



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

Ka 'Oihana Ho'oka'a'ike no ka Po'e Kīnānā

1010 Richards Street, Rm. 118 • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V) • Fax (808) 586-8129 • (808) 204-2466 (VP)

February 25, 2026

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senate Bill 3324 – Relating to Medicaid

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports Senate Bill 3324 – Relating to Medicaid. This bill appropriates moneys to the Department of Human Services to increase funding for certain Medicaid home- and community-based services, including residential services offered in community care foster family homes and expanded adult residential care homes. Requires the Department to obtain matching federal funds and to pursue additional funding sources.

Many Medicaid recipients prefer to receive in-home services and age in place. Hawaii has a shortage of community care foster family homes and expanded adult residential care homes.

This bill addresses the shortage of care facilities and cost savings for Medicaid recipients from out of pocket expenses if placed in an institutionalized nursing facility- and would assist individuals who prefer to age in place and prevent placement in expensive nursing facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

KRISTINE PAGANO
Acting Executive Director

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



RYAN I. YAMANE
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA
Office of the Director
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

TRISTA SPEER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

February 24, 2026

TO: The Honorable Senator Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 3324 – RELATING TO MEDICAID.**

Hearing: February 25, 2026, 10:57 a.m.
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the bill, offers comments, and requests an amendment. DHS respectfully requests that this program and appropriation not conflict with, reduce, or replace priorities identified in the executive budget.

DHS agrees that Community Care Family Foster Home (CCFFH) and Expanded Adult Residential Care Home (E-ARCH) capacity remains limited despite the rate increase authorized by the Legislature in 2025 in alignment with the "low" rate scenario provided in the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Rate Study Report commissioned by DHS in December 2022. DHS supports the Legislature's intent to increase reimbursement for CCFFH and E-ARCH facilities to the "medium" rate scenario provided in the HCBS Rate Study Report. Based on updated utilization data, the appropriation request may be reduced to a general fund request of \$1,770,892.

Additionally, DHS respectfully requests that the bill language be amended to remove all references to a DHS contractor (Milliman), who performed the study under a DHS contract, and instead refer to the study as the "DHS Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Rate Study Report" to clarify that DHS is the "group author" of the study.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
'A'UNIKE MOKU'ĀPUNI NO KA NĀ KĀWAI KULA
PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543

February 25, 2026

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: Testimony in Support of SB3324, Relating to Medicaid

The Hawai'i State Council on Developmental Disabilities is in **SUPPORT of SB3324**, which appropriates moneys to the Department of Human Services to increase funding for certain Medicaid home- and community-based services, including residential services offered in community care foster family homes and expanded adult residential care homes, and requires the Department to obtain matching federal funds and to pursue additional funding sources

Sustaining and strengthening the caregiver workforce is critical to maintaining community-based options for individuals with disabilities and kupuna across Hawai'i. Workforce shortages remain a significant barrier to expanding access to home and community-based services, particularly on the neighbor islands, where shortages are most acute.

Increasing residential service reimbursement rates helps providers recruit and retain direct care staff and offer stable wages and basic benefits. Stronger workforce stability directly translates into more available homes and shorter waitlists for individuals who rely on these settings to live safely in the community.

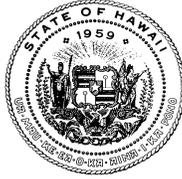
Community care foster family homes and expanded adult residential care homes are essential components of Hawai'i's long-term care system. Supporting provider sustainability ensures continuity of care, prevents unnecessary institutionalization, and strengthens community-based living options statewide.

For these reasons, the Hawai'i State Council on Developmental Disabilities **supports SB3324**.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

Daintry Bartoldus, Executive Administrator



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

**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB3324
RELATING TO MEDICAID.**

SENATOR DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date and Time: WED., February 25, 2026 @ 10:57am

Room Number: 211

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** There is no cost to the Department of Health (Department).
- 2 **Department Position:** The Department submits testimony in strong support of SB3324
- 3 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health, Office of Health Care Assurance (OHCA)
- 4 licenses and oversees community care foster family homes and other long-term care settings
- 5 that serve many of Hawai'i's most vulnerable residents, including older adults and individuals
- 6 with disabilities. These providers play a critical role in supporting residents in community-based
- 7 settings and helping prevent unnecessary institutionalization.

8 Adequate Medicaid reimbursement is essential to sustaining this system of care. Many
9 licensed care homes operate on very narrow margins while facing rising costs for staffing, food,
10 utilities, insurance, training, and regulatory compliance. Without reimbursement rates that
11 reflect the true cost of care, providers face significant financial strain, which can lead to
12 workforce shortages, reduced capacity, or facility closures.

13 Increasing Medicaid reimbursement will:

- 14 • Help stabilize the existing network of licensed care homes.
- 15 • Support recruitment and retention of qualified caregivers.
- 16 • Improve quality of care and resident safety.

- 1 • Encourage providers to continue serving Medicaid beneficiaries.
- 2 • Help ensure access to community-based long-term care statewide.

3 As Hawai'i's population continues to age, demand for community-based long-term care
4 services will continue to grow. Strengthening reimbursement now is a proactive step to ensure
5 that safe, licensed care settings remain available for residents who depend on them.

6 For these reasons, OHCA respectfully urges the Committee to pass SB3324.

7 **Offered Amendments:** None.

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



1001 Bishop Street | Suite 625 | Honolulu, HI 96813-2830
1-866-295-7282 | Fax: 808-536-2882
aarp.org/hi | aarphi@aarp.org | twitter.com/AARPHawaii
facebook.com/AARPHawaii

The State Legislature
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Wednesday, February 25, 2026
Conference Room 211, 10:57 p.m.

TO: The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
FROM: Kealii Lopez, AARP State Director
RE: Support for S.B.3324, Relating to Medicaid

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i Lopez and I am the State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a nonpartisan, social impact organization that advocates for individuals age 50 and older. We have a membership of nearly 38 million nationwide and nearly 135,000 in Hawaii. We advocate at the state and federal level for the issues that matter most to older adults and their families.

AARP Hawaii supports S.B. 3324 which appropriates funds to increase Medicaid reimbursement rates for home and community-based services (HCBS), including residential care homes. This measure advances policies that allow kūpuna and people with disabilities to live safely in their homes and communities—where they overwhelmingly prefer to receive care.

S.B. 3324 strengthens Hawai'i's continuum of long-term care by directing additional resources to essential HCBS providers. These services enable older adults and individuals with disabilities to receive assistance with daily activities, manage chronic conditions, and maintain independence. Investing in HCBS helps prevent unnecessary institutionalization, reduces avoidable hospitalization, and improves overall health outcomes.

Equally important, the bill recognizes the critical role of direct care workers. Caregivers are the backbone of our long-term care system, yet many face low wages, limited support, and high turnover. Increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates helps stabilize this workforce, enhances care continuity, and ensures families can rely on a trained, reliable, and sustainable caregiving system.

AARP Hawai'i appreciates the Legislature's attention to strengthening home and community-based care options for our kūpuna and people with disabilities. We respectfully urge passage of S.B. 3324.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.



To: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

Hearing: Wednesday, February 25, 2026, 10:57am, Conference Room 211

RE: **SB3324 SD1 Relating to Medicaid**

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of the intent of SB3324 SD1**. This measure would (1) appropriate moneys to the Department of Human Services to increase funding for certain Medicaid home- and community-based services, including residential services offered in community care foster family homes and expanded adult residential care homes; and (2) require the Department to obtain matching federal funds and to pursue additional funding sources.

AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan founded by Hawai'i's Community Health Centers and the Queen Emma Clinics. We serve over 66,000 Medicaid and Medicaid-Medicare dual-eligible residents on all islands. Since 1994, AlohaCare has partnered with providers, government entities, and community-based organizations to meet the evolving needs of our safety net community as Hawai'i's only health plan focused solely on Medicaid-eligible individuals. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating for equitable access to quality, whole-person care for all.

AlohaCare is committed to improving access to care, especially for our kūpuna, persons with disabilities, and others needing home- and community-based services as an alternative to institutional care settings. For example, AlohaCare directly invests in these services through our GRACE (Geriatric Resources for Assessment and Care of Elders) program, which serves Medicaid members with complex medical, functional, and social needs. GRACE relies on in-home services to help members safely age in place, manage chronic conditions, and prevent avoidable emergency room visits and hospitalizations. However, the success of programs like GRACE depends on the availability and stability of in-home service providers. As such, we support the intent of this bill. We defer to the Department of Human Services Med-QUEST Division and the Legislature as to the appropriate level of funding.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in **support of the intent of SB3324 SD1**.



Wednesday, February 25, 2025

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB3324

Relating to Medicaid Home- and Community-Based Services

Submitted by:

The Ava Sofia Foundation dba Autism Moms of Kona

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **strong support of SB3324**, which appropriates funding to strengthen Medicaid home- and community-based residential services and requires the State to maximize available federal matching funds.

SB3324

The Ava Sofia Foundation, known as Autism Moms of Kona, supports families across Hawai'i raising children and caring for individuals with developmental disabilities and complex support needs. Many of these families depend on sustainable community-based care systems not only for kupuna, but for individuals with lifelong disabilities who require residential supports throughout adulthood.

Hawai'i faces a growing shortage of community care foster homes and expanded adult residential care homes due to insufficient reimbursement rates and workforce instability. Providers are increasingly unable to offer competitive wages or benefits, placing long-term community care options at risk.

SB3324 represents a fiscally responsible investment that moves reimbursement rates toward sustainability while leveraging federal matching funds to maximize impact. Strengthening these residential services allows individuals to remain in their communities, maintain family connections, and avoid more costly institutional care settings.

For families planning lifelong care for loved ones with disabilities, stable home- and community-based services are essential to dignity, safety, and independence.

On behalf of the families we serve statewide, we respectfully urge the Committee to **PASS SB3324**.

Mahalo for your continued commitment to Hawai'i's most vulnerable residents.

Sincerely,

Jessica McCullum
Founder, the Ava Sofia Foundation
(DBA Autism Moms of Kona)

www.AutismMomsofKona.com

SB-3324

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 2:03:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------------|---|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Rosemarie S. Sebastian | Testifying for SEBASTIAN'S ARCH LLC | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

To: The Honorable Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair, and all Members of Ways and Means Committee:

Thank you for SB3324 - Relating to Medicaid.

I operate an Adult Residential Care Home (Type I ARCH) but I am quite aware that the Community Care Foster Family Homes (CCFFH)--most especially--are very much underpaid for many many years now. Their current pay for their Medicaid Reimbursement pay doesn't commensurate with the levels of services that they provide. They work very hard to provide care for our precious Kupunas here in Hawaii 24/7 but gets compensated so minimal. I don't know how these homes are meeting both ends month after month but I know that the Operator/Caregiver compromises a lot. Because the current income isn't sufficient to meet their monthly expenses, you can assume that the Operator, in this case, is the one that doesn't get paid. This is not good for Hawaii.--it's demoralizing! I believe our State can do better. If we care so much about our Kupunas, then the State should try it's best to compensate these CCFFH Caregivers' a respectable & fair pay. Usually, Caregivers make it their vocation to care for the elderly and the mentally disabled in our community because they are compassionate individuals. However, caregiving job is hard and it's hardest when you have to worry about monthly budget--that is upside down. These Caregivers/Homes are essential to the future of Kupunas care in our State so would the State also take care of Caregivers?

I am humbly pleading, on behalf of all fellow caregivers; therefore, I highly encourage your Committee to Support/Pass SB3324.

Your kind support would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Rose Sebastian

SEBASTIAN'S ARCH LLC

1630 LEILANI ST.

HONOLULU, HI 96819

(808) 842-3736

Email: rose.sebastian808@gmail.com

SB-3324

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 3:05:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Louis Erteschik | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

We support this Bill. While our main focus of course is on our clients who reside in care homes we very much value the efforts of the caregivers who operate those homes. Without them, we would not have the robust community based system of residential care that we do have. It is important that they be properly compensated. In particular, as the caregiver population ages, it is vital to ensure that the next generation is properly incentivized to carry forward with this work.



Hawaii Medical Association

1360 South Beretania Street, Suite 200 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Phone: 808.536.7702 • Fax: 808.528.2376 • hawaiimedicalassociation.org

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Date: February 25, 2026

From: Hawaii Medical Association (HMA)

Elizabeth Ann Ignacio MD - Chair, HMA Public Policy Committee

Christina Marzo MD and Robert Carlisle MD, Vice Chairs, HMA Public Policy Committee

RE SB 3324 RELATING TO MEDICAID. DHS; Medicaid; Med-QUEST; Home- and Community-Based Services; Residential Services; Community Care Foster Family Homes; Expanded Adult Residential Care Homes; Federal Matching Funds; Appropriation (\$)

Position: Support

This measure would appropriate moneys to the Department of Human Services to increase funding for certain Medicaid home- and community-based services, including residential services offered in community care foster family homes and expanded adult residential care homes and require the Department to obtain matching federal funds and to pursue additional funding sources.

Hawaii's care needs are growing, yet Hawaii has unmet demand and persistent waiting lists for home- and community-based supports - signals that access is not keeping pace with need. HMA supports this measure that may strengthen in-home and other home-like residential supports, reduce avoidable institutional placement, support smoother hospital-to-home transitions, and better match services to patient goals and functional needs. Additionally, the provision for available federal matching dollars while building capacity for patients' community-based services may rebalance long-term care systems toward care in the least restrictive setting.

Home-like, community-based residential options can strengthen continuity, relieve caregiver strain, and improve quality of life while preserving higher-acuity institutional resources for those who truly need them. Investing in Medicaid in-home and community-based care is one of the most practical ways to help kūpuna and people with disabilities stay safely in familiar settings, maintain independence, and remain connected to family and community.

Thank you for allowing the Hawaii Medical Association to testify in support of this measure.

2026 Hawaii Medical Association Public Policy Coordination Team

Elizabeth A Ignacio, MD, Chair • Robert Carlisle, MD, Vice Chair • Christina Marzo, MD, Vice Chair
Linda Rosehill, JD, Government Relations • Marc Alexander, Executive Director

2026 Hawaii Medical Association Officers

Nadine Tenn-Salle, MD, President • Jerald Garcia, MD, President Elect • Elizabeth Ann Ignacio, MD, • Immediate Past President
Laeton Pang, MD, Treasurer • Thomas Kosasa, MD, Secretary • Marc Alexander, Executive Director

REFERENCES AND QUICK LINKS

Burns, Alice, Abby Wolk, and Molly O'Malley Watts. *A Look at Waiting Lists for Medicaid Home- and Community-Based Services from 2016 to 2025*. Kaiser Family Foundation, 20 Nov. 2025, <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/a-look-at-waiting-lists-for-medicaid-home-and-community-based-services-from-2016-to-2025/>

"Home- and Community-Based Services." MACPAC, 2 Apr. 2024. <https://www.macpac.gov/subtopic/home-and-community-based-services/>. Accessed 15 Feb. 2026.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE).

"Rebalancing Long-Term Services and Supports for Medicaid Enrollees." ASPE, Jan. 2025. <https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad7cf66fb2a7ae1a0bd91b288363fc71/rebalancing-ltss-medicaid-enrolled-brief.pdf>. Accessed 15 Feb. 2026.

2024 Hawaii Medical Association Officers

Elizabeth Ann Ignacio, MD, President • Nadine Tenn-Salle, MD, President Elect • Angela Pratt, MD, Immediate Past President
Jerris Hedges, MD, Treasurer • Thomas Kosasa, MD, Secretary • Marc Alexander, Executive Director

2024 Hawaii Medical Association Public Policy Coordination Team

Beth England, MD, Chair
Linda Rosehill, JD, Government Relations • Marc Alexander, Executive Director

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Esteemed Committee Members,

My name is Leonora Gamboa, and I am a caregiver who serves Hawaii's kupuna with dedication and perseverance every single day.

Caring for our elders is more than a job—it is a responsibility rooted deeply in our culture. Our kupuna raised families, built communities, and shaped the Hawaii we cherish today. They deserve to age with dignity in the comfort of their own homes, surrounded by familiarity and compassion.

Yet many of us caregivers struggle to make ends meet. The work is physically demanding, emotionally intensive, and requires patience, training, and heart.

Despite this, Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement rates remain too low to reflect the true value and cost of providing quality home and community-based care. Many caregivers are forced to work multiple jobs or leave the profession entirely, creating shortages that directly impact our elders.

I respectfully urge you to support and pass SB3324 to increase funding for Medicaid home and community-based services for Hawaii's kupuna. This bill is not just about numbers in a budget, it is about sustaining a workforce that allows our elders to remain safely at home, prevents unnecessary institutionalization, and honors our cultural commitment to caring for one another.

Investing in caregivers is investing in our kupuna, our families, and the future of Hawaii. Please stand with us and ensure that those who provide this essential care are fairly compensated and supported.

Thank you for your time, your leadership, and your commitment to our community.

Leonora C Gamboa
CCFFH Operator
PH3 Member
(808)7770842

SB-3324

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 12:10:22 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Johnnie-Mae L. Perry | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

3324 SB RELATING TO MEDICAID.

To: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

From: Veronica Moore, Individual Citizen

Date: February 24, 2026

RE: Senate Bill 3324
Measure Title: RELATING TO MEDICAID.
Report Title: DHS; Medicaid; Med-QUEST; Home- and Community-Based
Services; Residential Services; Community Care Foster Family Homes;
Expanded Adult Residential Care Homes; Federal Matching Funds;
Appropriation (\$)

To All Concerned,

My name is Veronica Moore and I support Senate Bill 3324. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Veronica M. Moore

SB-3324

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 9:12:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Shaina calizo | Testifying for PH3 | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

I am a licensed CCFFH provider and I strongly support SB3324.

Providers deliver 24/7 care while facing rising costs in payroll, insurance, utilities, food, and compliance. Current reimbursement does not reflect the actual cost of care.

A rate adjustment consistent with the 2022 Milliman study is necessary to ensure sustainability and prevent closures.

I respectfully urge your support.

Respectfully,
Shaina

SB-3324

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 9:14:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Imee Gallardo | Testifying for Providing Healthy Home Care For Hawaii, PH3 | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair and Committee Members,

First and foremost, thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

I am writing to respectfully ask that you hear our voices. The caregiver community stands united in full support of SB3324.

We work tirelessly, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, caring for our beloved kūpuna who can no longer care for themselves. We wake up in the middle of the night to ensure our bedbound residents are not left soaking in their diapers. We stay alert to make sure our ambulatory residents do not fall. We comfort, feed, bathe, and advocate for them. We hold the hands of those battling cancer and other terminal illnesses, sometimes even holding them through their final breath.

This is not just a job, this is our calling. We provide 100% hands-on care, yet many of us struggle to make ends meet due to inadequate reimbursement rates. While we continue to give our full hearts and strength, the financial strain threatens the sustainability of our care homes.

Without proper support, many caregivers may be forced to close their homes. If that happens, where will our kūpuna go?

We humbly ask for your full support of SB3324 so that we may continue providing safe, loving, and quality care to those who depend on us most.

Mahalo for your time, consideration, and commitment to our community.

Respectfully,

Imee Gallardo, PH3

SB-3324

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 9:20:52 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jenice Casabay | Testifying for PH3 memeber CCFH carehome operator | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

In Support of SB3324

Dear Chair and Committee Members,
strongly support SB3324.

Being a caregiver is not just a job for me — it is a calling.

I am a mother of two beautiful children, and at the same time, I provide 24-hour care for an elderly person who depends on me every single day. From the moment I wake up until I close my eyes at night, my hands and heart are always serving — cooking, cleaning, assisting with medications, helping with bathing, offering comfort, and simply being present.

There are nights when I barely sleep. There are days when I am physically exhausted. But I continue, because caregiving requires patience, compassion, and love. We become their support system, their companion, and sometimes their only family nearby.

As a mother, I also carry the responsibility of raising my children — guiding them, nurturing them, and making sure they feel loved even when I am tired. Balancing both roles is not easy. It takes strength that only God can give.

Caregivers give so much of themselves — emotionally, physically, and mentally. We sacrifice time, energy, and even moments with our own families to care for someone else’s loved one. Yet often, our voices are unheard and our efforts unseen.

I am sharing this not to complain, but to speak up — hoping that one day caregivers will be more recognized, more valued, and fairly compensated for the vital work we do. We deserve good pay, proper rest, and respect, because what we do is essential. We care for the vulnerable. We protect dignity. We give comfort in the most fragile seasons of life.

To all caregivers out there: I see you. Your work matters. Your sacrifices matter. And one day, I pray that our voices will be heard.

If financial strain forces homes to close, discharge delays and higher-cost placements may increase.

SB3324 helps preserve this essential community-based network.

I respectfully request your favorable consideration.

Respectfully,
jenice Casabay

SB-3324

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 9:57:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Geraldine Flores | Testifying for Foster Care home Pearl City | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Members.

I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of SB3324. As a full-time caregiver, and on behalf of other foster caregivers that cannot express their full support may I humbly ask our chair and committee members to consider this Bill. I live and work every day, and our residents live in our homes. Our residents need our 24-hour care, 7 days a week. Even at the late night and earliest mornings, weekends and holidays, we respond every time they need help. We make sure that families have reassurance and stability of their loved ones. We coordinate with case managers, nurses and doctors, social workers, and home health providers just to make sure we give the continuous and proper care to our residents. We carry both emotional, physical and responsibilities to maintain safety and a stable home. We choose this work for compassionate and care to all individuals we serve. However, it is not enough to offset the rising operational costs, especially here in Hawaii. We have payroll, rent, utilities, insurances, education, high costs of food, medical supplies and most of all the continuing increase in our compliance requirements. Some of the foster care home operators work more hours just to prevent closure. SB3324 will serve a big help especially to a struggling foster care home. We don't want disruption to serve. We need help. Please help us and urge your support of SB3324.

Sincerely,
Geraldine Flores
Pearl City foster care home

SB-3324

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 10:24:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Rowena Sonajo Agustin | Testifying for PH3 | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Member:

My name is Rowena Agustin, and I am submitting my testimony in strong support of SB3324, which would increase pay for caregivers in our state.

Caregivers are the backbone of our healthcare and long-term care systems. They provide daily support to older adults, people with disabilities, and medically fragile individuals who rely on them not just for physical care, but for dignity, safety, and human connection.

Yet despite the essential nature of their work, caregivers are often paid wages that do not reflect their responsibility, skill, or the emotional and physical demands of the job. Many work multiple jobs just to survive. Some qualify for public assistance while working full-time caring for others. That is not sustainable, and it is not just.

When caregivers are underpaid, turnover increases. High turnover disrupts care, destabilizes families, and ultimately costs the state more money in training, emergency services, and institutional care. Investing in caregiver wages is not just the right thing to do morally — it is fiscally responsible.

Increasing pay will:

- Improve workforce stability
- Reduce burnout and turnover
- Improve quality of care

- Allow families to remain in their homes rather than moving to higher-cost facilities

Caregiving is skilled, demanding, and essential work. It deserves fair compensation.

I respectfully urge you to pass SB3324 and show that we value the people who care for our most vulnerable residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Rowena Agustin

PH3 Member

SB-3324

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 11:30:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Jelly Repuya | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Greetings Chair, Vice-chair and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Jelly Repuya, a licensed CCFFH provider and I am in support of Bill SB3324. I have been an operator for 7 years and I'm having more trouble meeting the rising costs/demands for supplies, utilities like water/sewer are increasing quickly, and everyone knows that grocery prices have increased.

Sometimes clients would have delayed payments or no payments at all. I've had a patient refuse to pay room and board for 3 months when they were in my care. I had a hard time getting payment from my patient's insurance. I was unable to be paid for 6 months, and have only started to receive money now. During those 6 months I had to borrow money from my family just to stay afloat.

Demands to have foster homes have 3 caregivers if they have 3 bed bound clients are also troubling. Where would the money to pay the extra caregiver come from, would an increase be enough to pay them to be there everyday.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jelly Repuya

CCFFH PH-3 Operator

SB-3324

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 8:03:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Lea Daguro | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

In Support of SB3324

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

I respectfully support SB3324.

Community care homes provide stability and familiarity for individuals who rely on structured, safe environments. When homes close due to financial hardship, residents face disruption and uncertainty.

Providers deliver round-the-clock care while coordinating with hospitals, social workers, case managers, and home health agencies to ensure continuity of services.

A reasonable rate adjustment helps maintain this vital network of community-based care.

I respectfully ask for your support of SB3324.

Respectfully,

Assistant Treasurer

Lea Daguro

Providing Healthy Homecare for Hawaii

CCFFH