

**Testimony of the Hawaii Medical Board**

**Before the  
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection  
Tuesday, February 22, 2022  
10:00 a.m.  
Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:  
S.B. 2445, S.D. 1, RELATING TO PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS**

Chair Baker and Members of the Committee:

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

The purpose of this bill is to expand the authorized scope of practice for physician assistants.

The Board supports this measure as it broadens physician assistants' scope of practice to provide a wide range of services, which would benefit the citizens of Hawaii. 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.

Testimony of the [Board name]  
H.B./S.B. [####]  
Page 2 of 2

[Continue text here.]



February 22, 2022

To: The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair,  
The Honorable Stanley Chang, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer  
Protection

Date: Tuesday, February 22, 2022  
Time: 10:00 a.m.  
Place: Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

From: Anne Perreira-Eustaquio, Director  
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

**Re: S.B. 2445 S.D.1 RELATING TO PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS**

**I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

This measure seeks to broaden the scope and practice of physician assistants by amending multiple chapters of the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) including Chapter 392, HRS, the Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) law. The proposal will allow physician assistants to provide care to and certify the disabilities of individuals for TDI purposes.

DLIR supports this measure, specifically Section 8 that amends the TDI law.

**II. CURRENT LAW**

Sections 392-26(a) and 392-26(c), HRS, specify that an individual must be under the care of and have the individual's disability certified by a person duly licensed to practice medicine, surgery, dentistry, chiropractic, osteopathy, or naturopathic medicine, or an advanced practice registered nurse.

**III. COMMENTS ON THE SENATE BILL**

DLIR supports the intent of the measure to assist with the critical physician shortage by allowing Physician Assistants to certify an employee's disability after receiving treatment.



DATE: 20 Feb 2022

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

RE: **Testimony in Strong Support of SB 2445 SD1, RELATING TO PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS**

HRG: 22 Feb 2022, 10:00 AM Conference room 229 & Videoconference

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Chang, 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 2445 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 2445 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



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

Hearing Date/Time: February 22, 2022, 10:00 a.m.

Place: Via Videoconference

**Re: SB 2445 SD1 Related to Physician Assistants**

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Chang, and Committee Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2445 SD1, which serves to modernize scope of practice for physician assistants in the state of Hawai'i.

### **Hawai'i Academy of Physician Assistants (HAPA) STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB 2445 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 and education. HAPA supports SB2445 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 2445 SD1 will allow physician assistants, like advanced practice nurses (APRNs), to sign temporary disability insurance forms, disability parking permits, Provider Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) forms, and other administrative forms that are time sensitive and critical for patients' quality of life and continuity of care but are often delayed by the physician shortage. 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 and 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 in 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

Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at 10:00 AM  
Via Video Conference

**Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection**

To: Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair  
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

From: Michael Robinson  
Vice President, Government Relations & Community Affairs

Re: **SB 2445, SD1 – Testimony In Support  
Relating to Physician Assistants**

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My name is Michael Robinson, and I am the Vice President of Government Relations & Community Affairs at Hawai'i Pacific Health. Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system comprised of its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox and over 70 locations statewide with a mission of creating a healthier Hawai'i.

I am writing in SUPPORT of SB 2445, SD1 which expands the scope of practice for physician assistants.

The 2021 annual report on findings from the Hawaii Physician Workforce Assessment found that Hawaii has an unmet need for seven hundred thirty-two full-time doctors. The islands of Maui and Hawaii face the most severe shortages, each needing forty per cent more healthcare providers. In contrast, the number of licensed physician assistants has grown by one hundred five per cent on the island of Hawaii, one hundred fourteen per cent on the island of Kauai and thirty-five per cent on the island of Maui.

Utilization of physician assistants provides a viable option to managing both the growing physician shortage and the growing medical demands of the State's aging population. Physician assistants are skilled health care providers trained to take medical histories, perform physical examinations, order and interpret laboratory tests, diagnose illness, develop and manage treatment plans, prescribe medications, and assist in surgery. Thus, they offer an effective and efficient method of delivering healthcare to our community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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

February 22, 2022  
10:00 a.m.  
Via Videoconference

**Re: SB 2445, SD1, Related to Physician Assistants**

Chair Baker, Vice Chair Chang, and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2445, SD1, which modernizes the practice of physician assistants.

**Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB 2445, 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 medicine at the top of their training, education, and experience. 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 to our members. 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 collaborate with physicians and other medical professionals to provide high quality patient care in a variety of specialties and settings, including: Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Dermatology, Orthopedics, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Oncology, Obstetrics & Gynecology, Emergency Medicine, Nephrology, Occupational Medicine, Vascular Surgery, General and Cardiothoracic Surgery, Infectious Disease, Radiology, Urology and Otolaryngology (ears, nose and throat).

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i supports SB2445, HD1 because it removes barriers to practice for 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 and education. We support SB2445, HD1 because it removes some of these restrictions and helps bring Hawai'i physician assistant scope of practice into alignment with national practices.



SB 2445, SD1 builds on the Legislature's previous successes modernizing physician assistants' practice in Hawai'i. SB 2445, SD1 will allow physician assistants, like advanced practice nurses (APRNs), to sign temporary disability insurance forms, disability parking permits, Provider Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) forms, and other administrative forms that are time sensitive and critical for patients' quality of life and continuity of care but are often delayed by the physician shortage.

Physician assistants are skilled health care providers and 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 typically 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 in surgery. With their skills and training, physician assistants play a critical role on our care delivery teams and are represented in every medical specialty within our medical group. Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i continues to focus on recruiting physician assistants because physician assistants possess a skillset and training that allows them to be able to pivot quickly to supply care when and where it is needed most. This has been invaluable during the pandemic when we rely heavily on our physician assistants' unique adaptability to provide care in an ever-changing landscape.

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

February 18, 2022

To: Honorable Senator Rosalyn Baker – Chair, Commerce & Consumer Protection  
Honorable Senator Stanley Chang – Vice Chair

Hearing: Tuesday, February 22, 2022 – 10:00 a.m.

RE: SB 2445, SD 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants – In Support

On behalf of the Occupational Therapy Association of Hawaii (OTAH) we support SB 2445, SD 1 - Relating to Physician Assistants which modernized physician assistant scope of practice. Currently under HRS 453-5.5, Physician assistants are able to sign orders and plans of care for both Physical and Speech therapies, however, not for Occupational Therapy. Occupational Therapy practitioners provide services to both inpatient and outpatients who have sustained a stroke, brain injury, spinal cord injury, hip fractures, amputations, hand & upper extremity conditions. Occupational Therapy practitioners are employed in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, mental health agencies, schools to name a few throughout Hawaii.

The Hawaii Academy of Physician Assistants (HAPA) is also in favor of SB 2445, SD 1 to include orders for Occupational Therapy and plans of care in HRS 453-5.5.

We hope that your committee will favorably pass SB 2445, SD 1. With passage of this bill, the consumer can receive complete orders from one referral source. At the present time, the consumer needs to see his/her physician to obtain a referral to Occupational Therapy as orders from a physician assistant is not covered under current regulation under HRS 453-5.5. Thus, the consumer, will experience a delay in receiving services. In some of our hospitals and outpatient facilities, Physician Assistants work alongside the primary physicians and have been writing orders for Occupational Therapy services. However, we have needed to ask that the MD's co-sign orders or additional orders need to be re-written by the primary physician. By adding Occupational Therapy, this would allow our consumers to access OT services in a timely manner and when prescribed by the Physician Assistant. Furthermore, Medicare allows Physician Assistants to prescribe OT services, but depending on the Medicare fiduciary they reference the individual states statutes.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach me at (808) 542-1882.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brooke Nakamura', followed by the text 'OTD, OTR/L' in a smaller font.

Brooke Nakamura, OTD, OTR/L  
Doctorate of Occupational Therapy  
President, Occupational Therapy Association of Hawaii



## THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

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To: The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair  
The Honorable Stanley Chang, Vice Chair  
Members, Senate Committee on Commerce & Consumer Protection

From: Jacce Mikulanec, Director, Government Relations, The Queen's Health Systems

Date: February 22, 2022

Re: Support for SB 2445 SD1: Relating to Physician Assistants

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The Queen's Health Systems (Queen's) is a nonprofit 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, and more than 1,500 affiliated physicians and providers 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 provide comments in support of SB 2445 SD1, which would expand the scope of practice for physician assistants. We appreciate the intent of this measure to help bring parity with APRN in scope of practice, supervision, and streamlining of record review process. They continue to play an increasingly important role in expanding physician care – especially on neighbor islands and in rural healthcare settings.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

*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.*

February 18, 2022

To: Honorable Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair – Commerce & Consumer Protection  
Honorable Senator Stanley Chang – Vice Chair

Hearing: Tuesday, February 22, 2022 – 10:00 a.m.

RE: SB 2445, SD 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants – IN SUPPORT

We are occupational therapy practitioners and are employed at one of Oahu's acute care hospital and outpatient clinics. We support SB 2445, SD 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants which expands the authorized scope of practice for physician assistants. Currently under HRS 453-5.5, Physician assistants are able to sign orders and plans of care for both Physical and Speech therapies, but not for Occupational Therapy. Occupational Therapy practitioners provide services to both inpatient and outpatients who have sustained a stroke, brain injury, spinal cord injury, hip fractures, amputations, hand & upper extremity conditions. Occupational Therapy practitioners are employed in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, mental health agencies, schools to name a few throughout Hawaii.

At our hospital and outpatient clinics, we work closely with Physician Assistants in orthopedic surgery, neurosurgery and general surgery to name a few. On behalf of the OT practitioners at our facility and our professional state association, Occupational Therapy Association of Hawaii, we support SB 2445, SD 1 which will include changes to the current **CHAPTER 453 MEDICINE AND SURGERY**

**§453-5.5 Physician assistant; authority to sign documents that will include orders for Occupational Therapy and plans of care.**

With hope that your committee will pass SB 2445, SD 1. Passage of this bill will allow the consumer to receive complete orders from one referral source. At the present time, the consumer needs to see his/her physician to obtain a referral to Occupational Therapy as orders from a physician assistant is not covered under current regulation under HRS 453-5.5. Thus, the consumer, will experience a delay in receiving services. At our facility, Physician Assistants work alongside the primary physicians and have been writing orders for Occupational Therapy services. However, we have needed to ask that the MD's co-sign orders or additional orders need to be re-written by the primary physician. Furthermore, Medicare allows Physician Assistants to prescribe OT services, but depending on the Medicare fiduciary they reference the individual states statutes.

If you have any questions, we can be reached at (808) 522-4602.

Sincerely,

*Avis Sakata, OTR*

Avis Sakata, OTR  
Occupational Therapy Team Lead

**Additional OT staff in agreement with testimony:**

**Whitney Reigh Asao, OTD**

**Ashley Cadavona, OTR**

**Brian Coyle, COTA**

**Farrah Dimagiba, OTR**

**Lisa Hall, OTR**

**Casey Imelio, OTR**

**Wendy Kondo, OTR**

**Andrea Muraoka, OTR**

**Bernice Oishi, COTA**

**Vandana Pal, OTR**

**Melissa Pang, OTR**

**Tisha Taba, OTR**

**Katie Watanabe, OTR**

**Dale Yasumoto, OTR**

**SB-2445-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2022 4:10:39 PM

Testimony for CPN on 2/22/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
PAUL KYLE	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Chang, and Committee Members,

My name is **Paul Kyle**. I am a physician assistant student (PA-S) currently attending the University of Washington's MEDEX physician assistant program in Kealahou on Hawai'i Island. I write in strong support of SB2442 SD1, which seeks to improve patients' access to care by bringing up to date the scope of practice for current and future PAs. The time honored and demonstrated skill, accumen, and ability of PA's is an untapped resevoir of potential waiting to be fully utilized to its fullest extent in closing the the growing void that is our state's critical need for competent and qualified healthcare providers.

It is the kuleana of all physician assistants, both current and future, to ensure the many peoples of Hawai'i have access to safe, timely, and nearby medical care. Hawai'i PAs remain committed to this kind of healthcare delivery in our community and this bill is a step in invigorating not only the current generation of advanced practice medical providers like physician assistant's but the many generations that are to come and continue to serve our communities. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Paul Kyle

PA-S , MEDEX - Kona Class 2

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

FROM: **Flora Wang**

DATE: **02/20/2022**

RE: SB2445 SD1 – Strong Support

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Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Chang, and Committee Members,

My name is Flora Wang. I am a physician assistant (PA) practicing at Windward Orthopaedic Group. I write in strong support of SB2442 SD1, which seeks to improve patients' access to care by bringing the scope of practice for PAs up to date.

The people of Hawai'i deserve access to safe, timely, and nearby medical care. Hawai'i PAs remain dedicated to this kind of quality healthcare delivery in our communities. The PA profession has had substantial growth both nationally and in the state of Hawai'i over the last decade. PAs have routinely 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 are nationally certified to provide a wide range of clinical services. This bill helps to reduce barriers to PA practice and thus, improve community access to quality medical care.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Flora Wang, MPH, MSHS, PA-C

February 20, 2022

To: Honorable Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair, Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection  
Honorable Senator Stanley Chang, Vice-Chair

Hearing: Tuesday, February 22, 2022, 10:00 AM

RE: SB 2445, SD1 – Relating to Physician Assistants - In support

I am a retired Occupational Therapist who continues to be interested in healthcare concerns for consumers. I support the intent of SB2445, SD1 – Relating to Physician Assistants which expands the authorized scope of practice for physician assistants.

Currently, under Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) 453-5.5, Physician assistants can sign orders and plans of care for both Physical and Speech therapies, however, not for Occupational Therapy (OT). Allowing physician assistants to sign occupational therapy orders will allow consumers timely access to occupational therapy services. Consumers will not need to wait for a physician's co-signature or for his/her physician to re-write the orders for OT services.

The proposed SB2445, SD1 amends Hawaii Revised Statutes §453-5.5 Physician assistant; authority to sign documents by allowing Physician Assistants to sign orders and plans of care for Occupational Therapy services. The section that addresses this in SB2445, SD1, may be found on page 15, line 13, "(10) Orders for occupational therapy and plans of care."

I request your support by passing SB 2445, SD1 so that HRS §453-5.5 Physician assistant; authority to sign documents may be amended to allow Physician Assistants to sign Occupational Therapy orders and sign plans of care. Consumers will also receive timely access to OT services.

If you have any questions, I may be reached at gin575@yahoo.com

Sincerely,



Virginia Tully



**SB-2445-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2022 7:22:54 AM

Testimony for CPN on 2/22/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Emily Callaway	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committees,

I am a Physician Assistant currently practicing in Hawai'i and I am providing this testimony in **strong support of SB 2445 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 bill helps to reduce barriers to PA practice and thus, improve community access to quality medical care.

**I support SB 2445 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,

Emily Callaway, PA-C

**From:** [Rachelle Lam](#)  
**To:** [CPN Committee](#)  
**Subject:** re: SB2445, SD1 Hearing  
**Date:** Sunday, February 20, 2022 5:39:54 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

February 19, 2022

To: Honorable Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair – Commerce & Consumer Protection  
Honorable Senator Stanley Chang – Vice Chair

Hearing: Tuesday, February 22, 2022 – 10:00 a.m.

RE: SB 2445, SD 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants – IN SUPPORT

We are occupational therapy practitioners and are employed at Hawaii Hand and Rehabilitation Services, LLC. I support SB 2445, SD 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants which expands the authorized scope of practice for physician assistants. Currently under HRS 453-5.5, Physician assistants are able to sign orders and plans of care for both Physical and Speech therapies, but not for Occupational Therapy. Occupational Therapy practitioners provide services to both inpatient and outpatients who have sustained a stroke, brain injury, spinal cord injury, hip fractures, amputations, hand & upper extremity conditions. Occupational Therapy practitioners are employed in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, mental health agencies, schools to name a few throughout Hawaii.

At Hawaii Hand and Rehabilitation Services, LLC , we work closely with Physician Assistants in orthopedic surgery, neurosurgery and general surgery to name a few. On behalf of the OT practitioners at our facility and our professional state association, Occupational Therapy Association of Hawaii, we support SB 2445, SD 1 which will include changes to the current **CHAPTER 453 MEDICINE AND SURGERY §453-5.5 Physician assistant; authority to sign documents** that will include orders for Occupational Therapy and plans of care. In SB2445, SD1, please refer to page 15, line 13 “(10) Orders for occupational therapy and plans of care.”

With hope that your committee will pass SB 2445, SD 1. Passage of this bill will allow the consumer to receive complete orders from one referral source. At the present time, the consumer needs to see his/her physician to obtain a referral to Occupational Therapy as orders from a physician assistant is not covered under current regulation under HRS 453-5.5. Thus, the consumer, will experience a delay in receiving services. At our facility, Physician Assistants work alongside the primary physicians and have been writing orders for Occupational Therapy services. However, we have needed to ask that the MD’s co-sign orders or additional orders need to be re-written by the primary physician. Furthermore, Medicare allows Physician Assistants to prescribe OT services, but depending on the Medicare fiduciary they reference the individual states statutes.

If you have any questions, we can be reached at (808) 677-4263

Sincerely,

Rachelle Lam, OTR/L

February 19, 2022

To: Honorable Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair – Commerce & Consumer Protection  
Honorable Senator Stanley Chang – Vice Chair

Hearing: Tuesday, February 22, 2022 – 10:00 a.m.

RE: SB 2445, SD 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants – IN SUPPORT

We are occupational therapy practitioners and are employed at **Hilo Medical Center and our East Hawaii Clinics** support S 2445, SD 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants which expands the authorized scope of practice for physician assistants. Currently under HRS 453-5.5, Physician assistants are able to sign orders and plans of care for both Physical and Speech therapies, but not for Occupational Therapy. Occupational Therapy practitioners provide services to both inpatient and outpatients who have sustained a stroke, brain injury, spinal cord injury, hip fractures, amputations, hand & upper extremity conditions. Occupational Therapy practitioners are employed in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, mental health agencies, schools to name a few throughout Hawaii Clinics. We here at Hilo Medical Center and our East Hawaii Clinics, we work closely with Physician Assistants in orthopedic surgery, neurosurgery and general surgery to name a few. On behalf of the OT practitioners at our facility and our professional state association, Occupational Therapy Association of Hawaii, we support SB 2445, SD 1 which will include changes to the current **CHAPTER 453 MEDICINE AND SURGERY §453-5.5 Physician assistant; authority to sign documents** that will include orders for Occupational Therapy and plans of care.

In SB2445, SD1, please refer to page 15, line 13 “(10) Orders for occupational therapy and plans of care.”

With hope that your committee will pass SB 2445, SD 1. Passage of this bill will allow the consumer to receive complete orders from one referral source. At the present time, the consumer needs to see his/her physician to obtain a referral to Occupational Therapy as orders from a physician assistant is not covered under current regulation under HRS 453-5.5. Thus, the consumer, will experience a delay in receiving services. At our facility, Physician Assistants work alongside the primary physicians and have been writing orders for Occupational Therapy services. However, we have needed to ask that the MD’s co-sign orders or additional orders need to be re-written by the primary physician. Furthermore, Medicare allows Physician Assistants to prescribe OT services, but depending on the Medicare fiduciary they reference the individual states statutes.

If you have any questions, we can be reached at (808) 932-3045.

Sincerely,

Claire T Nagatori, OTR/L  
Hilo Medical Center Outpatient Rehab.

February 19, 2022

To: Honorable Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair – Commerce & Consumer Protection  
Honorable Senator Stanley Chang – Vice Chair

Hearing: Tuesday, February 22, 2022 – 10:00 a.m.

RE: SB 2445, SD 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants – IN SUPPORT

I am an occupational therapist who provides pro-bono outpatient occupational therapy (OT) services via a teaching clinic to people in the community who live with various impairments as a result of stroke, Parkinson's disease, brain injury, spinal cord injury, and Guillain Barre syndrome. Many of the clients that I work with in the pro-bono OT clinic receive primary care services from practitioners who employ physician's assistants.

Occupational therapy practitioners (OTPs) are committed to enabling people to engage in meaningful activities ("occupations") that they need and want to do regardless of their injury, illness, condition, or disability. These activities may include but are not limited to activities of daily living (ADLs), work tasks, school responsibilities, leisure pursuits, and play. OTPs enable their clients by improving, modifying, and/or adapting skills and activities. OTPs are employed in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, mental health agencies, and schools throughout Hawaii.

I fully support *SB 2445, SD 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants* which expands the authorized scope of practice for physician assistants. Currently under *HRS 453-5.5*, physician assistants are able to sign orders and plans of care for both physical and speech therapies, but not for occupational therapy. At present time, OT recipients must see his/her physician to obtain a referral for OT services as orders from a physician assistant are not covered under current regulation (i.e. *HRS 453-5.5*). In short, OT consumers often experience a delay in receiving skilled services that are necessary for restoring, rebuilding, and enhancing physical health and mental wellness.

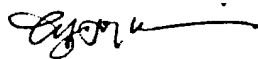
Medicare allows physician assistants to prescribe OT services with consideration of individual states statutes. I urge you and your committee to pass SB 2445, SD 1 so that Hawaii will be one of the states in which OT services are prescribed by physician's assistants. Passage of this bill will allow locals who live with injury, illness, condition, or disability in Hawaii to returning to living their "life to the fullest" through OT services that are ordered by physician assistants.

As a seasoned OT practitioner who is committed to the providing excellent OT services to our local community while training the next generation of OT practitioners and as a long-time member of the Occupational Therapy Association of Hawaii, I whole-heartedly support *SB 2445, SD 1* which will include changes to the current **CHAPTER 453 MEDICINE AND SURGERY §453-5.5 Physician assistant; authority to sign documents** that will include orders for Occupational Therapy and plans of care. In SB2445, SD1, please refer to page 15, line 13 "(10) Orders for occupational therapy and plans of care."

If you have any questions, I can be reached at [tiffanykawaguchi@gmail.com](mailto:tiffanykawaguchi@gmail.com).

Thank you for the work that you do to support the health and well-being of our Hawaii community.

Respectfully,



Tiffany-Joy Kawaguchi, OTD, OTR/L  
HI OT License #323

**LATE**

**SB-2445-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2022 12:40:05 PM

Testimony for CPN on 2/22/2022 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Larry Alfrey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

FROM: [INSERT NAME]

DATE: [INSERT DATE]

RE: SB2445 SD1 – Strong Support

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Chang, and Committee Members,

My name is Larry Alfrey. I am a physician assistant. I write in strong support of SB2442 SD1, which seeks to improve patients' access to care by bringing up to date the scope of practice for PAs.

The people of Hawai'i deserve access to safe, timely, and nearby medical care. Hawai'i PAs remain committed to this kind of healthcare delivery in our community. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Larry Alfrey

Downtown Honolulu

**LATE**

February 19, 2022

To: Honorable Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair – Commerce & Consumer Protection  
Honorable Senator Stanley Chang – Vice Chair

Hearing: Tuesday, February 22, 2022 – 10:00 a.m.

RE: SB 2445, SD 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants – IN SUPPORT

I am an occupational therapy practitioner and work at an outpatient clinic. I support SB 2445, SD 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants which expands the authorized scope of practice for physician assistants. Currently under HRS 453-5.5, Physician assistants are able to sign orders and plans of care for both Physical and Speech therapies, but not for Occupational Therapy. Occupational Therapy practitioners provide services to both inpatient and outpatients who have sustained a stroke, brain injury, spinal cord injury, hip fractures, amputations, hand & upper extremity conditions. Occupational Therapy practitioners are employed in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, mental health agencies, schools to name a few throughout Hawaii.

I work closely with Physician Assistants in orthopedic surgery, neurosurgery and general surgery to name a few. On behalf of the OT practitioners at our outpatient clinic and our professional state association, Occupational Therapy Association of Hawaii, we support SB 2445, SD 1 which will include changes to the current **CHAPTER 453 MEDICINE AND SURGERY §453-5.5 Physician assistant; authority to sign documents** that will include orders for Occupational Therapy and plans of care.

In SB2445, SD1, please refer to page 15, line 13 “(10) Orders for occupational therapy and plans of care.”

With hope that your committee will pass SB 2445, SD 1. Passage of this bill will allow the consumer to receive complete orders from one referral source. At the present time, the consumer needs to see his/her physician to obtain a referral to Occupational Therapy as orders from a physician assistant is not covered under current regulation under HRS 453-5.5. Thus, the consumer, will experience a delay in receiving services. At our facility, Physician Assistants work alongside the primary physicians and have been writing orders for Occupational Therapy services. However, we have needed to ask that the MD’s co-sign orders or additional orders need to be re-written by the primary physician. Furthermore, Medicare allows Physician Assistants to prescribe OT services, but depending on the Medicare fiduciary they reference the individual states statutes.

If you have any questions, I can be reached at (808) 392-2077.

Sincerely,  
Kari-lyn (Hayashi) Whitaker, OTR/L

**LATE**

February 21, 2022

To: Honorable Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair – Commerce & Consumer Protection  
Honorable Senator Stanley Chang – Vice Chair

Hearing: Tuesday, February 22, 2022 – 10:00 a.m.

RE: SB 2445, SD 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants – IN SUPPORT

I am an occupational therapist employed at Hawaii Hand & Rehabilitation Services (HHRS). I support SB 2445, SD 1 – Relating to Physician Assistants which expands the authorized scope of practice for physician assistants. Currently under HRS 453-5.5, Physician assistants are able to sign orders and plans of care for both Physical and Speech therapies, but not for Occupational Therapy. Occupational Therapy practitioners provide services to both inpatient and outpatients who have sustained a stroke, brain injury, spinal cord injury, hip fractures, amputations, hand & upper extremity conditions. Occupational Therapy practitioners are employed in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, mental health agencies, schools to name a few throughout Hawaii.

At HHRS, I work closely with Physician Assistants in orthopedic surgery, neurosurgery and general surgery to name a few. On behalf of the OT practitioners at our facility and our professional state association, Occupational Therapy Association of Hawaii, we support SB 2445, SD 1 which will include changes to the current **CHAPTER 453 MEDICINE AND SURGERY §453-5.5 Physician assistant; authority to sign documents** that will include orders for Occupational Therapy and plans of care.

In SB2445, SD1, please refer to page 15, line 13 “(10) Orders for occupational therapy and plans of care.”

With hope that your committee will pass SB 2445, SD 1. Passage of this bill will allow the consumer to receive complete orders from one referral source. At the present time, the consumer needs to see his/her physician to obtain a referral to Occupational Therapy as orders from a physician assistant is not covered under current regulation under HRS 453-5.5. Thus, the consumer, will experience a delay in receiving services. At my facility, Physician Assistants work alongside the primary physicians and have been writing orders for Occupational Therapy services. However, there are times orders are sent back for MD co-sign orders or additional orders need to be re-written by the primary physician. Furthermore, Medicare allows Physician Assistants to prescribe OT services, but depending on the Medicare fiduciary they reference the individual states statutes.

If you have any questions, we can be reached at (808) 593-2830.

Sincerely,

Man Wa Shing  
Occupational Therapist  
Hawaii Hand and Rehabilitation Services, LLC  
1401 S. Beretania Street, Suite 730  
Honolulu, HI 96814  
(808) 593-2830