



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

Testimony in SUPPORT of H.B. 885
RELATING TO HEALTH

REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS

Hearing Date, Time and Room Number: Friday, February 10, 2023 at 10 a.m. in Rm. 329/VIDEO

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (“Department”) requests that this measure be
2 considered as a vehicle to provide this needed funding so long as it does not supplant the
3 priorities and requests outlined in the Governors executive budget request.

4 **Department Position:** The Department strongly supports this measure and offers comments.

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

7 The Department is committed to addressing the needs of individuals who live with
8 behavioral health challenges and need necessary treatment when it is in their best interest.
9 Methods to establish authorization to treat are important to ensure the application of those
10 services to those who would benefit from treatment over their objection. The Department
11 supports the availability and effectiveness of court and administrative procedures to obtain
12 authorization to treat over objection, including working with state agencies, the Judiciary, and
13 community partners to improve access and implementation.

14 We recognize that existing policies are not fully implemented at this time. Successful
15 implementation depends on an aligned understanding of laws and policies across professional
16 disciplines.

1 We strongly support our role in the development and implementation of educational
2 and training activities that will result in more effective implementation of emergency
3 examination, emergency hospitalization and Assisted Community Treatment.

4 **Offered Amendments:** None.

5 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-885

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 7:24:24 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louis Erteschik	Hawaii Disability Rights Center	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We think this is a good idea.

Testimony of Marya Grambs

I am writing in strong support of HB855.

While I write as an individual, I have served as Executive Director of Mental Health America of Hawai'i; I am President of the Board of Directors of Partners in Care's nonprofit arm, and a volunteer with IHS's Women's and Family shelter.

The Assisted Community Treatment law is a vitally important tool in addressing the plight of untreated severe mental illness among those experiencing homelessness. Many people, especially those suffering from psychotic conditions like schizophrenia, suffer from anosognosia, in which they *literally* do not know they are ill, thus they refuse treatment: they lack the capacity to make a judgment in their own best interests. Unable to take care of themselves, they often live in degrading and dangerous circumstances on our streets, victims of physical and sexual assault. We all see these individuals out in the community, and we all know that they are in dire need of help to escape the horrific downward spiral of hospital, jail, and streets. This law, and those governing emergency hospitalization and involuntary treatment, are critical, life-saving interventions, but they are not simple to carry out and their availability as an option is not widely known.

An educational and training effort will assist us, as a state, move towards more compassionately and proactively helping individuals such as these. Each one of these people is somebody's mother, daughter, brother, son; sometimes, it is often only involuntary hospitalization and/or community treatment that will enable them to have a chance to recover. Of course we want to help them, but without tools like ACT and involuntary treatment/hospitalization, we leave them to – literally - die on our streets.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of these most vulnerable and marginalized members of our society.

Marya Grambs

Kailua, Hawaii

HB-885

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 10:48:11 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dara Yatsushiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT

HB-885

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 6:46:42 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raelyn Reyno Yeomans	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill in theory but would like to add that the real issue is the many barriers to access accessing mental health care in the state. Please attend State Council On Mental Health monthly meetings as access to mental health care comes up at every meeting for years. Please consider funding Mental Health Clinics throughout the state.