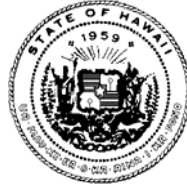


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA
Office of the Director
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 12, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Health & Human Services

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 842 – RELATING TO HEALTH CARE FOR IMMIGRANTS.**

Hearing: February 13, 2023, 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 225 & Videoconferencing, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the measure's intent and offers comments.

PURPOSE: The bill's purpose is to appropriate funds for the Department of Human Services to purchase health care services for certain low-income, uninsured immigrants.

DHS supports the intent of this bill and notes that Hawaii's Medicaid program currently provides coverage of emergency medical services to individuals who are ineligible for Medicaid due to immigration status and may be unlawfully residing in the United States. Emergency medical services are available to lawfully present non-citizen who is age nineteen or over and not pregnant; a non-citizen who was never legally admitted to the U.S. for any period or was admitted for a limited time and did not leave when the time expired; or lawfully admitted for a temporary or a specified period as a legal nonimmigrant. These emergency services coverage is provided to stabilize the emergency medical condition. Notably, Medicaid does not cover any follow-up visits resulting from the emergency visit.

Separately, DHS provides health coverage for other immigrants, such as refugees, through its Refugee Medical Assistance Program and to pregnant women and children who are qualified non-citizens or have a lawfully present noncitizen status if they meet all other categorical and financial eligibility criteria for Medicaid.

This measure seeks to appropriate \$1,000,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for the purchase of health care services.

However, DHS notes that providing state-funded health coverage to the estimated 11,000 uninsured individuals identified in the preamble may require a general fund appropriation of at least \$30 million per year to cover this population with an additional appropriation to DHS for human resources and system modifications to support the creation and administration of this new program. Also, these additional services will not be eligible for any federal matching funds and must be 100 percent state funded.

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



TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 842

Monday, February 13, 2023, at 1:00 PM
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

To: The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
The Honorable Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

From: The Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights
Co-Chairs Amy Agbayani and Pat McManaman

The Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights works to achieve equity, justice, inclusion, uphold civil rights, and eliminate discrimination. We stand in **Strong Support of Senate 842**.

SB 842 appropriates funds for the purchase of healthcare services for low-income uninsured immigrants who are ineligible for health care through Medicaid, the Children's Health Care Insurance Program (CHIP), or the federal Affordable Care Act (ACA). These individuals are either undocumented or deferred action for childhood arrivals (DACA).

It is estimated that 45,000 undocumented persons reside in Hawaii. Many of these individuals secure health care insurance through the Hawaii Prepaid Health Care Act which does not deny coverage based on immigration status. Approximately 11,000 Hawaii's undocumented immigrants are uninsured with 43% of these households reporting incomes below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines.

Many low-income residents in Hawai'i, insured and uninsured, obtain quality healthcare services at one of the state's 17 federally qualified or rural healthcare centers (FQHC). However, in addition to sliding scale fees charged by an FQHC, low-income uninsured immigrants scramble to pay for prescriptions and are virtually foreclosed from costly life-saving specialty care such as chemotherapy or radiation.

This appropriation is a step forward towards providing healthcare for Hawaii's neediest and least protected residents.

Thank you for your consideration.



Testimony in SUPPORT of SB842
RELATING TO HEALTH CARE FOR IMMIGRANTS
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

February 13th, 2023 | 1:00pm | Conference Room 225

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee,

The Legal Clinic (TLC) submits testimony in **SUPPORT of SB842**, which appropriates funds for the Department of Human Services to purchase health care services for certain low-income, uninsured immigrants. Access to quality healthcare is a fundamental right that should not be denied to anyone. The pandemic taught us that public health concerns such as deadly viruses affect us all, regardless of immigration status. SB842 is an essential legislation aimed at addressing the persistent challenges faced by low-income immigrants in accessing affordable health care. Denial of access to health care creates a cycle of disadvantage, leading to poorer health outcomes and greater economic hardships for our immigrant families. Immigrants greatly support our state's economic well-being, contributing over \$17.5 billion to the state GDP—paying taxes, creating businesses, and staffing essential jobs, yet many are unable to access the health care they need to live healthy, stable lives and be fully participating members of our communities.

TLC provides immigration legal services to Hawai'i's low-income immigrant and migrant communities, to help keep families unified, and to promote residents' economic self-sufficiency, longer-term security, and civic engagement. As an organization that witnesses first-hand the impact that healthcare access can have on our clients, we believe that the passage of SB842 is a step towards ensuring health and wellness for everyone in our state.

Low-income immigrant communities were disproportionately impacted by the lasting effects of the Covid19 pandemic. Many experienced job losses, lower rates of healthcare coverage, less access to unemployment insurance and other public benefits. Passage of SB842 is necessary to ensure that more of Hawai'i's immigrants have access to essential healthcare.

We humbly request the passage of SB842.

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration,



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Monday, February 13, 2023; 1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0842, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE FOR IMMIGRANTS.

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill No. 0842, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE FOR IMMIGRANTS.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would appropriate \$1,000,000 in general funds for fiscal year 2023-2024, and \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2024-2025, for the purchase of health care services for low-income uninsured immigrants who are not eligible to receive coverage under Medicaid, the Children's Health Care Program, or health insurance exchanges establish pursuant to Part II of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. The bill would take effect on July 1, 2022.

According to the American Immigration Council, nearly one in five Hawaii residents is an immigrant, while one in seven residents is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent. The Kaiser Family Foundation found that the uninsured rate for Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders (NHOPI) (13%) was significantly higher than for Asian (7%), and White (8%) populations. They further found that NHOPI were less likely to have private health care coverage and more likely to have Medicaid coverage with half (50%) of NHOPI children covered by Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program. (See, <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/issue-brief/health-care-disparities-among-asian-native-hawaiian-and-other-pacific-islander-nhopi-people/>)

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 0842
Monday, February 13, 2022; 1:00 p.m.
Page 2

These findings were substantiated in published by the New American Economy in May 2021, which reported that despite making up 18 percent of Hawaii's population, immigrants account for nearly 31 percent of all those without any form of health insurance coverage, making them nearly twice as likely to not have any form of health insurance as their U.S.-born counterparts. ([See, https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/05/NAE_Hawaii_V7_FINAL.pdf](https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/05/NAE_Hawaii_V7_FINAL.pdf))

In light of this, it is imperative that the State take steps to help these people. When they get sick, they will still utilize our emergency rooms and health care facilities resulting in indigent costs that will impact health care providers' ability to meet the needs of the entire population. These costs will either be borne by consumers in the form of higher premiums, the need for more appropriations for public insurance, but the costs will be much higher.

Because of this, we SUPPORT this measure and urge this Committee's favorable consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.



www.hicir.org | Instagram @hicir
hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB842
RELATING TO HEALTH CARE FOR IMMIGRANTS
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: February 13th, 2023

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai‘i Coalition for Immigrant Rights is in **full support of SB842**, which appropriates funds for the Department of Human Services to purchase health care services for certain low-income, uninsured immigrants.

Access to quality healthcare is a fundamental right that should not be denied to anyone, regardless of their immigration status. SB842 is essential legislation aimed at addressing the persistent challenges faced by low-income immigrants in accessing affordable health care. Denial of access to health care creates a cycle of disadvantage, leading to poorer health outcomes and greater economic hardships for our immigrant families. They contribute so much to our State and Federal government, yet are unable to access the health care they need. As we witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic, all of our community’s health is bound up together. If we allow some populations to go without services or care, it will eventually impact the collective health of the whole state.

There are approximately 11,000 individuals who may be impacted by this bill. Hawai‘i has made significant strides in reducing our uninsured population but there remains a few who are unable to access MedQUEST or the healthcare connector. This money is an investment in preventative care that will save the state dollars that would otherwise be spent in the much more costly Emergency Room. We cannot stop folks from all injury or illness- but getting them care as soon as it is needed is cheaper than more extensive measures later.

SB842 seeks an appropriation of one million dollars over two years for federally qualified health centers (FQHC) to provide in-serve and out of service care for immigrants who are eligible for health care insurance through the Affordable Care Act or Medicaid. This measure will help FQHC to offset their costs, and importantly, provide out-service care where the FQHC does not have the ability to provide a service; this includes services such as Chemo, radiation, etc.



www.hicir.org | Instagram @hicir
hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com

I urge you to pass SB842 and help our immigrant communities break the cycle of disadvantage and provide them with the opportunity to lead healthier, more productive lives.

Thank you for your support and consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Liza Ryan Gill'.

Liza Ryan Gill

Coordinator/Refounder



American Cancer Society
Cancer Action Network
2370 Nu'uau Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96817
808.460.6109
www.fightcancer.org

Senate Committee Health and Human Services
Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry Aquino, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: Monday, February 13, 2023

ACS CAN SUPPORTS SB 842 – RELATING TO HEALTH CARE FOR IMMIGRANTS.

Cynthia Au, Government Relations Director – Hawaii Guam
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

Thank you for the opportunity to **SUPPORT** SB 842 – RELATING TO HEALTHCARE FOR IMMIGRANTS which appropriates funds for the Department of Human Services to purchase health care services for certain low-income, uninsured immigrants.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), the nonprofit, non-partisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society advocates for public policies that reduce death and suffering from cancer. ACS CAN works with federal, state, and local government bodies to support evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) expanded health insurance coverage to millions of Americans. However, despite these coverage gains, twelve years after the law was enacted approximately 27 million people in the United States remain uninsured.ⁱ Data shows that noncitizens are more likely to be uninsured. In 2020, 26% of lawfully present individuals and 42% of undocumented immigrants were uninsured, compared to only 8 percent of U.S. citizens.ⁱⁱ

The American Cancer Society (ACS) and its advocacy affiliate, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), believe that everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer. Cancer impacts everyone and key to eliminating disparities and ensuring health equity is to guarantee that all individuals have access to affordable coverage. Access to care for those who are undocumented not only ensures that serious diseases like cancer can be detected and treated earlier but also often means better patient outcomes and less costs to the individual and the system.

This position is an extension of ACS CAN's existing work to advocate for access to affordable, comprehensive coverage to better prevent, treat and survive cancer regardless of citizenship status thereby ending cancer as we know it for everyone.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT on this important matter. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Government Relations Director Cynthia Au at 808.460.6109, or Cynthia.Au@Cancer.org.

ⁱ United States Census Bureau. Health insurance coverage in the United States: 2021. Sept. 13, 2022. Available at <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2022/demo/p60-278.html#:~:text=In%202021%2C%208.3%20percent%20of,8.6%20percent%20or%2028.3%20million>).

ⁱⁱ Kaiser Family Foundation. Health coverage of immigrants. Apr. 6, 2022. Available at <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/fact-sheet/health-coverage-of-immigrants/>.



Chair Joy San Buenaventura
Vice Chair Henry Aquino

Senate Committee on Health & Human Services

Monday, February 13, 2023
1:00 PM

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT WITH COMMENTS ON SB842 RELATING TO
HEALTH CARE FOR IMMIGRANTS**

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, Members of the Senate Committee on Health & Human Services,

The Hawai'i State Youth Commission (HiYC) was first created through Act 106 in 2018, "to advise the governor and legislature on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the youth of the State." HiYC's Public Health legislative committee is in **Support w/ Comments** of **SB842**, Relating to Health Care for Immigrants.

We strongly support the intent of this measure to put critical funding toward meeting the healthcare needs of Hawai'i's youth and their families, who are part of the approximately 41,426-45,000¹ undocumented members of our immigrant community (4.5% of our workforce as of 2016²), and are working in low-wage, precarious jobs without healthcare benefits. As the bill language rightfully points out, community organizations and nonprofits do their best to meet the healthcare needs of undocumented families when they can, but it isn't enough for longer term illnesses and medical needs, such as pregnancy, mental health treatment, anything that requires surgical operations and aftercare, etc.

¹ <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-in-hawaii>

² <https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/interactives/u-s-unauthorized-immigrants-by-state/>

However, there is language within this bill that the Hawai‘i State Youth Commission would like this committee to clarify:

- 1. Which department and/or agency will be administering the appropriations made from this measure?**
- 2. How will the legislature be defining who is “low-income”?**

Healthcare is a basic human right for all, and we are very supportive of the legislature working toward expanding it for some of the most vulnerable communities here in Hawai‘i. We **hope that you clarify the bill language** and then **PASS SB842** out of your committee.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

The Hawai‘i State Youth Commission
hawaiiistateyc@gmail.com

SB-842

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 1:27:15 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/13/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB842.

SB-842

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 9:16:15 AM

Testimony for HHS on 2/13/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee,

As a public health professional and a child of Vietnamese refugees, I write in support of SB842, which appropriates funds for the Department of Human Services to purchase health care services for certain low-income, uninsured immigrants.

As we have seen during the early COVID-19 pandemic, access to quality healthcare is a fundamental right that should not be denied to anyone, regardless of their immigration status. SB842 is an essential legislation aimed at addressing the persistent challenges faced by low-income immigrants in accessing affordable health care. Denial of access to health care creates a cycle of disadvantage, leading to poorer health outcomes and greater economic hardships for our immigrant families. They contribute so much to our State and Federal government, yet are unable to access the health care they need.

Please pass SB842 to ensure the public and economic health of our state.

With thanks,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

LATE

SB-842

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 8:24:43 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/13/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy MacPherson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of SB842. This is critical in ensuring that Hawai'i's immigrants have access to adequate healthcare.

Mahalo for your consideration.

SB-842

Submitted on: 2/13/2023 1:15:13 AM

Testimony for HHS on 2/13/2023 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcella Alohalani Boido	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Pleae support this bill.

Hawaii can should lead the way in the treatment of immigrants. Our history demands it.

It is the right and the compassionate thing to do.

Thank you.

Aloha,

Marcella Alohalani Boido, M. A.

**Hawaii State Judiciary Certified Spanish Court Interpreter
(Tier 4)**

Moili'ili, Honolulu, Hawaii 96826