



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Education

and

Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

March 25, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Bonnie Irwin, Chancellor

and

Rae Matsumoto, Dean

Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy

University of Hawai'i at Hilo

#### HB 2161 HD3 – RELATING TO PHARMACY.

Chairs Kim and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2161 HD3. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) strongly supports HB 2161 HD3, which establishes the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP) Special Fund to create a Hawai'i Center for Pharmacy which will support workforce assessments and strategic collaborations to advance the profession of pharmacy, as part of an intentional effort to improve access to quality health care for the people of Hawai'i.

No legislative appropriations are being requested to establish the proposed Center. Instead, the bill will allow for a workforce assessment fee as part of licensing requirements that would create a foundational base to hire a Director and provide a sustainable mechanism for supporting the activities of a Hawai'i Center for Pharmacy. This proposed increase has been supported by the Board of Pharmacy in the previous two legislative sessions without opposition from the profession itself; even with the modest increases proposed, Hawai'i remains one of the most inexpensive states in the country to practice and conduct pharmacy business. The proposed Center thus represents a profession-driven solution that is modeled after the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing and Hawai'i Medical Education Council which have been instrumental in facilitating the ability of these professions to be proactive and strategic in formulating data-driven solutions for existing and emerging health care challenges in Hawai'i.

While physician and nursing shortages are widely recognized in Hawai'i, there is little awareness that impending shortages of pharmacy professionals should be a concern. Nationally, the profession is preparing for a shortage of pharmacy professionals, and it is concerning that Hawai'i lacks robust workforce assessment data for the pharmacy profession. Nevertheless, local pharmacist employers are already voicing challenges in filling positions, even in Honolulu and within health care systems which have historically

been impervious to such challenges. These warning signs signal an urgent need for the state to start generating actionable data in order to prevent insurmountable workforce shortages in pharmacy which would compound the situation that already exists for nursing and medicine.

The priorities for the Hawai'i Center for Pharmacy include:

- Workforce data and analysis for the profession (pharmacists, technicians, interns);
- Identification and evaluation of best practices and models of pharmacy innovations for adaptation and implementation appropriate for Hawai'i;
- Coordination and distribution of state and federal grants related to pharmacy and access to care;
- Collaboration with already established Centers for other health professionals in Hawai'i to help develop and deploy team-based care models across the state; and
- Annual reports to the legislature on pharmacy-related initiatives supported by the state.

The proposed Hawai'i Center for Pharmacy is important for helping to shape a strong and sustainable health care landscape in the state. In addition to taking proactive steps to mitigate an anticipated pharmacist shortage, the Center will also play a critical role in facilitating focused coordination of stakeholders to optimize and leverage the expertise of pharmacists to improve access to quality health care in the state.

Pharmacists are among the most accessible health care professionals, with about 90% of Americans living within 5 miles of a pharmacy. Patients visit community pharmacies about twice as often as primary care physician offices, with pharmacists strongly embedded as trusted resources in many remote communities, particularly across our neighbor islands. With a doctoral level of expertise and clinical training, pharmacists are recognized as critical members of health care teams, but are currently underutilized in Hawai'i.

The proposed Center for Pharmacy will work toward allowing pharmacists, who are essential members of health care teams, to better align with and contribute to this collective effort, especially for bridging access to preventative care and chronic disease state and medication therapy management. Initial efforts in these areas are underway with the joint leadership of the DKICP and the Hawai'i Pharmacists Association (HPhA), but a proper infrastructure to sustain and grow these initiatives are needed.

The Hawai'i Center for Pharmacy will be housed in the DKICP. Being housed within the University of Hawai'i system has worked well for the successful entities for medicine and nursing that already exist, and ensures that appropriate business systems are in place to manage funds (accept, disburse, leverage from different sources) and hire personnel. Also, the profession will be able to leverage the academic expertise and unique training and professional networks of the college that will be crucial for

implementing data-driven approaches and innovative solutions to improve access to quality health care. The role of the college in training future pharmacists also offers natural synergies for supporting the disbursement of scholarships and loan repayment initiatives to attract to Hawai'i and retain needed talent for service in medically-underserved areas of the state.

In summary, the needs of the state and evolution of pharmacy practice in Hawai'i are at a critical juncture. Passage of HB 2161 HD3 will support a data-informed, coordinated and intentional effort to position the profession of pharmacy to help fill existing health care gaps in Hawai'i. The DKICP is uniquely suited for housing the proposed Center which will proactively assess, train, and leverage pharmacists, working with pharmacy stakeholders across the state and country, to fill gaps in care related to medication management and safety. Pharmacists are embedded as trusted health care professionals in many remote communities, and many published studies have documented their positive impact on patient outcomes as the health care landscape has shifted to value- and team-based care models. The proposed Center would be instrumental in adapting effective approaches for the unique needs of Hawai'i and creating innovative solutions working in alignment with other stakeholders in today's rapidly evolving health care landscape. The people of Hawai'i deserve access to quality health care and we respectfully ask your support in allowing the profession of pharmacy to be part of the solution through this Center.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2161 HD3.

**Testimony of the Board of Pharmacy**

**Before the  
Senate Committees on Education  
And  
Commerce and Consumer Protection  
Wednesday, March 25, 2026  
2:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 229 and Videoconference**

**On the following measure:  
H. B. 2161 H.D. 3, RELATING TO PHARMACY**

Chair Kim, Chair Keohokalole, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Christopher Fernandez, and I am the Executive Officer of the Board of Pharmacy (Board). The Board supports the intent of this bill and offers the following comments.

The purpose of this bill is to: (1) establish the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy Special Fund to support pharmacist workforce assessment and planning efforts; (2) establish the pharmacist workforce assessment fee, and (3) appropriates funds.

The Board supports efforts that advance the practice of pharmacy while maintaining a strong focus on consumer protection. The Board acknowledges the real and potential benefits that a workforce assessment program could provide. In this regard, the Board notes the work of the Hawaii State Center for Nursing and recognizes the value of establishing a similar framework for the pharmacy profession.

For clarity, with respect to page 5, lines 9 through 16, the Board notes that this bill would establish fees for: (1) pharmacist licenses; (2) wholesale prescription drug distributor licenses and renewals; (3) in-state and out-of-state pharmacy permits and renewals. While the Board acknowledges the basis for these funding mechanisms, it respectfully recommends that the bill specify the fee amount to clearly indicate the contribution required for each licensee and permit holder. As a point of information, the Board also acknowledges the fee amounts proposed by the Hawaii Pharmacist's Association in prior testimony on this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



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

**JOSH GREEN, MD**  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII  
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

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

**JOHN C. (JACK) LEWIN, MD**  
ADMINISTRATOR

1177 Alakea Street, #402, Honolulu, HI 9681

Phone: 587-0788 Fax: 587-0783 [www.shpda.org](http://www.shpda.org)

March 23, 2026

TO: SENATE COMMITTEE EDUCATION  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION  
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair  
Honorable Members

FROM: John C. (Jack) Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA, and Sr. Advisor to  
Governor Josh Green, MD on Healthcare Innovation

RE: **HB 2161-HD3 -- RELATING TO PHARMACY**

HEARING: Wednesday, March 25, 2026 @ 2:00 pm; Conference Room 229

POSITION: SUPPORT with COMMENTS

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Testimony:

SHPDA strongly supports HB 2161-HD3, with comments.

This bill intends to strengthen Hawai'i's pharmacist workforce by creating a dedicated funding source to support statewide workforce assessment and planning through the UH Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy. By establishing a special fund and an assessment fee tied to Board of Pharmacy licensure, requiring annual reporting to the Legislature, and providing funding from an unspecified appropriation source rather than the Compliance Resolution Fund, the bill seeks to sustain data collection, recruitment and retention strategies, and targeted efforts to expand pharmacy services, especially in rural and medically underserved communities.

This bill would create practical public health benefits by enabling Hawai'i to use pharmacist workforce data to close service gaps, strengthen retention, and expand pharmacist-supported care, especially in rural and medically underserved communities. With dedicated resources, the bill helps expand innovative pharmacy care models within value-based, team-based care, which can improve medication management, increase access to preventive services, and help reduce avoidable complications that lead to emergency visits or hospitalizations.

*HB 2161-HD3: testimony of SHPDA (2026), continued.*

Lastly, data is currently being collected from UH for physicians and nurses, and we should have the same kind of workforce tracking data for pharmacists as well.

Thank you for hearing HB 2161-HD3.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

■ -- Jack Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA



Testimony in **SUPPORT of H2161 HD3**  
presented before the  
Senate Committees on Education and Consumer Protection  
Wednesday, March 25, 2026

Corrie L. Sanders on behalf of  
The Hawai'i Pharmacists Association

To the Honorable Chairs Kim and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and Members of the Senate Education and Consumer Protection Committees,

I am writing to express the **strong support of the Hawai'i Pharmacists Association for HB2161 HD3**, which proposes the establishment of a Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy special fund to create a Center for Pharmacy. We believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The proposed roles of the Center for Pharmacy include funding for 1.0 FTE to serve as the Executive Director for the Center for Pharmacy driven by a minor increase in licensing fees from all pharmacy related entities overseen by the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA). It should be noted that **even with these modest increases, Hawai'i still ranks among the lowest in the country in costs to practice and conduct pharmacy related business**. This position would prioritize much needed workforce assessment data for our profession, implement retention initiatives for pharmacists, and serve as an entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy models that would expand opportunities for the pharmacy workforce across our state and positively impact access to care.

The Hawai'i Pharmacists Association has worked with the Board of Pharmacy and the Daniel K. Inouye School of Pharmacy to mimic the flow of funds that have been successfully utilized for both nursing and medicine. Because of their respective centers, both nursing and medicine have a proactive role in developing and implementing innovative healthcare solutions. **The Center for Pharmacy special fund is a profession-driven, sustainable solution that matches the standard already granted to other healthcare professions in Hawai'i.**

As we navigate through a transformative period in healthcare, characterized by a shift towards value-based and team-based care models, it is imperative to recognize the indispensable role that pharmacists must play in patient outcomes and healthcare access. With shortages in various healthcare professions, and an anticipated pharmacist shortage in the coming decade, expanding opportunities to advance the profession by leveraging the expertise of pharmacists becomes even more critical in ensuring pharmacists that are trained in Hawai'i are incentivized to practice in our state after graduation.

Section 3 461 (b) The pharmacist workforce assessment fee shall be as follows:

- (1) **\$100\*** for each renewed license as a pharmacist (n=2713)
- (2) **\$200\*** for each new or renewed wholesale prescription drug distributor license (n=59)
- (3) **\$200\*** for each new or renewed pharmacy permit under section 461-14 (n=238)
- (4) **\$200\*** for each new or renewed permit under section 461-15 (n=854)

*\*licenses are renewed for 2 year periods, so pharmacist practice fees (1) will increase \$50/year and other entities (2-4) increase \$100/year.*



Total annual revenue generated from pharmacy related entities each two-year period: ~\$490,000

The immediate priority for the use of these funds is to hire a Center Director (1.0 FTE), an experienced pharmacist and administrator to oversee operations, generate new funding, stimulate collaborations, advance legislation, ensure compliance and report to stakeholders. The estimated annual salary for this position would be a pharmacist faculty (rank 3-4), \$160-195K. Additional funds would be used immediately to accumulate workforce data to drive additional funding streams towards progressive pharmacy initiatives across the state.

The Hawai'i Pharmacists Association urges the committee's support for HB2161 HD3, recognizing that the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy is a pivotal step towards properly leveraging the expertise of our profession and establishing Hawai'i at the forefront of pharmacy practice across the country.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Corrie L. Sanders". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Corrie L. Sanders, PharmD., BCACP, CPGx  
Executive Director, Hawai'i Pharmacists Association



# MOLOKA'I DRUGS, INC.

EST. 1935

March 25, 2026

## Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161 HD3: Establishment of a Hawaii Center for Pharmacy

Dear Chairs Kim and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and members of the Senate Education and Consumer Protection Committees:

As a **rural** healthcare provider, access to comprehensive, high-quality healthcare services is our mission at Molokai Drugs, Inc. On behalf of our patients and employees, I am testifying in favor of HB2161 HD3, which proposes the establishment of a "Center for Pharmacy" in Hawaii.

For the past 17 years, Molokai Drugs has supported the Daniel K. Inouye UH College of Pharmacy (DKICP) in Hilo by being an intern preceptor site. **In fact, we have a DKICP year-four intern who will be finishing her final rotation this month.** We do this to help "grown our own" in Hawaii.

One of the biggest reasons Molokai-based students do not attend DKICP is the sheer expense of four years of tuition, books, fees, dorm room/board, etc. of \$202,000+ for four years. One of the proposed roles of the new Center will also include **coordinating pharmacy student loan repayment programs** by working in rural and/or underserved areas like Molokai as well as supporting the new online/hybrid 5.5 year DKICP pharmacy program. By having a Center, we will possibly see more Molokai-raised students going into the pharmacy profession.

Molokai Drugs, Inc. has also been a training worksite for national certified pharmacy technician (CPhT) training. We were a worksite for "**Good Jobs Hawaii**," a partnership with the State of Hawaii and UH Community Colleges "to help people in Hawai'i attain a good quality job for generations to come." Molokai Drugs is also partnering with DKICP and the University of Hawaii Maui College with expanded CPhT development, which includes immunization training. The new Center will also help **implement retention initiatives** for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, which has always been a concern of rural healthcare facilities.

This measure represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful "center" models already in place in Hawaii for medicine and nursing.

Thank you for your consideration and your vote for HB2161 HD3.

Sincerely,

/s/ Kimberly Mikami Svetin

Kimberly Mikami Svetin  
President  
Molokai Drugs, Inc.  
P.O. Box 558  
Kaunakakai, HI 96748  
Work 808-553-5790

**HB-2161-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 3:52:35 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/25/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ronald Taniguchi, Pharm.D., MBA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB2161 HD3. Mahalo!

THE SENATE REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

**Committee on Education and Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection**

Hearing on March 25, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD3**

To the honorable **Chairs Kim and Keohokalole and Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,**

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161-HD3, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a pharmacy student at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds. While this will increase the cost of my license, it will still be among the lowest in the nation, and I feel that it is a worthwhile investment to ensure that my future profession and career can bring practices that are already available to people in other states to our islands and help improve access to health care in our communities.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD3** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Shaun-Marie Aquino

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2031

THE SENATE REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

**Committee on Education and Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection**

Hearing on March 25, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD3**

To the honorable **Chairs Kim and Keohokalole and Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,**

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The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

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I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD3** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adam Ka'ana'ana". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Adam Ka'ana'ana

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2027

THE SENATE REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

**Committee on Education and Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection**

Hearing on March 25, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD3**

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The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds. While this will increase the cost of my license, it will still be among the lowest in the nation, and I feel that it is a worthwhile investment to ensure that my future profession and career can bring practices that are already available to people in other states to our islands and help improve access to health care in our communities.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD3** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Raelynn Hashiba

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2027

**HB-2161-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 7:40:20 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/25/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lara Gomez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

THE SENATE REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

**Committee on Education and Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection**

Hearing on March 25, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD3**

To the honorable **Chairs Kim and Keohokalole and Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,**

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161-HD3, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD3** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lara Gomez

THE SENATE REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

**Committee on Education and Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection**

Hearing on March 25, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD3**

To the honorable **Chairs Kim and Keohokalole and Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,**

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161-HD3, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a practicing pharmacist and faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD3** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Aryn Meguro, PharmD.

THE SENATE REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

**Committee on Education and Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection**

Hearing on March 25, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD3**

To the honorable **Chairs Kim and Keohokalole and Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,**

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161-HD3, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD3** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Christina Requelman

**HB-2161-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 1:51:24 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/25/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

THE SENATE REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

Committee on Education and Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

Hearing on March 25, 2026

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD3

To the honorable Chairs Kim and Keohokalole and Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to express my **strong support** for House Bill 2161-HD3, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a practicing pharmacist and faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawai'i's healthcare workforce.

Envisioning the potential of the Center for Pharmacy, I see the creation of opportunities related to optimizing the pharmacy workforce to help address the healthcare needs of Hawai'i. This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

I respectfully urge your support of HB2161-HD3 and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nicole Young

SENATE KA 'AHA KENEKOA REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION  
Hearing on Wednesday, March 25, 2026  
**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chairs Kim and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and members of the Senate Education and Consumer Protection Committees,

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a pharmacist I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

I am a Board-Certified Psychiatric Pharmacist who collaborates closely with psychiatrists, primary care providers, and interdisciplinary teams to optimize complex medication regimens, particularly for treatment-resistant and high-risk patients living with a mental health condition. My role includes evaluating medication efficacy and safety, managing side effects, addressing drug interactions, guiding medication selection and dosing, supporting deprescribing when appropriate, and improving adherence through patient-centered education. I also contribute to transitions of care, clozapine and long-acting injectable management, and evidence-based treatment planning for serious mental illness.

I helped create a Post-Graduate Year Two (PGY2) Psychiatric Pharmacy Residency Program that produced 10 board-certified psychiatric pharmacists, five of whom remained in Hawaii after graduation, demonstrating the workforce impact of targeted investments. Unfortunately, the program ended in 2024. A Center for Pharmacy could have possibly strengthened my ability to advocate for sustaining the program through workforce data, formal endorsement, and/or partnerships with other pharmacies to share resources and maintain the position.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161** and thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo,

Lehua Kay, PharmD, BCPP  
Pharmacy Director Hawaii State Hospital, serviced by PharMerica Kaneohe

THE SENATE REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

**Committee on Education and Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection**

Hearing on March 25, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD3**

To the honorable **Chairs Kim and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees,**

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a practicing pharmacist faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to the team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

Envisioning the potential of the Center for Pharmacy, I see the creation of opportunities related to the expansion of patient-centered interprofessional care teams, increasing access to healthcare services for our patients in rural communities, and improving overall safe and effective medication use for our state. This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD3** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jarred Prudencio', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jarred Prudencio, PharmD, FCCP, BCACP, BC-ADM

SENATE KA 'AHA KENEKOA REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION  
Hearing on Wednesday, March 25, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable **Chairs Kim and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and members of the Senate Education and Consumer Protection Committees,**

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Dianqing Sun, PhD

Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences  
Director of Distance Education

THE SENATE REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
Committee on Education and Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection  
Hearing on March 25, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB2161-HD3**

Dear Chairs Kim and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and Members of the Committees:

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2161-HD3, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe the creation of this Center is both timely and essential to addressing critical challenges facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The proposed Center for Pharmacy would provide the data infrastructure, coordination, and strategic leadership necessary to assess workforce needs, support retention, and advance pharmacy practice across the state. By enabling pharmacists to practice at the top of their training, the Center would help strengthen team-based, value-driven care and improve patient outcomes statewide.

Importantly, the Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale innovative pharmacy practice initiatives. This represents a proactive and strategic approach to addressing both current and anticipated healthcare workforce shortages in Hawai'i. The model aligns with successful efforts already established for nursing and medicine, while not requiring state general funds.

HB2161-HD3 offers a thoughtful, profession-driven solution that will enhance healthcare access, efficiency, and quality for our communities.

I respectfully urge your support for this important measure. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah Taira". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the top.

Deborah Taira, ScD

Professor, Pharmacy Practice

Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy

**HB-2161-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 9:38:40 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/25/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Glick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SENATE KA 'AHA KENEKOA REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Hearing on Wednesday, March 25, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chairs Kim and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and members of the Senate Education and Consumer Protection Committees,

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a pharmacist at Lihue Pharmacy, Inc., I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

Envisioning the potential of the Center for Pharmacy, I see the creation of opportunities related to increased patient access and integration of pharmacists into a more robust healthcare system in Hawaii. This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161** and thank you for your consideration.

Aloha,

Kevin Glick, Pharm.D.

**HB-2161-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 11:00:04 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/25/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alina Ramos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**SENATE KA ‘AHA KENEKOA REGULAR SESSION OF 2026**

**COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION**

**Hearing on Wednesday, March 25, 2026**

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

**To the honorable Chairs Kim and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and members of the Senate Education and Consumer Protection Committees,**

**I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai’i. As a [pharmacist/pharmacy technician/pharmacy student] at [XX], I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.**

**Envisioning the potential of the Center for Pharmacy, I see the creation of opportunities related to [XXX] and [XXX]. [Additional personal anecdotes to be entered if applicable]. This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.**

**The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii’s healthcare workforce.**

**I respectfully urge your support of HB2161 and thank you for your consideration.**

**Sincerely,**

**Alina Ramos, P4 Pharmacy Student at DKICP**



*You're Someone Special*

**Testimony in Support of HB2161 – Establishment of a Center for Pharmacy**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Regular Session of 2026**

**Committee on EDUCATION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION**

**Hearing: Wednesday, March 25, 2026**

**To the Honorable Chairs Kim and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and members of the Senate Education and Consumer Protection Committees,**

My name is Megan Arbles and I am a licensed pharmacist at KTA Pharmacy serving patients on the Big Island of Hawai'i. I am writing in strong support of HB2161, which would establish a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i.

Pharmacists are among the most accessible healthcare providers in our communities, particularly across neighbor islands and rural areas. As a practicing pharmacist, I see firsthand how pharmacy teams are increasingly relied upon to support medication management, chronic disease care, preventive services, and care coordination—yet pharmacy lacks the same workforce infrastructure and statewide coordination that exists for other doctorate-level healthcare professions.

HB2161 represents a proactive, profession-driven solution to this gap. The proposed Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, coordination, and infrastructure necessary to assess workforce needs, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care models that improve patient outcomes. This is especially important given Hawai'i's current healthcare workforce shortages and the anticipated shortage of pharmacists in the coming decade.

Importantly, this initiative mirrors successful models already established for nursing and medicine in Hawai'i and does not rely on state general funds. Instead, it leverages a modest licensure fee increase to reinvest directly into strengthening the pharmacy profession and expanding access to care statewide.

Establishing a Center for Pharmacy will better position Hawai'i to support innovative pharmacy services, attract and retain local talent, and ensure pharmacists remain an integral part of the healthcare solution for our communities.

I respectfully urge your support of **HB2161**, and thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Megan Arbles, PharmD**

Pharmacist, KTA Pharmacy

[KTASUPERSTORES.COM/PHARMACY](https://KTASUPERSTORES.COM/PHARMACY)

KTA Puainako Pharmacy: (808) 959-8700 | 50 E. Puainako Street, Hilo, HI 96720  
KTA Pharmacy, Ponahawai: 808-865-0505 | 670 Ponahawai Street, Suite 211 • KTA Waimea Pharmacy: (808) 885-0033 | 65-1158 Mamalahoa Hwy., Kamuela, HI 96743  
KTA Waikoloa Village Pharmacy: (808) 883-8434 | 68-3916 Paniolo Ave. (P.O. Box 384270), Waikoloa, HI 96738 • KTA Keauhou Pharmacy: (808) 322-2511 | 78-6831 Ali'i Drive, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740

**HB-2161-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 1:56:28 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/25/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joy Matsuyama	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SENATE KA ‘AHA KENEKOA REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Hearing on Wednesday, March 25, 2026

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161

To the honorable Chairs Kim and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and members of the Senate Education and Consumer Protection Committees,

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai’i. As a pharmacist, I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

Envisioning the potential of the Center for Pharmacy, I see the creation of opportunities related to progression and promotion of the profession. This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii’s healthcare workforce.

I respectfully urge your support of HB2161 and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joy Matsuyama, PharmD, BCPS

**LATE**

**HB-2161-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/25/2026 8:01:17 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/25/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
LILY VAN	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SENATE KA 'AHA KENEKOA REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Hearing on Wednesday, March 25, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chairs Kim and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Kidani and Fukunaga, and members of the Senate Education and Consumer Protection Committees,

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a clinical pharmacist working here in Honolulu, I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds. The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care. I am hopeful that this Center will allow us to train our skilled healthcare professionals and keep them here in the islands. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161** and thank you for your consideration.

Thank you,

Lily Van, PharmD, BCACP, CDCES