



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ÖNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony  
Hō‘ike Mana‘o I Mua O Ka ‘Aha‘olelo

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Higher Education  
Friday, February 6, 2026 at 2:05 p.m.

By  
Bonnie Irwin, PhD  
Chancellor  
University of Hawai'i at Hilo  
And  
Rae Matsumoto, PhD  
Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy  
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

### HB 2161 – RELATING TO PHARMACY

Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2161. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) strongly supports HB 2161, 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.

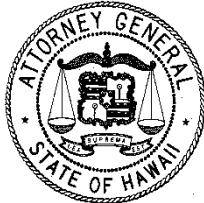
The proposed Center for Pharmacy will work toward allowing pharmacists, who are essential members of health care teams, to better align with and contribute to this collective effort, especially for bridging access to preventative care and chronic disease state and medication therapy management. Initial 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 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.



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:  
H.B. NO. 2161, RELATING TO PHARMACY.**

**BEFORE THE:  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

**DATE:** Friday, February 6, 2026                    **TIME:** 2:05 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 309

**TESTIFER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Candace J. Park, Deputy Attorney General

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Chair Garrett and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

This bill establishes the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy Special Fund, to be administered by the University of Hawai'i; creates a Pharmacist Workforce Assessment Fee to be collected by the State Board of Pharmacy; and requires the Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs to disburse all moneys collected from the Pharmacist Workforce Assessment Fee to the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy Special Fund.

This bill implicates article X, section 6, of the Hawai'i Constitution, which gives the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i "exclusive jurisdiction over the internal structure, management, and operation of the university." Section 6 further provides: "This section shall not limit the power of the legislature to enact laws of statewide concern. The legislature shall have the exclusive jurisdiction to identify laws of statewide concern." We recommend an amendment that adds a statement identifying this bill as a law of statewide concern.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.



Testimony in SUPPORT of H2161 presented before the  
House Committee on Higher Education  
Friday, February 6, 2026

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

Honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Higher Education Committee,

I am writing to express the **strong support of the Hawai'i Pharmacists Association for HB2161**, which proposes the establishment of a 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.

Suggested amendments:

Section 2: 304(A) (b) The following shall be deposited into the special fund:

~~(1) Appropriations by the legislature~~

*Legislative appropriations are not necessary to fund this profession driven initiative*

Section 2: 304(A) (c) These efforts shall be included but not limited to

- ~~(1) Workforce data and analysis for the profession (pharmacists, technicians, interns)~~
- ~~(2) Identification and evaluation of best practices and models of pharmacy innovations for adaptation and implementation appropriate for Hawai'i~~



- (3) Coordination and distribution of state and federal grants related to pharmacy and access to care
- (4) Collaboration with already established Centers for other health professionals in Hawai'i to help develop and deploy team-based care models across the state
- (5) Annual reports to the legislature on pharmacy-related initiatives supported by the state
- (6) ~~Providing loan repayment to pharmacists who commit to working in medically underserved areas of the State as part of the Hawai'i state loan repayment program administered by the Daniel K. Inouye school of pharmacy~~: We recognize concerns regarding sufficient funding specifically for loan repayment but expect the Center for Pharmacy to assist in creating more desirable positions and progressive pharmacy practice opportunities in Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs). A state-level loan repayment process for healthcare professionals in MUAs already exists.
- (7) ~~Providing scholarships to qualifying pharmacy students, to be determined by the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy~~: Scholarship funds are to remain in a separate pool of funding than those for the Center for Pharmacy. The Center's funds will focus strictly on workforce data and development.

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 reporting 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, 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,

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

**HB-2161**

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:46:51 PM  
Testimony for HED on 2/6/2026 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Blazak	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

**Comments:**

Honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee,  
As a constituent of House District 2, I strongly support this measure.

**HB-2161**

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 10:59:34 PM  
Testimony for HED on 2/6/2026 2:05:00 PM

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

**Comments:**

I support the intent and execution of HB2161. Mahalo.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 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.

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

Sincerely,



Kiana Holokai

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2028

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026  
**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 KTA, 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,

Travis Young PharmD.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 and licensed pharmacist 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,



Lara Gomez

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 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.

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

Sincerely,

*Kamaha'o Kini-Lopes*

Kamaha'o Kini-Lopes

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2027

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026  
**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

I am writing to you as I strongly support House Bill 2161, 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 essential for the future of healthcare in our state, as it will help address the critical issues that it currently faces.

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,



Jarin Loristo

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2031

**HB-2161**

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 12:27:30 AM  
Testimony for HED on 2/6/2026 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yu Erh Lin Chen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026****COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026**

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

**To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,**

**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 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.**

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

**Sincerely,**

**Yu Erh Lin Chen**

**Student Pharmacist, DKICP XO Class of 2031**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026 COMMITTEE ON  
HIGHER EDUCATION Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026**

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for **House Bill 2161**, which proposes establishing a **Hawaii Center for Pharmacy**. As an Associate Professor at the University of Hawaii at Hilo's Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP) and a practicing pharmacist specializing in **geriatrics, substance use disorders, and mental health**, I believe this Center is essential to the future of healthcare in our state.

Pharmacists are among the most accessible healthcare providers in Hawaii, particularly on the neighbor islands. However, we currently lack the workforce data and infrastructure needed to address critical shortages. In my work with Hawaii's aging population and those struggling with substance use and mental health challenges, I see firsthand the need for a coordinated, statewide approach to pharmacy practice.

Envisioning the potential of the Center for Pharmacy, I see the creation of opportunities related to:

- **Improving Medication Management for Seniors:** Ensuring that our kupuna receive specialized, team-based care to reduce polypharmacy and improve health outcomes.
- **Expanding Access to Mental Health and Substance Use Services:** Leveraging the pharmacy workforce to provide essential screenings and support for behavioral health in rural and underserved communities.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine and, notably, does not require state general funds. By establishing this Center, we can ensure Hawaii is prepared for the anticipated shortage of pharmacists over the next decade and incentivize our local talent to remain in the state.

I respectfully urge your support of **HB2161**. Thank you for your time and for your consideration of this vital initiative.

Sincerely

Chad Kawakami, Pharm.D., BCPS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 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.

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

Sincerely,

Kelli Furutomo

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2031

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As pharmacist at Hawaii State Hospital serviced by PharMerica, 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.

Establishing the Center for Pharmacy will allow Hawai'i to proactively prepare for future health care demands by strengthening pharmacy's role as an accessible, patient-centered resource across the state. By creating a dedicated structure to support innovation, collaboration, and sustainable practice development, this legislation ensures pharmacists are positioned to meet the needs of both urban and rural communities. House Bill 2161 reflects a forward-looking investment in Hawai'i's health care system that aligns pharmacy with other health professions and enables meaningful progress without reliance on state general funds.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026  
**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 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** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

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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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adam Ka'ana'ana".

Adam Ka'ana'ana

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2027

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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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.

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

Sincerely,

*Christina Regelman*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026  
**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 The Queen's Health System, 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.

Envisioning the potential of the Center for Pharmacy, I see the creation of opportunities to build a statewide framework that uses state and federal grants to fuel innovation and improve rural health outcomes. 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.

Regards,



Mina R. Ibrahim, PharmD, CDCES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

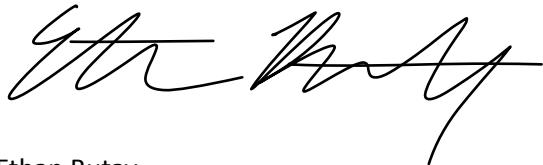
I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a pharmacy student at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but 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.

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

Sincerely,



Ethan Butay

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2026

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 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.

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

Sincerely,

Leiema Fano

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2026

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 that is currently unemployed from the retail sector, 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 recently became unemployed when the employer decided to close his doors. He and several other retail pharmacies have decided to downsize, reduce hours, reduce labor, and close because of the erosion and controls imposed by Pharmacy Benefit Managers. Pharmacy Benefit Managers that reduce reimbursements below the cost of a medication and without any compensation for the labor or infrastructure to process the prescription, educate the patient, evaluate for appropriateness and interactions with other medications or disease processes. Pharmacy Benefit Managers that own a chain of pharmacies, that lures the patients to their pharmacies with lowered copayments, also drive out smaller pharmacies from doing business.

My search for employment has been narrowed down to the hospitals. However, the hospitals are seeking experience in their setting. I believe the Center for Pharmacy could help Pharmacists looking to transition in new areas with resources and mentorship for re-training and sharpening the knowledge and skills necessary to work in a different pharmacy setting.

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.

Envisioning the potential of the Center for Pharmacy, I see the creation of opportunities related to the enhancement of our professional skills and knowledge. 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,

SueAnn Yasuoka, RPh

**HB-2161**

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 11:12:11 AM  
Testimony for HED on 2/6/2026 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Corinne Solomon	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I have been a licensed pharmacist in Hawaii for over twenty years. I applaud the legislature's efforts to support the practice of pharmacy.

I have a few suggestions for this bill:

-Remove the proposed workforce assessment fee from the individual pharmacist biannual renewal fees.

-Limit the scope of the use of the moneys collected to workforce assessment and scholarships, exclude student loan repayment use.

In my personal experience there is not a pharmacist shortage like we are experiencing for physicians. Take a look at local pharmacist job listings; there are very few. This has been the case in my twenty years of practice.

Rural area shortages have more to do with cost of living issues and pay that is not competitive. Furthermore, increasing the number of clinical training sites and expanding the scope of practice for pharmacists will produce better trained and more competent pharmacy professionals, as well as "fill the gaps" where health services are lacking.

Mahalo

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 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.

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

Sincerely,



Shaun-Marie Aquino

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2031

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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,

Deborah Taira, ScD

Professor, Pharmacy Practice

**HB-2161**

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 12:33:13 PM  
Testimony for HED on 2/6/2026 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cherie Chu	UH Hilo DKICP	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026****COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026**

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

**To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,**

**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 Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, 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,**

**Cherie Chu, PharmD**

**Associated Professor, Pharmacy Practice**

**HB-2161**

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 12:33:13 PM  
Testimony for HED on 2/6/2026 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cherie Chu	UH Hilo DKICP	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026****COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026**

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

**To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,**

**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 Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, 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,**

**Cherie Chu, PharmD**

**Associated Professor, Pharmacy Practice**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, 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,

Aryn Meguro, Pharm.D.

Associate Professor, Pharmacy Practice

**HB-2161**

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 12:54:02 PM  
Testimony for HED on 2/6/2026 2:05:00 PM

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

Comments:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

Testimony in **SUPPORT** for HB2161

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

I am writing to express my strong 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,

Nicole Young, PharmD

Associate Professor

**Testimony to support HB2161 aiming to establish a Center for Pharmacy**  
Committee on Higher Education  
Feb. 5, 2026

To the Honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2161. My name is Camlyn Masuda and I am an Associate Clinical Professor and Clinical Pharmacist with the University of Hawai'i at Hilo Daniel K Inouye College of Pharmacy. I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB2161, a bill to establish a Center for Pharmacy. My testimony does not represent the views of the University of Hawai'i at Hilo.

I currently practice in a family medicine physician office setting. In my role I teach patients with diabetes about their medications (how it works, side effects) and make medication changes. In addition, I manage other chronic health conditions, submit prior authorization for medications, teach patients how to use medications and resolve issues with the prescriptions sent and the pharmacy. This helps to free up time for the physicians to see more patients and provide quality healthcare. Establishing a Center for Pharmacy will help collect data to determine areas in our State that need pharmacists that can perform these functions. This will help address the lack of primary care services available.

I respectfully and strongly urge the Committee to pass **HB2161** and thank you for the opportunity to testify and prevent complications for the people of Hawai'i who have diabetes.  
Sincerely,



Camlyn Masuda, PharmD, CDCES, BCACP  
Associate Clinical Professor, Dept. of Pharmacy Practice, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, University of Hawai'i at Hilo  
677 Ala Moana Blvd. Ste 1025A  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Email: [camlynm@hawaii.edu](mailto:camlynm@hawaii.edu)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, 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.

As a faculty member of DKICP, I run a clinical practice at Hilo Benihoff Medical Center's primary care clinics. As an ambulatory care pharmacist, I conduct appointments managing their patient's chronic medical conditions, most commonly diabetes, hypertension, and hyperlipidemia. Having a Center for Pharmacy would further help us to solidify pharmacist as part of the team based care in improving patient outcomes. This 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,

Michelle Kim, Pharm.D.

Clinical Associate Professor, Pharmacy Practice

LATE \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026  
**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

**LATE**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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 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.

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

Sincerely,

[Keili Takamiya]

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2029

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026  
**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

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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.

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

Sincerely,



Adam Perez

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2029

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026  
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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.

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

Sincerely,

Edward Guintu

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2029

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026  
**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

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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,

*Vernon L. Warnock*

Vernon L. Warnock

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2029

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026  
**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

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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,

Adam Hocson

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2029

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026  
**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

**LATE**

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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.

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

Sincerely,

Adam Kealiher

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2029

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Hearing on Friday, February 6, 2026  
**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161**

**LATE**

To the honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Higher Education Committee,

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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.

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

Sincerely,



Bryanne Soares  
Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2029