



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY
ONLY

Testimony in SUPPORT of HCR 59
RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING ONGOING COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS
TO IMPLEMENT A STATEWIDE STRATEGY TO ELIMINATE
VIRAL HEPATITIS TYPES A, B, AND C IN HAWAII

REPRESENTATIVE RYAN YAMANE, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, & HOMELESSNESS
Hearing Date: 3/23/2021 Room Number: 329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Testimony:** Thank you for the opportunity to testify in STRONG SUPPORT of
3 HCR59, which requests that the Legislature “recognizes and supports ongoing collaborative
4 efforts by state agencies and private organizations to implement the ‘Hep Free 2030’ statewide
5 strategy to eliminate viral hepatitis types A, B, and C in Hawaii” by convening informational
6 briefings on the status of the strategy’s implementation.

7 Hawai‘i has one of the highest incidence and mortality rates in the country for liver cancer,
8 primarily due to viral hepatitis. To address this public health priority, the department has
9 partnered closely since 2011 with a wide array of state and community partners as a member of
10 the Hep Free Hawai‘i coalition. The department has an advisory role in the development and
11 implementation of “Hep Free 2030: The Hawai‘i Hepatitis Elimination Strategy 2020-2030” to
12 ensure alignment with recommendations and priorities of the department, the U.S. Centers for
13 Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the
14 World Health Organization. Furthermore, the Hawai‘i “Hep Free 2030 Strategy” is the first in
15 the nation to commit to eliminating hepatitis A, B, and C, positioning the State and the
16 department as thought leaders and innovators in public health.

- 1 As such, the department submits this testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of H.C.R. 59 so that the
- 2 Legislature can formally recognize the successes of ongoing public-private partnerships in public
- 3 health and to continue to learn more about the importance of viral hepatitis elimination for
- 4 Hawai'i.

- 5 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 7:32:03 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Peter Tuiolosega Silva	Hawaii Island HIV/AIDS Foundation	Support	No

Comments:

As Executive Director of Hawaii HIV/AIDS Foundation, we fully support this resolution because it addresses many of the issues we see here on our island of Hawai'i related to viral hepatitis. The hard work of this committee is truly dealing with all aspects related to the disease spread and disease progression in our Hawaii residents. This plan will help to eliminate viral hepatitis from our communities and should continue to be supported and adopted by the State of Hawaii. Thank you, Peter Silva

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 6:13:00 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



To: House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness

Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, March 22, 2021

Re: Testimony in Support of HCR 59

From: Heather Lusk, Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and members of the Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness:

The Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHHRC) strongly supports HCR 59 (SCR 178) this recognizes and supports the ongoing collaborative efforts to implement a statewide strategy to eliminate viral hepatitis in Hawaii. This resolution specifically supports the Hep Free Hawaii (HFH) “Hep Free 2030” statewide strategy which will be the first elimination strategy in the nation to address hepatitis A, B and C.

Hawaii has one of the highest rates in the U.S. of liver cancer which is directly related to our disproportionately high rates of hepatitis, esp. hepatitis B, in the islands. HFH and its close to 100 community partners developed the “Hep Free 2030” strategy over the past two years and has been working to implement micro-elimination strategies, such as the Hepatitis ECHO Project launched in January 2021, to move towards no new infections and supporting those living with chronic hepatitis access to life-saving care.

HHHRC’s mission is to *reduce harm, promote health, create wellness and fight stigma in Hawaii and the Pacific*. We focus our efforts on those disproportionately affected by social determinants of health, including but not limited to: people living with and/or affected by HIV, hepatitis, substance use, and the transgender, LGBTQ and the Native Hawaiian communities. HHHRC is the fiscal sponsor of Hep Free Hawaii and HHHRC’s Executive Director, Heather Lusk is the founding Co-Director of HFH with DOH’s Thaddeus Pham.

We very much appreciate Chair Yamane introducing and scheduling this measure and for the ongoing support of the legislature for public health measures such as HCR 59.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



To: House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, March 22, 2021
Re: Testimony in Support of HCR 59
From: Heather Lusk, Hep Free Hawaii

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and members of the Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness:

Hep Free Hawaii strongly supports HCR 59 (SCR 178) this recognizes and supports the ongoing collaborative efforts to implement a statewide strategy to eliminate viral hepatitis in Hawaii. This resolution specifically supports the “Hep Free 2030” statewide strategy which will be the first elimination strategy in the nation to address hepatitis A, B and C.

Hawaii has one of the highest rates in the U.S. of liver cancer which is directly related to our disproportionately high rates of hepatitis, esp. hepatitis B, in the islands. HFH and its close to 100 community partners developed the “Hep Free 2030” strategy over the past two years and has been working to implement micro-elimination strategies, such as the Hepatitis ECHO Project launched in January 2021, to move towards no new infections and supporting those living with chronic hepatitis access to life-saving care.

HFH is a coalition of local, national, and global partners dedicated to increasing awareness of and access to viral hepatitis and harm reduction services throughout the islands. Born out of a partnership of the Hawaii Department of Health and the Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center, Hep Free Hawaii and its close to 100 community partners are dedicated to making Hawaii “Hep Free”.

We very much appreciate Chair Yamane introducing and scheduling this measure and for the ongoing support of the legislature for public health measures such as HCR 59.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please visit www.hepfreehawaii.org for more info!

In July 2020, we transitioned from our previous [2018-2020 Strategic Plan](#) to [Hep Free 2030: The Hawaii Hepatitis Elimination Strategy 2020-2030](#). Together with 120 active partners over 12 months of planning, we identified these five Priority Areas to eliminate viral hepatitis in Hawai'i by 2030:

1. Awareness and Education
2. Access to Services
3. Advocacy at All Levels
4. Equity in Everything
5. Data-Driven Decision-Making

Join our efforts to make #HepFree2030 a reality!





DATE 22 March 2021

To: Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair
Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair
House Committee on Health and Human Service

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: Strong Support of HCR59 RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING ONGOING COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT A STATEWIDE STRATEGY TO ELIMINATE VIRAL HEPATITIS A, B, AND C IN HAWAI'I

Hrg: 23 March 2021, 9:00 am in conference room 329 Via Videoconference

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 500 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. Our mission is to promote public health in Hawai'i through leadership, collaboration, education and advocacy. Issues around social justice and equity in areas that extend beyond the traditional context of health (e.g., education, digital equity, cultural sensitivity), can have profound impacts on health equity and well-being. Therefore, as stewards of public health, HPHA is advocating for equity in all policies.

HPHA strongly supports HCR 59, to implement a statewide strategy to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B and C in Hawai'i. Viral hepatitis A, B and C have been long-term public health issues that result in serious morbidity and mortality among infected individuals. In 2013, viral hepatitis was the leading cause of death worldwide with a death toll that exceeded that from HIV, tuberculosis or malaria [1]. The majority of the burden is due to advanced liver disease from hepatitis B (HBV) and hepatitis C virus (HCV). HCV specifically is the top indication for liver transplant and a leading cause of liver cancer in the U.S. and HBV is the leading cause of liver cancer world-wide. The risk of transmission of hepatitis A (HAV), B and C varies among different populations. However, a commonality between each of these three infections is the disproportionate burden of infection among vulnerable populations such as the homeless, individuals impacted by substance abuse (specifically IV drug use as a main risk factor for HCV transmission), and foreign-born populations from HBV endemic countries. Acute HAV and HBV infection can be prevented with vaccination. Chronic HBV and progression of liver disease can be managed by proven treatments and routine screening for liver cancer. Acute HCV infection can be prevented by programs such as safe needle exchange. Chronic HCV infection can be cured by new treatments that offer a high success rate. Equally vital to prevention and management is screening for chronic HBV and HCV as a large percentage of individuals with HBV or HCV infection are unaware they are infected. Individuals with chronic HBV or HCV are often asymptomatic until they encounter symptoms of advanced liver disease.



Both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), have called for the eliminate hepatitis B and C worldwide by 2030 and have published detailed and evidence-based strategies for prevention and management [1,2]. These strategies include vaccination efforts (applicable to HAV and HBV); harm reduction programs for persons who inject drugs (most applicable to HCV); and screening and treatment (applicable to HBV and HCV).

The elimination of viral hepatitis A, B, and C is a top public health priority both nationally and globally. It is imperative that action is taken and proven evidence-based strategies are deployed to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B and C in Hawai'i. HPHA strongly supports HCR 59.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Leocadia Conlon, PhD, MPH, PA-C
Legislative Committee Co-Chair
Hawaii Public Health Association

References:

1. World Health Organization. *Combating Hepatitis B and C to reach elimination by 2030*. https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/206453/WHO_HIV_2016.04_eng.pdf;jsessionid=3D3313A564F45D1D27CDA4273DDA80FE?sequence=1
2. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. *Progress Toward Viral Hepatitis Elimination in the United States, 2017*. <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/policy/pdfs/nationalprogressreport.pdf>

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/19/2021 10:17:34 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Linda Kim	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Honorable Members,

Please pass HCR59/HR48 to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B, and C. This measure aligns with the Hep Free Hawaii strategic plan and would be a huge benefit for our entire community.

Mahalo,

Linda Kim

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/19/2021 10:34:41 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maddalynn Seseapasara	HHHRC	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Honorable Members,

Please pass HCR59/HR48 to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B, and C. This measure aligns with the [Hep Free Hawai'i strategic plan](#) and would be a huge benefit for our entire community.

Mahalo,

Maddalynn Seseapasara

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/19/2021 9:24:22 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lorenzo Perillo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Honorable Members,

Please pass HCR59/HR48 to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B, and C. This measure aligns with the [Hep Free Hawai'i strategic plan](#) and would be a huge benefit for our entire community.

Mahalo,

Dr. Lorenzo Perillo

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 4:28:20 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Itai Bradshaw-Lang	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Honorable Members,

Please pass HCR59/HR48 to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B, and C. This measure aligns with the [Hep Free Hawai'i strategic plan](#) and would be a huge benefit for our entire community.

Mahalo,

Itai Bradshaw-Lang, BSN, RN

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 12:10:53 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kevin Tomita	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Honorable Members,

Please pass HCR59/HR48 to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B, and C. This measure aligns with the [Hep Free Hawai'i strategic plan](#) and would be a huge benefit for our entire community.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 12:16:05 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Deborah T Atkinson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This is a deadly health issue that can be prevented and, in some cases, cured. Let's help our citizens and beat this disease! Please support efforts to implement a statewide initiative to eliminate viral Hep A, B, and C. Thank you!

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 12:49:28 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joanne Amberg	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am urging lawmakers to vote in support of HCR59 to recognize and support a statewide strategy to eliminate Hepatitis A, B and C from our community. I work in a FQHC where we see a large number of individuals who have been infected by a hepatitis virus. Many are not even aware of this before te do testing. They can pass it on to others if they are unaware of their positive status. Many of our patients have not been immunized for Hep A or B, which leaves them at high risk for infection, and subsequent sequalae from the infection.

Please support this measure for the health and well being of our community.

Mahalo,

Joanne Amberg, CNM MSN MPH

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 3:58:23 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha HHH Committee,

As a public health professional and concerned citizen, I write in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HCR59, which requests the Legislature to recognize and support hepatitis elimination in Hawai'i, as detailed in the Hep Free 2030 strategy.

Hawai'i has one of the highest rates of liver cancer in the country, mostly due to hepatitis. The CDC recently recommended that all adults get tested for hepatitis C, which means that hepatitis in Hawai'i affects all communities. Many of the communities most affected by hepatitis (people who are houseless, people who are foreign born, people who are incarcerated) are also disparately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, this resolution would support a community-driven strategy to support communities to eliminate hepatitis and related harms.

Please support HCR59.

Mahalo,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 7:07:06 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ashley Shearer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 7:09:48 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tami Whitney	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Tami Whitney

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 7:21:20 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ari Whitney	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hi,

My name is Ari Whitney and I am 10 years old. Please support ending hepatitis in Hawaii so people stop getting sick.

Thanks,

Ari

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 7:44:44 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Koni Whitney	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hi Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee,

My name is Koni Whitney, I'm 13 and I live in Kaneohe. Please support this so that we can end hepatitis in Hawaii because there are a lot of people who have it and a lot of them don't even know it. This could be your family and friends or my family and friends so please help to stop hepatitis.

Thanks,
Koni Whitney

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/20/2021 8:31:35 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cindy Nawilis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I fully support this bill to promote collaborative efforts among public and private entities in achieving important public health measures, especially to eliminate viral hepatitis. I believe the HEP Free 2030 goal and framework is measurable, actionable and deserving of wide spread support.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 7:44:18 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
DOMINIC CHOW	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C. I am a clinician and see the overall devastating effects of untreated infectious hepatitis in my patients.

Over 63,000 individuals living in Hawaii are infected with hepatitis A, B or C. Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C. I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 9:45:35 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jen Jenkins	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Honorable Members,

Please pass HCR59/HR48 to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B, and C. This measure aligns with the [Hep Free Hawai'i strategic plan](#) and would be a huge benefit for our entire community.

Mahalo,

Jen Jenkins

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 9:57:43 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shayna Lonoaea Alexander	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Honorable Members,

Please pass HCR59/HR48 to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B, and C. This measure aligns with the [Hep Free Hawai'i strategic plan](#) and would be a huge benefit for our entire community.

Mahalo,

Shayna Lonoaea Alexander

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 10:26:57 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hiromi Saito	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B, or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care fo those living with Hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the country to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer because of high rates of hepatitis, and I applaud this strategy to make our communities safer, healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 11:46:18 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Acasia Fukuda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

This innovative approach has been and will continue to lay the foundation for other programs to address the rise in infectious diseases and lack of equitable care for our marginalized populations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 12:34:24 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Daniel Saltman, MD	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59.

This bill highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii. It will increase access to screening and surveillance for these treatable infections and access to treatment for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C. Given our very high rates of liver cancer, a consequence of high rates of hepatitis, I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Hepatitis C (HCV) is an infection with a cure! In over 30 years of primary care practice in Hawaii, I have never seen anything like this. I started treating HCV in 2011 when treatment was a year of weekly injections that made patients feel ill. For the next 4-5 years, almost every year, newer treatments were approved that each made the prior ones obsolete. These were not "me too" drugs; they were more effective with less side effects. Now, we can **cure** 95+% of hepatitis C infections with only 8 weeks of pills taken once daily, with minimal side effects. This is incredible! HCV is a special case where the virus is not able to hide out inside of the cells. We test patients 12 weeks after the end of treatment to verify persisting absence of detectable virus. It really works! That is why the World Health Organization, countries like Russian Georgia, states like Louisiana and New York, and populations like the Navaho nation all have goals to eliminate HCV by 2030. Hawaii is a leader in the country in adopting these goals and moving forward with plans. As an island state, we are an ideal location to achieve these outcomes.

Further, I believe a coordinated effort to identify and treat hepatitis C infections is an excellent model for team care and for how a high functioning health system can work. The steps needed are well-defined as are the outcomes measures.

Please support HRC 59 as one step in the direction to eliminate hepatitis A, B and C in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 5:33:54 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alexander Bocchieri	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in full support of this resolution. I am a filmmaker in Honolulu, and for the past 6 years I have been working with the non-profit "Hep Free Hawaii" to create digital storytelling videos about people living with Hepatitis in Hawaii. Through their stories I have learned about the struggle of living with the disease and the horrible consequences on their health, about the survivor's incredible resilience, and also about the myriad of pathways that exist to eliminate Hepatitis. No one should have to go through what they went through, and this resolution will help continue to support those who are ensuring that no one ever has to.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 8:25:42 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lauren Trostler	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I, Lauren Trostler, am testifying that I support the HCR 59 RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING ONGOING COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT A STATEWIDE STRATEGY TO ELIMINATE VIRAL HEPATITIS TYPES A, B, AND C IN HAWAII.

Mahalo.

Sincerely,

Lauren Trostler

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 9:45:30 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melissa Bumgardner	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

I have had the great privilege of working with Hep Free Hawaii and patients living with chronic hepatitis C infection in the past several years. We have an unprecedented opportunity to completely eradicate these infectious sources of liver disease in our community. HCR59 gives strength and momentum to the efforts currently underway in the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Dr. Melissa Bumgardner, Director of Pharmacy Services, West Hawaii Community Health Center

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 10:16:48 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aashish Hemrajani	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

With vaccines and a Hep c cure, we can eliminate hepatitis!

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 10:27:02 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melissa Machida	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

I fully support HCR59 to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B, and C in Hawaii. As we have seen with COVID19, it is very important to get any virus under control. I have worked with the Hep Free Hawaii group for several years, and I have seen their unwavering commitment to ending viral hepatitis in Hawaii. We've endured the hepatitis A outbreak in 2016, and have seen the large financial costs and medical impacts of patients with Hepatitis B and C. The goal is to end hepatitis by 2030, and any assistance through HCR59 coming to fruition would be greatly appreciated. Please help to the best of your abilities to end viral hepatitis A, B, and C through passing HCR59.

Sincerely,

Melissa Machida, Pharm. D.

Times Clinical Pharmacy Manager

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 5:42:26 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nathan Tan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:08:47 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Beatrice Zovich	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:09:26 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nikki-Ann Yee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please pass HCR59/HR48 to eliminate viral hepatitis A, B, and C. This measure aligns with the [Hep Free Hawai'i strategic plan](#) and would be a huge benefit for our entire community.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:18:54 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dr. Christina MB Wang	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

As a nurse practitioner working on the frontlines of those most vulnerable in our community, access to HBV/HCV testing and treatment is paramount to decreasing the spread in our community and reducing the rates of HCC- which is both deadly and costly

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Dr. Christina MB Wang

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:19:53 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kavika Puahi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hawai'i has one of the highest rates in the country of liver cancer incidence and mortality, primarily due to viral hepatitis. This is why I STRONG SUPPORT HCR59 and ask Legislature to do so in the name of public health.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:20:49 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

William C. Kopp

Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Representative Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair
Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness

Talaivosa Moala

Monday, March 22, 2021

Support for HCR59

My name is Talaivosa Moala. I am a student pursuing a master's degree at the University of Hawaii Manoa in Public Health specializing in Healthy Policy and Management. As a part of the program I am required to do an internship and I chose to be an intern at the Harm Reduction Services Branch of the Hawaii Department of Health.

One of the communities that I hold dear to my heart is my Tongan community. I have seen a lot of loved ones suffer and/or die from diseases, like Hepatitis, that could have prevented had they known earlier or had more knowledge of the illnesses. HCR59 will give people within my Tongan community as well as rest of Hawaii a chance at a better and healthier life. Thus, I highly urge the committee to pass HCR59.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:26:30 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Abitbol	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59, which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy. This strategy is our roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii, and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Even as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to takes its toll on the health and economy of our community, we must not forget about other public health threats like viral hepatitis. Eliminating viral hepatitis is imperative for the health of our community because we have one of the highest rates of liver cancer liver-related deaths in the country. This strategy will move us toward a healthier and safer community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

David Abitbol

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:34:57 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jasmine Umeno	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

Thank you for hearing this measure. I strongly support HCR 59, which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:35:11 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Britt Nakamura	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear members of the Legislature,

My name is Britt Nakamura. I am a Community Health Outreach Worker for Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center and a Patient Advocate for HepFreeHawaii. When I was able to be the first person our agency treated for hep C in May of 2018, I thought I'd won the lottery! Getting treated has made a huge improvement in my health well-being and life. And because of this experience, I volunteer in our community to eliminate all forms of hepatitis. I am a storyteller, using my journey to inspire and connect with others to get tested and treated. Through documentary film, print media and just talking story with people, I am able to share a message of health and hope to our community. Testing and treatment of hepatitis is vital in Hawaii. We have some of the highest numbers of hepatitis B and C in the country, with Asians, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders being disproportionately afflicted. The support services and care that HFH and HHHRC offer are so vital to health and wellness of our entire community. The personal and financial costs of hepatitis are too high, with poor health outcomes for so many without access to treatment and care. We can eliminate hepatitis by 2030, will you please support us in our endeavors to do so by passing HCR59?

In Gratitude,

Britt Nakamura

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:35:18 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Natalia Werkoff	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of bill HCR 59. I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Certified Substance Abuse Counselor and work closely with many clients who have Hepatitis. Connecting them to testing and treatment is a resource I offer regularly thanks to the work of Hep Free Hawai`i and the funding the state can provide. Working towards eliminating hepatitis is a personal value of mine that helps drive the work that I do. Please vote in support of this bill to create a healthier Hawai`i.

Mahalo,

Natalia Werkoff, LCSW, CSAC

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:38:40 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Shaku	HHHRC	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:38:04 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
RUSSELL ABORDO	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:42:36 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jamie Boling	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of HCR 59 which highlights the Hep Free 2030 elimination strategy as a roadmap to move towards no new hepatitis A, B or C infections in Hawaii and to increase access to testing and care for those living with hepatitis B and/or C.

Hawaii is the first state in the county to have its elimination strategy encompass hepatitis A, B and C and given our very high rates of liver cancer (because of high rates of hepatitis), I applaud this strategy to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HCR-59

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:55:10 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Donita Garcia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill because I have known many people that have lived with Hepatitis C in Hawaii. If it was not for the organizations that are practicing harm reduction many of these people would not be alive today. Many have gone on to receive treatment and are free from Hepatitis C today. I am truly blessed to be walking along side these warriors. Please support this bill so that many more warriors can have this treatment and Hawaii can be Hepatitis free.