



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 119 SD 1 HD 1
RELATING TO NURSING
House Committee on Finance
Hawai'i State Capitol

March 27, 2025

2:00PM

Room 308

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) submits this testimony in **SUPPORT of SB 119 SD 1 HD 1** which appropriates funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program at the University of Hawai'i Maui College. Native Hawaiians face persistent disparities in health outcomes for a variety of reasons, including limited access to healthcare in rural areas and on neighbor islands. Within the next 5 years, 22% of Registered Nurses are expected to leave the Hawai'i nursing workforce;¹ already RNs are concentrated in Honolulu County.² This combination of factors threatens to increase the challenges facing Native Hawaiians when attempting to access healthcare by exacerbating the shortage of qualified nurses.

A Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at the University of Hawaii Maui College would play a pivotal role in addressing the shortage. The program would equip students with the skills, knowledge, and clinical experience necessary to meet the unique healthcare needs of rural populations, particularly in remote Hawaiian communities. By fostering local talent and promoting a strong presence of nurses, this program would help reduce healthcare access barriers, empower individuals to become healthcare leaders in their own communities, and strengthen the overall healthcare infrastructure in rural areas, ultimately improving health outcomes for Native Hawaiians. This program would also expand educational opportunities for students living and working on Maui and who cannot move simply to pursue higher education opportunities.

To improve both educational opportunities for our neighbor island residents and access for Native Hawaiian to culturally competent, community-centered care, OHA urges this committee to **PASS SB 119 SD 1 HD 1**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

¹ "Hawai'i State Center for Nursing's 2023 Workforce Supply: Statewide Report," at p. 29, <https://www.hawaiicenterfornursing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/2023HawaiiNursingWorkforceSupply.vFinal.pdf>

² "Hawai'i State Center for Nursing's 2023 Workforce Supply: Statewide Report," at p. 27, <https://www.hawaiicenterfornursing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/2023HawaiiNursingWorkforceSupply.vFinal.pdf>



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

ʻŌNAEHAHA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hōʻike Manaʻo I Mua O Ka ʻAhaʻōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, March 27, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

By

Della Teraoka, Interim Vice President for Community Colleges
University of Hawai'i System

SB 119 SD1 HD1 – RELATING TO NURSING

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports the intent of SB 119 SD1 HD1, which appropriates funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program at the University of Hawai'i - Maui College.

The UH recognizes the existing workforce shortages in health care and the high demand for nurses in the state. Additionally, the [UH Regents Policy 4.207](#) Community College System acknowledges the need for the neighbor island community colleges to continue to provide a comprehensive set of courses and programs to make the university accessible to every Hawai'i resident who wants and can benefit from the opportunities and experiences provided by the community colleges. The UH is also cognizant of the importance of using our budget resources wisely and being careful not to duplicate existing programs.

SB 119 SD1 HD1 indicates "[t]he legislature believes that offering a bachelor of science in nursing program at the university of Hawaii Maui college can help to increase the supply of nurse graduates, reduce the nursing workforce shortage, and allow Maui nursing students to remain on Maui during their entire course of study." The UH concurs with the legislature that the lack of a BSN program in the county of Maui is a matter of statewide concern and the Authorization to Plan for the BSN at UH Maui College has been submitted to the Council of Chief Academic Officers as part of the academic program actions process. The UH Maui College optimistically seeks to start the BSN in Fall 2026.

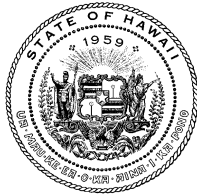
The funding from SB 119 SD1 HD1 would support students taking the new BSN prerequisites in preparation for the program curriculum and provide for additional faculty lecturers.

We respectfully suggest that should an appropriation be provided, it be included within the general appropriations act. We believe this approach, rather than through a special appropriation, would integrate the necessary funding into the base budget, ensuring greater fiscal stability and predictability for the program's long-term implementation and

sustainability. Integrating the funding in this manner would also facilitate better long-range planning and resource allocation.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of SB 119 SD1 HD1 on the condition its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 119 SD1 HD1.



**STATE HEALTH PLANNING
AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOHN C. (JACK) LEWIN, M.D.
ADMINISTRATOR

1177 Alakea St., #402, Honolulu, HI 96813 Phone: 587-0788 Fax: 587-0783 www.shpda.org

February 10, 2025

To: House Committee on Finance
Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair;
Representative, Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair; and
Honorable Members

From: John C (Jack) Lewin MD, Administrator, SHPDA

Re: SB119 SD1 HD1 RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES

POSITION: SUPPORT

Testimony:

SHPDA fully supports this bill to appropriate funds to create a much-needed Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at UH Maui College. Our statewide nursing shortage is growing and a huge concern for the future of health care here. This additional training program on Maui, which has been hit harder by staffing shortages after the wildfire is a critically important investment. Please support this.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify,

Jack Lewin MD, Administrator SHPDA



Rosalee Agas Yuu, RN
President

1600 Ala Moana Blvd Suite 100
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The Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawai'i
House Committee on Finance

Testimony by
Hawaii Nurses Association

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB119 SD1- HD1 – RELATING TO ESTABLISH A
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAM AT UH HAWAII MAUI
COLLEGE**

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

March 27, 2025 2:00 PM

Conference Room 308, Hawaii State Capitol

Aloha Chair Yamashita and Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Honorable Members of the house
Committee on Finance:

**The Hawai'i Nurses Association – OPEIU Local 50 is affiliated with the AFL-CIO, was
founded in 1917, and represents 4,000 nurses in the State of Hawai'i.**

The Hawai'i Nurses' Association **strongly supports** SB119 SD1, which appropriates funds to establish a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program at the University of Hawai'i Maui College. Nurses play a critical role in Hawai'i's healthcare system, providing essential, hands-on care that directly impacts patient outcomes. However, the ongoing nursing shortage makes it increasingly difficult to maintain safe staffing levels, placing a strain on both nurses and the patients they serve. By expanding access to a BSN program on Maui, we can strengthen our local workforce and ensure that Hawai'i residents receive the high-quality care they deserve.

When there are not enough nurses, patient care suffers, leading to increased wait times, higher rates of medical complications, and burnout among healthcare workers. Locally educated nurses are more likely to remain in their communities, helping to stabilize staffing levels and reduce turnover. Additionally, Hawai'i nurses bring a deep understanding of the culture, values, and unique health needs of our residents, allowing them to provide compassionate, culturally competent care. Patients benefit from caregivers who share their background and can communicate with them in ways that foster trust and healing.

Establishing a BSN program at UH Maui College is an investment in the future of healthcare in Hawai'i. By creating opportunities for local students to pursue nursing careers without leaving home, we can build a stronger, more resilient healthcare system. The passage of SB119 SD1 will help address the nursing shortage and ensure that our communities receive the safe, high-quality care they need. We urge the Legislature to support this critical initiative.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Philips". The ink is dark and the signature is centered within a faint, light-colored rectangular box.

Carol Philips
Legislative Liaison
Hawai'i Nurses' Association



March 27, 2025 at 2:00 pm
Conference Room 308

House Committee on Finance

To: Chair Kyle T. Yamashita
Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi

From: Paige Heckathorn Choy
AVP, Government Affairs
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: Support
SB 119 SD 1 HD 1, Relating to Nursing

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 30,000 people statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support** of this measure, which appropriates funds for the establishment of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program at the University of Hawaii Maui College. Addressing Hawaii's critical nursing workforce shortage is an urgent priority, and this measure takes an essential step toward increasing the pipeline of qualified nurses, particularly for the county of Maui.

According to our most recent healthcare workforce demand survey, Hawaii currently faces a deficit of just over 900 registered nurses. Expanding access to nursing education is an important piece of addressing this shortage, especially in neighbor island communities. Establishing a BSN program at UH Maui College will help to ensure that more individuals interested in nursing as a profession can live and study where they live, without having to relocate to Oahu or even the mainland. This can help to ensure a more stable and well-trained nursing workforce across the state, but especially on Maui.

This program will also serve as an important piece of an initiative that the Association is currently engaged in with UH Maui College to help certified nurse aides (CNAs) to become licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and, eventually, registered nurses (RNs). This type of glidepath program is essential to retaining our nursing workforce, especially in post-acute care settings.

We appreciate the legislature's continued interest in investing in nursing education and the health and well-being of our communities. Thank you for your time and consideration of this measure.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Thursday, March 27, 2025; 2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0119, SENATE DRAFT 1, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO NURSING.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, 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. 0119, Senate Draft 1, House Draft 1, RELATING TO NURSING..

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.

This measure, as received by your Committee, would appropriate unspecified amounts of general funds for fiscal years 2025-2026, and 2026-2027 to:

- (1) Meet the increased demand for prerequisite courses by students newly enrolled in the bachelor of science in nursing degree program at the University of Hawaii Maui College;
- (2) Hire additional program personnel;
- (3) Acquire supplies, equipment, and simulation and laboratory upgrades associated with establishment of the bachelor of science in nursing degree program at the University of Hawaii Maui College; and
- (4) Offset instructional costs associated with providing a third year of nursing courses following the establishment of the bachelor of science in nursing degree program at the University of Hawaii Maui College.

This measure would take effect on July 1, 3000.

The State of Hawaii is experiencing a severe shortage of health care professionals in the workforce, especially in rural areas. Recent studies note that the current shortage of physicians is at 20% of the total full-time equivalent positions throughout the State. The shortage is especially severe in the fields of primary care, infectious diseases, colorectal surgery, pathology, general surgery, pulmonology, neurology, neurosurgery, orthopedic surgery, family medicine, cardiothoracic surgery, rheumatology, cardiology, hematology/oncology, and pediatric subspecialties of endocrinology, cardiology, neurology, hematology/oncology, and gastroenterology.

The same can be said for registered and practical nurses, community health workers, social workers, pharmacists, and other disciplines in the field of health care.

The HPCA believes that the establishment of a bachelor of science degree in nursing at the University of Hawaii Maui College would greatly expand the learning opportunities of future nurses situated on the neighbor islands. This is critical because the shortage of nursing in Hawaii is dire.

Accordingly, the HPCA urges your favorable consideration of this measure.

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.

**Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance**

HEARING: Wednesday March 27, 2:00P.M.

PLACE: Room 308 State Capital and via videoconference



Hawai'i – American Nurses Association (Hawai'i-ANA)

SB119SD1HD1 (HSCR1279) – Relating to Nursing

Chair Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, and members of the House Committee on Finance thank you for providing this opportunity for Hawai'i - American Nurses Association (Hawai'i-ANA) to provide testimony **in strong support of SB119, SD1** that seeks to appropriate funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program at the University of Hawai'i Maui College.

Hawai'i-ANA is the state's premier professional nursing organization that fosters high standards of professional nursing practice, promotes safe and ethical work environments, and advocates on health care issues that affect nurses and the public.

We stand in strong support of this bill appropriating funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program at the University of Hawai'i Maui College (UHMC).

Currently, UHMC educates registered nurses (RNs) for an associates degree in nursing, whereas the preference of facilities in Hawai'i, including Maui, seeking to hire RNs is for

those prepared with a bachelor's degree. We need well-prepared nurses who understand and know the culture of Hawai'i, who do not need to leave their home island to achieve their dreams of a job and further education. We strongly support and promote education programs such as the BSN being offered on Maui to increase the number of graduating nurses in our state with a bachelor's degree, whom we can retain in the islands.

Hawai'i-ANA respectfully asks the committee to pass SB119SD1 through your committee. We thank your committee for its commitment to the people of Hawai'i, in ensuring that we educate and retain local nurses throughout the state to care for all of us. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

Contact information for Hawai'i – American Nurses Association:
President: Dr. Denise Cohen, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, president@hawaii-ana.org
Executive Director: Elizabeth M. Kahakua, BSN executivedirector@hawaii-ana.org
phone (808) 779-3001 500 Lunalilo Home Road, #27-E, Honolulu HI 96825



ALOHA CARE

To: The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

From: Paula Arcena, External Affairs Vice President
Mike Nguyen, Director of Public Policy
Sarielyn Curtis, External Affairs Specialist

Hearing: Thursday, March 27, 2025, 2:00 PM, Conference Room 308

RE: **SB 119 SD1 HD1 Relating to Nursing**

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of SB119 SD1 HD1**, which appropriates funds to the UH system for a nursing program.

Founded in 1994 by Hawai‘i’s community health centers, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving over 70,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members on all islands. Approximately 37 percent of our members are keiki. We are Hawai‘i’s only health plan exclusively dedicated to serving Medicaid and Medicaid-Medicare dually-eligible beneficiaries. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating for access to quality, whole-person care for all.

AlohaCare is committed to improving access to care. We support this measure as a critical and effective way to address chronic healthcare workforce shortages and expand the pipeline of nurses and other allied professions.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in **support of SB119 SD1 HD1**.

Written Testimony Presented Before the

House of Representatives

Committee on Finance

HEARING: Thursday, March 27, 2025, 2:00 P.M.

PLACE: Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

SB 119 – RELATING TO NURSING

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, members of the House Committee on Finance, thank you for the opportunity to testify **in strong support of SB 119**, appropriating funds to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program at the University of Hawai‘i Maui College (UHMC).

As background I am an alumna of Maui Community College (MCC) and graduated with an LPN in 1981. Since then, I have obtained my associate in nursing (ADN) in 1983, bachelor's in nursing in 1991, master's in nursing in 1999. and finally, a PhD in Nursing in 2013. All through UH Manoa. I started teaching at then MCC in January 1992 and retired from UHMC in December 2020. Since I started nursing school in 1980 I have seen all healthcare professions raise their educational basic requirements because the complexity of healthcare continues to increase. The notable exception is nursing. As I used to tell my students, “When I started nursing individuals in ICU are now being cared for on medical-surgical floors and what is in ICU today would have been dead 40+ years ago. Yet the minimum requirements remain the same despite the increased complexity of care.

Magnet hospitals such as Queens Medical Center must have at least 80% of their workforce be bachelor's prepared nurses. Currently the UHMC nursing program requires students to complete 4.5 semesters to obtain an ADN but with only 1.5 more they would obtain a bachelor's degree. This isn't fair to the student nor to the faculty. As one faculty member noted years ago, "We are trying to shove 4 years of education into two and expect our students to take the exact same national licensure exams." Make no mistake, I am proud to be an alumnus of MCC/UHMC, but we need to do better for our students and keep up with the times. Our students are at a disadvantage when they compete for jobs against Bachelor-prepared nurses from other islands or the mainland. We need well prepared nurses from the Maui community who understand the culture of Hawai'i. We need well-prepared nurses who do not need to leave home to achieve their dreams.

I strongly support and promote the BSN program being offered on Maui to increase the number of graduating nurses in our state to attract and retain local applicants for our nursing positions caring for our community.

I respectfully ask the committee to pass SB 119 through your committee. I thank your committee for its commitment to the people of Hawai'i, in ensuring that we educate and retain high quality nurses throughout the state.

Denise Cohen, PhD, APRN, RN, FNP-BC
Email: denisecohen@mac.com
Cell: 808-283-5414

SB-119-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:48:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sophia Bareng	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would want to have this bill passed in order for future nursing college classes so it can be easier for students to be able to receive their Bachelor of Science to be future nurses.

LINK TO SUBMIT:

https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/measure_indiv.aspx?billtype=SB&billnumber=119&year=2025

3/25/25

**TESTIMONY SUPPORTING SB 119 SD1 HD1
RELATING TO NURSING**

**TESTIMONY TO:
REPRESENTATIVE KYLE T. YAMASHITA, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE JENNA TAKENOUCHI, VICE CHAIR
MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**BY:
Anne Scharnhorst DNP, RN, CNE
University of Hawai'i Maui College**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT** of SB 119, SD1, HD1, Relating to Nursing. This bill proposes an appropriation of funds to support the development of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program within the University of Hawai'i - Maui College. This bill would enable nursing students to pursue a baccalaureate degree in nursing on their home campus and provide Maui County health care organizations access to Bachelor's prepared nursing graduates.

UH Maui College has been part of the Hawai'i Statewide Nursing Consortium since its inception in 2012, which was designed to allow community college associate degree nursing students to seamlessly pursue their Bachelor's of Science in Nursing degree. Since that time only 20% of UHMC students have taken advantage of this, and the Hawaii State Center for Nursing collected data that showed 80% of Maui based RNs get their BSN from out of state. A local BSN offering would recapture this educational market and steadily increase the percentage of Bachelor's prepared nurses which are those who go into advanced practice, leadership, and education; all important roles for the future of healthcare in Maui County.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT** of SB 119, SD1, HD1, Relating to Nursing.

SB-119-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 5:29:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathleen Hagan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and membres of the House Of Representatives Committee on Finance:

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in **strong support of SB119 SD1 HD1, Relating to Nursing.**

Evidence shows that bachelor's- prepared nurses are safer nurses, with fewer medical errors, fewer deaths, and better patient outcomes. I teach in the Associate's Degree in Nursing (ADN) program at UHMC and upon polling my current students, 100% of both first- year and second-year students responded they aspire to earn a BSN degree or beyond. We have a healthcare provider shortage and we need to remove barriers from our students achieving their career goals and ability to maximize earnings. Our local hospital will now be offering \$2 extra pay per hour for bachelor's- prepared nurses, not to mention that bachelor's-prepared nurses are now being given preference in the hiring process. Our students are stretched thin, with jobs and families to support in addition to school. Offering a Bachelor's of Science in Nursing (BSN) on their home campus and island will create a more efficient path for them, increase their earning potential, and increase the quality of care provided for our Maui Nui community. Furthermore, the BSN covers additional topics (beyond the acute care focus of the ADN program) including community, public, and global health as well as advanced mental health that are critical to responding to our community's complex modern health needs.

To improve local educational opportunities and better meet the evolving healthcare needs of our community, I urge you to PASS SB119 SD1 HD1, Relating to Nursing.

Kathleen Hagan, Adult Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Educator

Paia, Hawaii