

Testimony of the Hawaii Medical Board

**Before the
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
And
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Tuesday, March 1, 2022
10:00 a.m.
Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:
S.B. 2442, S.D. 1, RELATING TO PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS**

Chair Baker, Chair Rhoads, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Ahlani Quiogue, and I am the Executive Officer of the Hawaii Medical Board (Board). The Board supports this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to streamline the records review process for physician assistants by including review of physician assistants' prescriptions for controlled substances.

The Board supports this bill as it alleviates the overly burdensome administrative requirement of having a supervising physician review all medical records that contain written orders or prescriptions for controlled substances. The Board recognizes the important role physician assistants have in healthcare and believes this bill is a step in the right direction.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
The Honorable Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Judiciary
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair

Hearing Date/Time: March 1, 2022, 10:00 a.m.
Place: Via Videoconference
Re: SB 2442 SD1 Relating to Physician Assistants

Dear Chairs, Vice Chairs and Committee Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony for SB 2442 SD1, which streamlines the records review process for physician assistants by including review of physician assistants' prescriptions for controlled substances.

Hawai`i Academy of Physician Assistants (HAPA) STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB 2442 SD1

HAPA is the Hawai`i state chapter of The American Academy of Physician Assistants. According to the 2021 annual report on findings from the Hawai`i physician workforce assessment report, Hawai`i has an unmet need for 732 full time physicians across the state with neighbor island counties facing the most severe shortages.

Paradoxically, since 2016, the number of practicing physician assistants has increased by 105% on the island of Hawai`i, 114% on Kauai, and 35% on Maui. Despite this increase, physician assistants remain underutilized due to Hawai`i's restrictive practice laws, which prevent physician assistants from practicing at the top of their training, education, and licensure. HAPA supports SB2442 SD1 because it removes some of these restrictions and helps bring Hawai`i physician assistant scope of practice into alignment with national practices.

HAPA appreciates the Legislature's passage of Act 181, Session Laws of Hawai`i 2019, which was a monumental bill that modernized physician assistant chart review and successfully lowered administrative burden for physicians, without compromising patient care. SB 2442 SD1 expands the review structure established in 2019 to include physician assistant charts involving controlled substance prescriptions. Like 2019, we expect this change will continue to prioritize patient care while significantly decreasing physician administrative burden.

Physician assistants are highly skilled medical providers who are authorized by the Affordable Care Act, along with physicians and APRNs, to serve as primary care provider (PCP). They receive rigorous medical training modeled on medical school curriculum which includes rotations



in family medicine, internal medicine, general surgery, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, emergency medicine, psychiatry, and other specialty electives. Physician assistant training programs typically require thousands of hours of previous clinical care experience before matriculation is even considered.

In practice, physician assistants routinely take medical histories, perform physical examinations, order and interpret laboratory tests, diagnose illnesses, develop and manage treatment plans, prescribe medications, and first assist with surgery.

With their skillset and training, physician assistants play a critical role on care delivery teams and can pivot quickly to supply care when and where it is needed most. This has been invaluable during the pandemic when we rely heavily on physician assistants' unique adaptability to ensure care delivery in an ever-changing landscape.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.

Hawai'i Academy of Physician Assistants



DATE: 28 Feb 2022

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

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

RE: **Testimony in Strong Support of SB 2442 SD1, RELATING TO PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS**

HRG: 01 March 2022, 10:00 AM Conference room 229 & Videoconference

Dear Chairs Baker and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Chang and Keohokalole, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 450 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. Additionally, HPHA aims to call attention to issues around social justice and equity in areas that extend beyond the traditional context of health (e.g., education, digital equity, cultural sensitivity), which can have profound impacts on health equity and well-being. Therefore, as stewards of public health, HPHA is also advocating for equity in all policies.

We are providing this testimony in **strong support of SB 2442 SD1**, which seeks to improve patients' access to care by bringing up to date the scope of practice for physician assistants (PAs). In 2021, the annual report on the physician workforce in Hawai'i estimated a shortage of over 700 full time physicians. Physician shortages are a barrier to access timely medical care, especially for remote rural communities, and can lead to significant health disparities and poor community health outcomes. PAs are an essential part of the solution to expand access to healthcare and reduce health disparities.

The people of Hawai'i deserve access to safe, timely, and nearby medical care. Hawai'i PAs remain committed to this kind of quality healthcare delivery in our community. The PA profession has had significant growth both nationally and in the state of Hawai'i over the last decade. PAs have demonstrated the ability to deliver high quality medical care along with physicians and advanced practice nurses, fill gaps in care, and reduce health disparities by expanding access to quality health care. PAs are highly educated and trained in the medical curriculum and model, and are nationally certified to provide a wide range of clinical services. This bills help to reduce barriers to PA practice and thus, improve community access to quality medical care.



We support SB 2442 SD1 and respectfully ask that you pass this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important public health issue affecting members of our community.

Sincerely,

J. Leocadia Conlon, PhD, MPH, PA-C
Legislative Committee Chair
Hawai'i Public Health Association

Testimony of
Jonathan Ching
Government Relations Director

Before:
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
The Honorable Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Judiciary
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair

March 1, 2022
10:00 a.m.
Via Videoconference

Re: SB 2442, SD1, Relating to Physician Assistants

Chairs, Vice Chairs, and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2442, SD1, which streamlines the records review process for physician assistants by including review of physician assistants' prescriptions for controlled substances.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB 2442, SD1.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i is Hawai'i's largest integrated health system that provides care and coverage for approximately 265,000 members. Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i believes that physician assistants should be permitted to practice at the top of their training, education, experience, and licensure. Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i appreciates the contributions made by licensed physician assistants and has a great deal of confidence in the quality of health care they provide within the Kaiser Permanente system. Our physician-owned Hawai'i Permanente Medical Group (HPMG) – Hawai'i's largest multispecialty medical group – employs over 650 physicians and licensed medical providers, including over 80 physician assistants. Within the Kaiser Permanente system, physician assistants practice along with physicians and other medical professionals in a collaborative effort to provide high quality patient care in a variety of specialties and settings – including Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Dermatology, Orthopedics, Cardiology, Oncology, Nephrology, Occupational Medicine, Vascular, General and Cardiothoracic Surgery, Infectious Disease, Radiology, Urology and Otolaryngology (ears, nose and throat).

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i supports SB 2442, SD1 because it removes barriers for the practice of physician assistants and ensures greater access to health care for Hawai'i residents, especially those who reside on the neighbor islands where need is greatest. Since 2016, the number of physician assistants has increased by 105% on the island of Hawai'i, 114% on Kauai, and 35% on

Maui. Despite this increase, physician assistants remain underutilized because Hawai'i's restrictive practice laws prevent physician assistants from practicing at the top of their training, education, and licensure. We support SB 2442, SD1 because it removes some of those restrictions and brings Hawai'i physician assistant scope of practice into better alignment with national practices and practicing to the top of their scope.

SB 2442, SD1 builds on the Legislature's previous successes modernizing physician assistants' practice in Hawai'i. In 2019, the Legislature passed Act 181, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2019, modernizing physician assistant chart reviews by supervising physicians, which has successfully lowered the administrative burdens on supervisory physicians without compromising quality and patient care. SB 2442, SD1 expands the review structure established in 2019 to include physician assistant charts involving controlled substance prescriptions. Just as in 2019, we expect this change will continue to prioritize patient care while significantly decreasing supervising physicians' administrative burden.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

SB-2442-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2022 3:45:23 PM

Testimony for CPN on 3/1/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

They are not Doctors!!!