

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
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Testimony in SUPPORT of SB2992
RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH

SENATOR JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Monday, February 12, 2024 at 1:02 p.m., Room 225/VIDEO

1 **Fiscal Implications:** There are fiscal implications for proposed amendments for this measure.

2 **Department Position:** The Department supports the intent of this measure.

3 **Department Testimony:** The Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD) provides the following
4 testimony on behalf of the Department.

5 The Department supports the intent of SB2992 which proposes regular Mental Health
6 Code Review in the State of Hawaii.

7 The Legislature rightly recognizes that the chapters relating to mental health have been
8 amended in a piecemeal manner over the past several decades, leading to some lack of clarity
9 and inconsistencies. Establishing a regular and systematic review, as proposed in this bill, is
10 essential to maintaining the coherence and effectiveness of mental health laws.

11 The bill takes inspiration from the comprehensive reviews conducted every decade for
12 the Hawaii Penal Code since its enactment in 1972. This reflects a commitment to best practices
13 in legal governance and underscores the importance of periodic assessments for ensuring the
14 relevance and efficacy of mental health laws.

15 The bill proposes inclusion of input from key stakeholders such as the Director of Health,
16 Attorney General, representatives from relevant departments, judiciary, legislative bodies, and

1 community organizations. This diverse representation ensures a holistic and informed
2 perspective in the review process.

3 The bill outlines a clear scope for the review, encompassing federal and state court
4 cases, constitutional, statutory, and rule changes impacting the Hawaii Revised Statutes related
5 to mental health. This comprehensive approach ensures that the review is thorough and
6 addresses emerging issues.

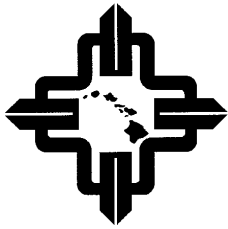
7 The requirement to submit a report of findings and recommendations, including any
8 proposed legislation, to the legislature adds a layer of transparency and accountability. This
9 ensures that the insights gained from the review are translated into actionable measures for
10 the benefit of mental health in the State.

11 **Offered Amendments:** The Department requests an appropriation to obtain an expert
12 to consult who is familiar with both federal statutes and mental health laws enacted in other
13 states to help guide this process.

14 The Department also requests consideration of other work structures to gain insight and
15 input from key stakeholders.

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

17



HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS
C O R P O R A T I O N

"Quality Healthcare For All"

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice-Chair

February 12, 2024
1:02 PM
Hawaii State Capitol
Room 225 & Via Videoconference

SB 2992

RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH

Beginning 7/1/2025, and occurring every ten years thereafter, requires the Department of Health to convene an Advisory Committee on Mental Health Code Review..

Edward N. Chu
President & Chief Executive Officer
Hawaii Health Systems Corporation

On behalf of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation (HHSC) Corporate Board of Directors, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of SB 2992, Relating to Mental Health, **with a request for an amendment.**

Like the Queen's Health System, HHSC provides psychiatric care in its hospitals on the islands of Hawaii and Kauai. As such, we respectfully request an amendment to include the President and CEO or a representative of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation to the Advisory Committee.

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



THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEM

To: The Honorable Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
The Honorable Henry Aquino, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Health & Human Services

From: Jace Mikulanec, Director, Government Relations, The Queen's Health System

Date: February 12, 2024

Re: Comments on SB2992 – Relating to Mental Health

The Queen's Health System (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 10,000 affiliated physicians, caregivers, and dedicated medical staff 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 on SB2992, requiring the Department of Health to convene an advisory committee of on mental health code review every ten years. As the largest healthcare system in the state offering comprehensive adult and adolescent psychiatric care (both hospital and community based programs and services) we respectfully request that the Committee amend the membership to include The Queen's Health System (or a representative from the private acute care hospitals who offer psych/mental health services).

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

The mission of The Queen's Health System 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.

LATE

SB-2992

Submitted on: 2/11/2024 11:44:33 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/12/2024 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shana Wailana Kukila	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

RE: SB2992 Relating to Mental Health

POSITION: Support

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

Amendments are requested in this bill.

Please consider convening the task force every 5 years instead of ten, until the delivery systems are fully implemented and the crisis is more fully addressed.

Please also add the following individuals to your list of State Mental Health Advisory Board Members:

- 1) Two people holding lived experience with mental health issues within the state;
- 2) Two family members of those with mental health issues within the state.

The reason for this is because these people would be the true first hand experts on the subject. They are key stakeholders and must be brought into any serious discussion on the status of mental health care here in Hawai'i. Those who suffer from mental illness, along with their friends and family, provide critical feedback on what they have experienced in regards to their suffering and how they experience access and barriers to care.

Please consider these amendments.

Mahalo for allowing me the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Shana W. Kukila

Hilo, Hawai'i

SB-2992

Submitted on: 2/8/2024 9:01:18 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/12/2024 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB2992

SB-2992

Submitted on: 2/11/2024 10:56:31 AM

Testimony for HHS on 2/12/2024 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellen Godbey Carson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support this bill to help provide a systemized way to review and update our mental health laws.

I am a former president of IHS and the Hawaii State Bar Association and practiced in health law for many years in this state.

The medical science and procedures for addressing mental health have changed very rapidly over the years and our laws generally lag behind the best models for treatment.

This bill assures we have regular intensive reveiws of how we are responding to mental health needs in our state, so we can bring the most modern modalities and processes to bear on these formidable challenges.

I would love, for example, to see Hawaii adopt a Mental Health Court that could specialize in problems involving mental illness, so as to get treatments as promptly and early as possible in the lives of those suffering from mental illness. We could save many dollars for our hospitals, courts and correctional system if we had a more comprehensive and integrated approach to offer.

Many thanks for consideration of my testimony.

Ellen Carson, Honolulu, Hawaii