



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 1891 HD1
RELATING TO HEALTH

SENATOR MIKE GABBARD, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

SENATOR ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH

Hearing Date: 3/13/2020

Room Number: 229

1 **Fiscal Implications:** Recommended \$95,000 salary and \$15,000 operational expenses;
2 however, any moneys authorized pursuant to this measure should not displace priority
3 appropriations requests described in the Governor's Executive Biennium Budget Request.

4 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) supports the creation and funding
5 of a Veterinary Medical Officer to focus on zoonosis and animal-related illnesses (e.g. rat
6 lungworm disease, leptospirosis, murine typhus, toxoplasmosis and other infectious diseases),
7 which can be relatively underfunded when compared to disease that are transmitted from person
8 to person. A veterinary medical officer would serve in a collaborative capacity with our
9 department entomologists when dealing with arthropods that transmit diseases that are carried by
10 mammals such as rats and mice.

11 This position would oversee the protection, investigation, assessment, prevention, control and
12 eradication of zoonotic diseases. Additionally, during an outbreak of a zoonotic disease, the
13 veterinary medical office would serve as the department's subject matter expert.

14 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



HAWAII VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 61309, Honolulu, Hawaii 96839-1309

March 10, 2020

Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair

Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

RE: HB 1891, HD1, Relating to Health

Dear Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health,

On behalf of the Hawaii Veterinary Medical Association, I would like to express our support of HB 1891 and the re-establishment of a public health veterinarian position within the Department of Health.

We believe a public health veterinarian would bring a necessary and invaluable resource to the Department of Health. Veterinarians go through unique training beyond the typical human medical practitioner, including training in comparative physiology, toxicology, immunology, herd health, and zoonotic diseases (diseases spread between animals and people) to earn their Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree. Furthermore, the veterinary profession has a recognized specialty for practitioners of public health and preventive medicine, the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine (ACVPM), that certifies core competencies of epidemiology, infectious disease, environmental health, food safety, and public policy.

Other federal health agencies such as the US Department of Health and Human Services, US Department of Agriculture, Army Veterinary Corps, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as 32 state health departments already recognize and utilize veterinarians in public health roles. A public health veterinarian within Hawaii's Department of Health would be essential in promoting disease control responsibilities and serving as a liaison to animal and wildlife health experts and other non-traditional public health partners when unusual public health challenges arise such as zoonotic disease outbreaks like the coronavirus COVID-19 and rat lungworm disease.

Please SUPPORT HB 1891 and re-establish a public health veterinarian position within Hawaii's Department of Health. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. Please contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Jill Yoshicedo, DVM
Executive Vice-President
Hawaii Veterinary Medical Association

HB-1891-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2020 2:39:32 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/13/2020 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Eric Ako DVM	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

A veterinarian on staff of the DOH is essential in this day and age;

infectious diseases,zoonoses,bioterrorism,natural disasters and public health concerns,

I personally contracted Leptospirosis...I am sure my own expertise was a part of saving my own life

HB-1891-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 9:36:52 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/13/2020 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dwamato	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-1891-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/8/2020 8:46:12 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/13/2020 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support HB1891 HD1. This bill creates and funds a Public Health Veterinarian to focus on zoonosis and animal-related illnesses (e.g., rat lungworm disease, Leptospirosis, toxoplasmosis, and other infectious diseases), which can be relatively underfunded when compared to diseases that are transmitted from person to person. This position can also focus on ciguatera and other types of fish and shellfish poisoning. This position will ensure our public health is safe from zoonotic diseases. Please pass HB1891 HD1.

HB-1891-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 5:42:03 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/13/2020 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please support HB1891. The animal issues are too great not to have a permanent veterinary medical officer vet on staff.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

Andrea Quinn

Kihei, Maui