



March 1, 2022 at 10:00 am
Via Videoconference

Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

To: Chair Rosalyn H. Baker
Vice Chair Stanley Chang

Senate Committee on Judiciary

To: Chair Karl Rhoads
Vice Chair Jarrett Keohokalole

From: Paige Heckathorn Choy
Associate Vice President, Government Affairs
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: Submitting Comments
SB 2880, Relating to Home Health Care

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), established in 1939, serves as the leading voice of healthcare on behalf of 170 member organizations who represent almost every aspect of the health care continuum in Hawaii. Members include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities and durable medical equipment suppliers. In addition to providing access to appropriate, affordable, high-quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 20,000 people statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **comments** on this measure. The home health agencies that are members of HAH have all received certification by Medicare and hold contracts with insurance companies at the federal and state level that set reimbursement rates that cannot be changed based on the vaccination status of an individual healthcare worker. Further, these home health agencies must follow strict state and federal rules to promote patient safety, access, and protection. As a result of these contracts, rules, and regulations, the home health agencies that are members of our Association do not engage in any practices that would require patients to pay additional fees or costs to receive care from a vaccinated individual.

Of note, there is a federal requirement from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that virtually all healthcare workers at organizations that are contracted with Medicare or Medicaid must be vaccinated, with some exceptions made if an individual has a legitimate medical or religious reason. The first phase of this requirement went into effect on January 27; the remaining portion of the requirement went into effect on February 28 of this year. All of our member facilities will comply with this federal requirement.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

SB-2880

Submitted on: 2/27/2022 4:25:36 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lani Stanturf	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It is our most vulnerable citizens, Kupuna and Handicapped, that require home health care. They are often physically as well as mentally impaired. When they need care, it is important that they receive quality, safe care. In addition, they are often on a fixed income and home health care is not covered under many health insurance policies, creating a financial burden that may not have been planned for.

After our mother's stroke, we found the need to search for home health care. We found an agency that provides service in her remote location. To keep our mother safe, we requested that home health care providers be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. We were told fully vaccinated workers would cause an increase in the price initially quoted to us. Unfortunately, that put the agency's services outside of my parent's budget.

It is vital that our vulnerable citizens have access to safe care, without the added burden of excess costs.

SB-2880

Submitted on: 2/27/2022 4:47:21 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
sheldon lehman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am testifying in support of SB2880 making the increase in charges by a home healthcare provider solely because of the patient asking for a vaccinated careworker a deceptive trade practice during a pandemic. I am writing from my own experience in seeking a home healthcare worker for my elderly patients. Because they are in a vulnerable population, I asked providers for vaccinated workers especially since they will be coming into close contact with my parents when they are providing care. I was shocked when I was given 2 rates with a substantially higher charge for a vaccinated worker. The rate jumped from \$33/hour to \$50/hour for 12-hour days; or \$396 to 600/day. Since they are private-pay patients, it is likely that most if not all their savings will already be depleted at \$11,880/month but at \$18,000 per month they won't be able to afford home healthcare for very long. It was even more shocking that the higher rate was solely due to our request that the home careworker be vaccinated so that my parents will not be subject to the deadly symptoms of covid19.

LATE

SB-2880

Submitted on: 2/28/2022 3:56:10 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
James D Cisler	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This should be a no-brainer. One more way to protect vulnerable kupuna from purposefully unscrupulous vendors and service providers. Thank you for your foresight and the protection this legislation provides.

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor



William H. Farr
Executive on Aging

County of Hawai'i

OFFICE OF AGING

Aging and Disability Resource Center, 1055 Kino'ole Street, Suite 101, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720-3872
Phone (808) 961-8600 • Fax (808) 961-8603 • Email: hcoa@hawaiiantel.net
West Hawai'i Civic Center, 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Highway, Kailua-Kona 96740
Phone (808) 323-4390 • Fax (808) 323-4398

February 28, 2022

LATE

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

Committee on Judiciary
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Jarrett Keohokālole, Vice Chair

Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Support of SB2880, RELATING TO HOME HEALTH CARE
10:00 A.M., March 1, 2022, Conference Room 229 and Videoconference

Dear Senator Baker, Rhoads, and Members of the **COMMITTEES ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY:**

The Hawaii County Office of Aging fully supports SB2880, relating to Home Health Care. The passage of SB2880 will help ensure that our Kupuna can continue receiving the services needed at the same cost prior to the declaration of a statewide or a local state of emergency. Not only will the passage of SB2880 assist in assuring financial stability, but also protection against any underlying disease causing the emergency by requiring that the home health care provider be vaccinated.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB2880.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William H. Farr".

William H. Farr
Executive on Aging
Hawaii County Office of Aging



An Area Agency on Aging

Hawai'i County is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Kokua Council

The **Kokua Council** is one of Hawaii's oldest advocacy groups. Kokua Council seeks to empower seniors and other concerned citizens to be effective advocates in shaping the future and well-being of our community, with particular attention to those needing help in advocating for themselves.

**Senate
Committees on Judiciary and
Commerce and Consumer Protection
Tuesday, March 1, 2022
10:00 a.m.**

LATE

To: Chair Karl Rhoads and Chair Rosalyn Baker
Re: SB2880, Relating to Home Health Care

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

I am Lila Mower, president of Kokua Council which advocates, informs, and educates to improve laws, policies, and practices that impact the well-being of kupuna, their families, and our community.

Kokua Council **supports SB2880** to disallow increases in fees charged for home health care services when an emergency proclamation or state of emergency regarding a public health pandemic is declared on the sole basis that the health care provider must be vaccinated against the disease causing the emergency.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

LATE

SB-2880

Submitted on: 2/28/2022 7:52:07 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Barbara J. Service	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Baker, Vice Chair Chang and committee members Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Keohokalole and committee members I am a resident of SB8 and HD19 and I am writing re: SB2880, which would prohibit home health agencies from increasing their fees during an emergency proclamation or state of emergency. Kupuna depend on these services in order to remain in their own homes. Please pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Barbara J. Service MSW (ret.)

Kupuna Advocate