PBMs enjoy near monopolistic power over pharmacy reimbursement, PBMs are able to determine which pharmacies patients may choose by creating provider networks. In addition, PBMs determine which drugs patients can be prescribed by creating drug formularies and determining how much patients pay at the pharmacy counter for their medications. Yet, despite their broad authority over patients' healthcare options, PBMs enjoy little regulatory oversight by the state.

PBMs claim to keep drug costs low, however, experience and evidence shows that PBM practices increase healthcare costs for patients and health plans while reducing payments to pharmacies. The New York Senate Committee on Investigations & Government Operations recently found that "PBMs often employ controversial utilization and management tools to generate revenue for themselves in a way that is detrimental to health plan sponsors patients, and pharmacies. CMS Administrator Seema Verma echoed these concerns when she said "I am concerned that spread pricing is inflating prescription drug costs that are borne by beneficiaries and by taxpayers."

To date, at least 40 states have enacted legislation with provisions similar to those contained in HB 1609. Passing HB 1609 will help put an end to the lack of transparency, oversight, and accountability that has allowed PBMs "to engage in anticompetitive practices at the detriment of consumers and pharmacists." To protect patient access, and ensure that community pharmacies like mine are able to continue operating in the state of Hawaii, I respectfully ask that you support HB 1609.

Sincerely,
Kerri Okamura, R.Ph.
Director of Pharmacy Operations

PHONE: (808) 959-4575

50 EAST PUAINAKO STREET, HILO, HAWAII 96720

WWW.KTASUPERSTORES.COM



Crystal Jack
State Government Affairs
Office: 925.906.8216
Mobile: 916.605.6736
Crystal.Jack@cigna.com



February 11, 2020

To: Representative Roy M. Takumi, Chair
Representative Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer
Protection & Commerce

Representative Chris Lee, Chair
Representative Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Judiciary

From: Crystal Jack, State Government Affairs

Re: HB 1609, HD1 – Relating to Pharmacy Benefit Managers
Hearing Date February 12, at 2:00 p.m.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **OPPOSITION** to HB 1609, HD1. Cigna's subsidiary company Express Scripts is one of the nation's leading pharmacy benefit managers. PBMs are an important part of the delivery of pharmaceuticals and healthcare in general. PBMs are engaged by clients to manage pharmacy benefits pursuant to health insurance contracts, and are projected to save payers over \$30 billion through the next decade.

HB 1609, HD1 seeks to regulate business contracts PBMs have with their clients by prohibiting the use of spread pricing arrangements. Employers *choose* spread pricing because it aligns incentives to lower costs for their employees. Spread pricing allows PBMs to offer client plan sponsors more favorable discounts and reduced administrative costs as compared to "pass-through" or "cost-plus" arrangements. Additionally, in spread arrangements, the risk of negotiating more favorable discounts is on the PBM, because it is obligated to guarantee the established prices for our clients. If we cannot meet our guarantees, we hold the plan sponsor harmless.

While some clients opt for spread pricing and others opt to use fee-based arrangements, it is important to note that it is our clients who decide whether or not to use spread pricing. Limitations on spread pricing restrict choices available to our clients and plan sponsors to lower drug spending. By prohibiting the payer's choice of spread models, some of clients will lose a valuable tool that both maximizes their benefit dollars and provides a predictable annual drug spend. For smaller employers, the use of spread pricing offers stable and predictable pharmacy benefit costs.

"Cigna" is a registered service mark, and the "Tree of Life" logo is a service mark, of Cigna Intellectual Property, Inc., licensed for use by Cigna Corporation and its operating subsidiaries. All products and services are provided by or through such operating subsidiaries and not by Cigna Corporation. Such operating subsidiaries include Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company, and HMO or service company subsidiaries of Cigna Health Corporation and Cigna Dental Health, Inc.

9301371

Eliminating the use of spread pricing would subject small employers to additional uncertainty, particularly from sharp drug price increases common among drug manufacturers.

The bill also imposes stringent reporting requirements which includes quarterly reporting of proprietary and confidential information which is important to business competition. Public disclosure of rebate information, for example, would likely allow manufacturers to learn the pricing from other manufacturers' products, and allow them to limit pricing concessions, rather than reducing prices. Not knowing the rebate information forces manufacturers to provide their best prices or risk losing product market share. In addition, although the bill seeks to protect confidential information under existing Hawaii law, if the information is somehow disclosed it is impossible to "unring" the bell.

Unfortunately, the current version of the bill limits employer choice, reduces drug affordability and is likely to reduce competition among drug manufacturers. For these reasons, Cigna must oppose the legislation at this time. Cigna been working with Hawaii's health insurance plans, PBMs and local pharmacies to address some issues raised in HB 1609, HD1. We are willing to continue working together with stakeholders to address these concerns in a mutually beneficial way.

Thank you for your consideration of the proposed amendments.



February 12, 2020

Representative Roy Takumi, Chair
Representative Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair
Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Representative Chris Lee, Chair
Representative Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary

RE: HB 1609 HD1 Relating to Pharmacy Benefit Managers
February 12, 2020; 2:00 p.m.; Conference room 325

Aloha Chairs Takumi and Lee, Vice Chairs Ichiyama and San Buenaventura and members of the committees:

On behalf of the Pharmaceutical Care Management Association (PCMA), we greatly appreciate the opportunity to testify on HB 1609 HD1 relating to Pharmacy Benefit Managers. We respectfully request the committee to consider our comments in the interest of payers and patients.

PCMA is the national trade association representing America's Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs), which administer prescription drug plans for more than 266 million Americans with health coverage provided through Fortune 500 employers, health insurance plans, labor unions, and Medicare Part D. PBMs are engaged by clients including health insurers, government agencies, unions, school districts, and large and small employers, to manage pharmacy benefits pursuant to health insurance benefits and contracts. PBMs are projected to save payers over \$30 billion through the next decade thanks to tools such as negotiating price discounts with drug manufacturers, establishing pharmacy networks and disease management and adherence programs.

Fiduciary

Federal law defines the term "fiduciary" as a person who (i) exercises any discretionary control respecting management of such plan or exercises any authority or control respecting management or disposition of its assets or (ii) has any discretionary authority or discretionary responsibility in the administration of such plan."¹ PBMs have no such control or authority over a plan's management or assets.

The concept of a fiduciary duty related to a PBM's contractual relationship with its clients was first raised and considered by federal courts in the early 2000s. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that a person is a fiduciary for an ERISA plan only "to the extent" a person has or exercises such discretionary authority or control on behalf of a plan.² Following this decision, multiple federal courts have ruled that the PBM was not acting in a fiduciary capacity in

¹ 29 U.S.C. § 1002(21)(A).

² Pegram, 530 U.S. at 223, 120 S. Ct. 2143.



managing its PBM-related services (e.g., negotiating with drug manufacturers or retail pharmacies or managing its formulary), but rather managing its own business which did not involve the discretionary control of plan assets.³

Imposing a fiduciary duty may reduce the flexibility that a plan sponsor has with regards to structuring their financial arrangement with their PBM and could lead to one-size-fits-all solutions. There may be only one way of contracting that would meet the definition of a fiduciary without some potential for incurring legal liability. Additionally, it could restrict payers' ability to uniquely design their benefit to meet their beneficiaries' specific needs while implementing ways to provide cost savings, including formulary preferences, exclusions, and utilization management techniques. There is also the possibility that it would prevent payers from having their PBM obtain better pricing from retail pharmacies through use of managed networks. The reality of the marketplace is that one-size-fits-all plan designs would not work for everyone because not all payers have the same level of economic resources or the same size and type of patient populations.

Transparency Reporting

HB 1609 HD1 would require the disclosure of competitively sensitive information. It is important to keep the competitive marketplace among drug manufacturers in place in order to drive down the cost of prescription medications. Any public disclosure of rebate information could allow manufacturers to learn what type of price concessions other manufacturers are giving and could disincentivize them from offering deeper discounts, which benefit plan sponsors and their beneficiaries.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has reviewed a number of state legislative proposals that would have required the public disclosure of competitive rebate information and opined that, "[i]f pharmaceutical manufacturers learn the exact amount of rebates offered by their competitors, then tacit collusion among them is more feasible" and that such knowledge of competitors' pricing information would dilute incentives for manufacturers to bid aggressively "which leads to higher prices."⁴ The FTC also concluded that "[a]ny such cost increases are likely to undermine the ability of some consumers to obtain the pharmaceuticals and health insurance they need at a price they can afford."⁵

Accreditation

HB 1609 HD1 would limit Hawaii employers' and health plans' ability to provide their beneficiaries with high quality, affordable care by prohibiting the use of accreditation and certification standards for network pharmacies that helps ensure quality and safety. Certification standards are the foundational requirements that health plans, employers, and their PBMs use to validate pharmacy providers prior to enrollment and network contracting. State licensure evaluations by the Board of Pharmacy do not include measures to validate a pharmacy's ability to comply with contractual provisions and regulatory requirements, such as inventory control for claim payment audits, quality management, liability, patient compliance and adherence, safety,

³ See *Chicago District Council of Carpenters Welfare Fund. v. Caremark*, 474 F.3d 463, (7th Cir. 2007); see also *Moeckel v. Caremark, Inc.*, 622 F. Supp. 2d 663 (M.D. Tenn. 2007), and *In re Express Scripts/Anthem ERISA Litigation*, 2018 WL 339346 (S.D.N.Y. Jan. 5, 2018).

⁴ Letter from FTC to Rep. Patrick T McHenry, U.S. Congress, Jul. 15, 2005.

⁵ *Id.*



clinical programs, etc. Additionally, the Board of Pharmacy is charged with overseeing pharmacy practice and does not have expertise or visibility in managing a pharmacy benefit or creating provider networks.

With regard to specialty pharmacy, this legislation would allow any pharmacy to dispense specialty medications to patients without being required to meet the accreditation and certification standards used to ensure quality and patient safety. Allowing any pharmacy to dispense highly complex specialty medications would not only lead to patient safety issues that would result in increased costs, but it would also interfere with the use of pharmacy networks comprised of pharmacies with the necessary expertise and service level, which health plans and employers use to help lower costs while providing a robust pharmacy benefit.

Patient Cost Sharing

With regard to patient cost sharing, we support the objective but have concerns with the language and are happy to discuss and provide suggested amendments. In their contracts with network pharmacies, our PBM members ensure patients pay the lower of the pharmacy's cash price (i.e., the price the consumer would pay out of pocket without insurance coverage) and the plan's copayment. We believe the language in the bill should more closely reflect this practice.

We believe that the provision prohibiting a PBM from penalizing, requiring, or providing financial incentives to members to use a specific pharmacy is already extensively covered by existing law and is unnecessary. Please see Haw. Rev. Stat. § 431R-3 (2020).

Spread Pricing

HB 1609 HD1 would prohibit the use of spread pricing arrangements. PBMs offer payer clients a variety of contractual options to pay for PBM services and they choose the one that is best for them based on the services they need and their plan membership. Each employer and plan sponsor evaluates and determines the financial arrangement that meets their specific needs for PBM services.

One option for clients is to elect a pass-through pricing arrangement for pharmacy reimbursement. Under a pass-through contract, the reimbursement negotiated with the retail pharmacies is passed along to the client to pay and the PBM collects fees from the client to pay for all of the services it performs for the client. In this case, there would be no difference between what the client pays the PBM and what the pharmacy is reimbursed by the PBM. This approach may involve more variation in cost along with drug price fluctuation due to drug shortages, patent expirations, and other market pressures.

Many PBM clients choose a spread pricing arrangement because it provides clients with more certainty in their pharmacy costs and allows them to budget in a more predictable manner. Reducing options in the marketplace employers and plan sponsors currently have will ultimately reduce their flexibility to contract in the best way to meet their needs.

Licensing

We believe the new licensure requirements are unnecessary. Existing code already requires PBMs to register with the Insurance Commissioner. Additionally, this section doesn't take into account that not only are we already registered as a PBM, but we have applied for a third-party administrator license as well.



Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 1609 HD1 and we look forward to working with the Committee to develop solutions that will demonstrably benefit Hawaii's residents.

Sincerely,

Bill Head
Assistant Vice President
State Affairs

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2020 5:10:23 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Toby Taniguchi | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2020 3:32:59 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Kenneth Navarrete | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB1609, which would help control drug costs in Hawaii, provide greater protections for patients regarding their prescription drug benefits programs, and provide greater oversight over the pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) that administer those benefits.

Community pharmacies have long been concerned with PBMs operating as largely unregulated middlemen in the drug supply chain. While PBMs claim to keep drug costs low, we believe PBM practices are often anti-competitive and ultimately drive up healthcare costs for consumers and plan sponsors while reducing payments to pharmacies. PBMs determine which pharmacies patients may choose by creating provider networks, determine which drugs patients can be prescribed by creating drug formularies, and determine how much patients pay at the pharmacy counter for their medications. The patient's choice of pharmacy should be left to the patient and is informed by what's in the patient's best interest, instead of what's in the PBM's best interest. Despite their authority over patients' health care options, PBMs enjoy little regulatory oversight by the state.

There is little to no standardization in the industry for the criteria or the methodology used by PBMs to determine prescription drug reimbursement rates. This gives PBMs the ability to gain significant revenues through questionable business practices at the expense of patients, pharmacies, and plan sponsors.

To protect local businesses and patient access to vital Pharmacy services, we respectfully request your support HB1609.



THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

To: The Honorable Roy M. Takumi, Chair
The Honorable Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair
Members, Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

LATE

The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
Members, Committee on Judiciary

From: Rowena Buffett Timms, Executive Vice President & Chief Administrative Officer, The Queen's Health Systems
Colette Masunaga, Manager, Government Relations & External Affairs, The Queen's Health Systems

Date: February 11, 2020

Hrg: House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce and Committee on Judiciary
Joint Hearing; Wednesday, February 12, 2020 at 2:00 pm in Room 325

Re: **Support the intent for H.B. 1609 HD1, Relating to Pharmacy Benefit Managers**

The Queen's Health Systems (Queen's) is a not-for-profit corporation that provides expanded health care capabilities to the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin. Since the founding of the first Queen's hospital in 1859 by Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV, it has been our mission to provide quality health care services in perpetuity for Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i. Over the years, the organization has grown to four hospitals, 66 health care centers and labs, and more than 1,600 physicians statewide. As the preeminent health care system in Hawai'i, Queen's strives to provide superior patient care that is constantly advancing through education and research.

Queen's appreciates the opportunity to support the intent for H.B. 1609 HD1, Relating to Pharmacy Benefit Managers. The measure establishes business practices and transparency reporting requirements for Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs), as well as replaces the registration requirement with a licensing requirement, and increases penalties for violations. We appreciate moving oversight of PBMs to the Insurance Commissioner, prohibiting PBMs from retaining any portion of spread pricing, and focusing on transparency by requiring a report to the Commission on rebates and fees received by a PBM.

Queen's contracts with over 15 PBMs, with each PBM having their own way of doing business and some with little to no transparency. PBMs control the formularies for prices and have the ability create pricing uncertainty for pharmacies. Queen's outpatient pharmacies take on the responsibility of due diligence in working to find the lowest costs possible for our patients. However, when PBMs reimburse our pharmacies for half of what the costs are to acquire a drug, there is no process for us to know where that drug is being purchased, in what market, and/or if it is even available at that price in Hawaii.

The mission of The Queen's Health Systems is to fulfill the intent of Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV to provide in perpetuity quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i.

In addition to price uncertainty, our pharmacies go through undue burdens when accessing PBMs prices for any given drug and we currently do not receive data in a standard and comprehensive list format, and must obtain prices on an individual prescription basis. With no guideline or standard approach when it comes to the disclosure of pricing, each PBM has been able develop their own burdensome process which puts pharmacies at a disadvantage.

Transparency and oversight of PBMs will greatly benefit our pharmacies, patients, and community. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

MOLOKAI DRUGS, INC.

P.O. Box 558
Kaunakakai, HI 96748
Phone 808-553-5790



February 12, 2020

Dear Members of the Consumer Protection & Commerce and Judiciary Committees:

My name is Kimberly Mikami Svetin and I am a co-owner of Molokai Drugs, Inc. I appreciate the opportunity to voice my support for H.B. 1609, legislation to protect our patients, community, and pharmacies. This measure will help control the costs of prescription drugs, and establish greater oversight of mainland-based pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs).

PBMs enjoy near monopolistic power over pharmacy reimbursement, PBMs are able to determine which pharmacies patients may choose by creating provider networks. Although Molokai Drugs would also like to participate in 100% of all provider network, we are not always allowed to do so. If our patients decides to come to us vs. going to a mainland-based, mail-order pharmacy as part of the provider network of select pharmacies, the patient will usually pay a higher co-payment on his/her medicine and the pharmacy will be reimbursed at a lower level.

PBMs also determine which drugs patients can be prescribed by creating drug formularies and determining how much patients pay at the pharmacy counter for their medications. These formularies can change at a moment's notice without any warning. Despite their broad authority over patients' healthcare options, PBMs have little regulatory oversight by the state of Hawaii. For example, independent pharmacies such as Molokai Drugs register an annual fee to be a licensed business in Hawaii. Mainland-based PBMS do not have to register.

PBM business practices are a concern not only in Hawaii but across the United States. As of this year, at least 40 states have enacted legislation with provisions similar to those contained in H.B. 1609.

We need to better understand how these PBMs deliver healthcare in Hawaii and how they are contributing to the rising costs of prescription drug delivery through the country. By increasing transparency and having Hawaii-based oversight of these mainland-based PBM, we may garner our answer, which will greatly benefit our local patients, community, and pharmacies.

In conclusion, to be fair, if Hawaii-based, community pharmacies need to register to provide services to Hawaii residents and have oversight over their business dealings, mainland-based PBMs should do the same.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Mikami Svetin

Kimberly M. Svetin
President

HB-1609-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2020 10:48:10 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/12/2020 2:00:00 PM

LATE

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|--------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| magdi latif | Northshore pharmacy and princeville pharmacy | Support | No |

Comments:

My name is Mike Latif and I am writing to you today to voice my support for HB1609, legislation to help control prescription drug costs, protect patients, and establish greater oversight of pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs).

As the owner of North Shore Pharmacy, We have been serving our community for over 30 years. We have been negatively impacted by PBM practices which threaten to put community pharmacies, like mine, out of business. Over the past several years, PBMs have engaged in aggressive anti-competitive tactics that have reduced payments to pharmacies and significantly disadvantaged Hawaiian patients. Because PBMs enjoy near monopolistic power over pharmacy reimbursement, PBMs are able to determine which pharmacies patients may choose by creating provider networks. In addition, PBMs determine which drugs patients can be prescribed by creating drug formularies and determining how much patients pay at the pharmacy counter for their medications. Yet, despite their broad authority over patients' healthcare options, PBMs enjoy little regulatory oversight by the state.

PBMs claim to keep drug costs low, however, experience and evidence shows that PBM practices increase healthcare costs for patients and health plans while reducing payments to pharmacies. They tie our hands in being able to save our customer money when they are overcharging the customer's copay and clawing it back. The New York Senate Committee on Investigations & Government Operations recently found that "PBMs often employ controversial utilization and management tools to generate revenue for themselves in a way that is detrimental to health plan sponsors patients, and pharmacies. CMS Administrator Seema Verma echoed these concerns when she said "I am concerned that spread pricing is inflating prescription drug costs that are borne by beneficiaries and by taxpayers."

To date, at least 40 states have enacted legislation with provisions similar to those contained in HB 1609. Passing HB 1609 will help put an end to the lack of transparency, oversight, and accountability that has allowed PBMs "to engage in anticompetitive practices at the detriment of consumers and pharmacists." To protect patient access, and ensure that community pharmacies like mine are able to continue operating in the state of Hawaii, I respectfully ask that you support HB 1609.

Sincerely,

Mike Latif RPh

The Honorable Roy Takumi, Chair
The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
The Honorable Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair
The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
Members, Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce
Members, Committee on Judiciary
Hawaii State Capitol
Room 325
415 S Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813



Dear Representatives,

My name is Reece Uyeno and I am writing to you today to voice my support for HB1609, legislation to help control prescription drug costs, protect patients, and establish greater oversight of pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs).

As a community pharmacist, the pharmacy has been negatively impacted by PBM practices which threaten to put community pharmacies, like the one I work at, out of business. Over the past several years, PBMs have engaged in aggressive anti-competitive tactics that have reduced payments to pharmacies and significantly disadvantaged Hawaiian patients. Because PBMs enjoy near monopolistic power over pharmacy reimbursement, PBMs are able to determine which pharmacies patients may choose by creating provider networks. In addition, PBMs determine which drugs patients can be prescribed by creating drug formularies and determining how much patients pay at the pharmacy counter for their medications. Yet, despite their broad authority over patients' healthcare options, PBMs enjoy little regulatory oversight by the state.

PBMs claim to keep drug costs low, however, experience and evidence shows that PBM practices increase healthcare costs for patients and health plans while reducing payments to pharmacies. The New York Senate Committee on Investigations & Government Operations recently found that "PBMs often employ controversial utilization and management tools to generate revenue for themselves in a way that is detrimental to health plan sponsors patients, and pharmacies."¹ CMS Administrator Seema Verma echoed these concerns when she said "I am concerned that spread pricing is inflating prescription drug costs that are borne by beneficiaries and by taxpayers."²

To date, at least 40 states have enacted legislation with provisions similar to those contained in HB 1609. Passing HB 1609 will help put an end to the lack of transparency, oversight, and accountability that has allowed PBMs "to engage in anticompetitive practices at the detriment of consumers and pharmacists."³ To protect patient access, and ensure that community pharmacies like mine are able to continue operating in the state of Hawaii, I respectfully ask that you support HB 1609.

Sincerely,

Reece Uyeno, Pharm.D.

¹ New York Senate Committee on Investigations and Government Operations, *Final Investigative Report: Pharmacy Benefit Managers in New York*, (May 31, 2019), available at

https://www.nysenate.gov/sites/default/files/article/attachment/final_investigatory_report_pharmacy_benefit_managers_in_new_york.pdf.

² CMS Issues New Guidance Addressing Spread Pricing in Medicaid, Ensures Pharmacy Benefit Managers are not Up-Charging Taxpayers, (May 15, 2019), <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/cms-issues-new-guidance-addressing-spread-pricing-medicaid-ensures-pharmacy-benefit-managers-are-not>.

³ New York Senate Committee, *supra* note 1.