



# Hawai'i State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Plus Commission



*Advocating for the Hawai'i LGBTQIA+ Community*

Mailing Address: LGBTQ+ Commission, c/o The Department of Human Services,  
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February 21, 2026

House's Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at 2:00 PM

**RE: Strong Support for House Bill 1961**

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe and fellow committee members,

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 1961 on behalf of the Hawai'i State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Plus (LGBTQ+) Commission, which was established by the 2022 Hawai'i State Legislature to

“improve the State's interface with members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus community; identify the short- and long-range needs of its members; and ensure that there is an effective means of researching, planning, and advocating for the equity of this population in all aspects of state government.”

The Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission strongly supports House Bill 1961, which would prohibit interference with a person's access to or from a health care facility, protect the normal functioning of health care facilities, establish meaningful enforcement mechanisms, and authorize both private and state action when harm occurs.

Access to health care is a fundamental right. No individual should be harassed, obstructed, intimidated, or endangered when seeking medical care, nor should health care providers and staff be subjected to disruption or threats while delivering essential services. House Bill 1961 affirms this principle by ensuring that health care facilities remain safe, accessible, and operational for all who rely on them.

This bill is particularly important for [māhū, LGBTQIA+, and QTPI+](#) individuals, who already face disproportionate barriers to care, including stigma, discrimination, and fear of harassment. For transgender, nonbinary, māhū, QTPI+ and gender-diverse people, especially those seeking gender-affirming care, interference at health care facilities is not hypothetical; it is a documented and growing concern nationwide. Such interference can deter people from seeking medically necessary care, worsen health outcomes, and undermine trust in the health care system.

*Proudly established pursuant to Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 369, as enacted through Act 41, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022*

## HI State LGBTQ+ Commission Testimony in Support of HB 1961

House Bill 1961 appropriately balances the protection of lawful expression with the need to safeguard public health and safety. It does not prohibit free speech or peaceful protest; rather, it draws a clear and necessary line against conduct that interferes with access to care, disrupts medical services, or causes harm to patients and providers. By classifying violations as a petty misdemeanor, creating a private right of action, and authorizing the Attorney General to seek injunctive or equitable relief, the bill provides a comprehensive and enforceable framework to prevent harm before it escalates.

The Commission strongly believes that Hawai'i must remain a place where everyone regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression can access health care with dignity, safety, and respect. House Bill 1961 sends a clear message that intimidation and obstruction have no place in our health care system.

For these reasons, the Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission urges your strong support of House Bill 1961.

If you or any member of your staff has any questions regarding my testimony you can reach me at [hawaiistatelgbtqpluscommission@gmail.com](mailto:hawaiistatelgbtqpluscommission@gmail.com).

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration,

Sandy Harjo Livingston (he/him/they/them)

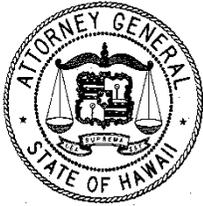
Chair

[Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission](#)

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### [Inclusive LGBTQIA+ Glossary](#)

The [Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission](#) has this webpage and that is dedicated to understanding and being able to use the correct terms when talking about the rainbow community from māhū to LGBTQIA+ to QTPI+ to MVPFAFF+ and beyond. The list found on this page is not an exhaustive list and will be updated as appropriate.



**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. 1961, H.D. 1, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

**BEFORE THE:**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

**DATE:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026      **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 325

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Lauren K Chun, Deputy Attorney General

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Chair Tarnas and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments on this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to protect safe and unobstructed access to health care for patients and providers by prohibiting persons from interfering with another person's access to a health care facility and establishing civil and criminal penalties for violations.

Section -2(b) of the new chapter to be added to title 19 provides: "This section shall not apply to actions taken as part of a labor demonstration or when exercising the right to strike" (page 4, lines 4-5). This provision may invite a challenge under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and article I, section 4, of the Hawai'i Constitution, as it appears to make the ability to engage in the conduct described on page 3, line 4, through page 4, line 3, contingent on the message the person engaging in the conduct intends to convey. The Department recommends **deleting section -2(b) (page 4, lines 4-5).**

Section -3(b) (page 4, line 20, through page 5, line 5) and section -4(d) (page 6, lines 5-11) instruct courts having jurisdiction over either a criminal or civil proceeding under the new chapter to "take all reasonably necessary steps to safeguard the individual privacy of an aggrieved party . . . including gra[n]ting protective orders and motions in limine." To preserve the First Amendment right of access to courts, with certain exceptions for specific kinds of proceedings, courts should not seal proceedings

or documents absent case-specific determinations finding that sealing is necessary. The bill's referenced subsections may be interpreted as requiring courts to grant protective orders and motions in limine without weighing privacy interests against the public's interest in access to court records. The Department recommends **revising section -3(b) (page 4, line 20, through page 5, line 5) and section -4(d) (page 6, lines 5-11)** to read as follows:

**A court having jurisdiction in a [criminal or civil] proceeding under this chapter, upon motion by an interested party, shall take all reasonably necessary steps to safeguard the individual privacy of an aggrieved party and prevent harassment of a patient, health care provider, or health care facility employee who is a party or witness to a proceeding.**

Section -4(a) (page 5, lines 8-12) indicates that a civil suit under this chapter may only be brought in the district court of the district in which the violation took place. Under section 604-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, district courts only have jurisdiction in civil actions where damages do not exceed \$40,000. If the Committee does not intend to limit claimants in civil suits brought under the new chapter to \$40,000 in damages, we recommend **revising page 5, lines 10-11**, to read: **"the district court of the district or the circuit court of the circuit in which the violation took place . . . ."**

Section -4(d) (page 6, line 5) refers to "[a] court having jurisdiction in a **criminal** proceeding under this chapter . . . ." It should provide: "A court having jurisdiction in a **civil** proceeding under this chapter . . . ." (Emphasis added.)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



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

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

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

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

February 23, 2026

**TO:** HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair  
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair  
Honorable Members

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

**RE:** **HB 1961-HD1 -- RELATING TO HEALTH CARE**

**HEARING:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 @ 2:00 pm; Conference Room 325

**POSITION:** SUPPORT with COMMENTS

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Testimony:

SHPDA strongly supports HB 1961-HD1, with comments.

This bill is intended to ensure that patients and health care providers can access health care services safely and without obstruction, intimidation, or harassment. The bill does this by prohibiting conduct that interferes with a person's ability to enter or leave a health care facility or that disrupts a facility's normal operations, and by establishing clear civil and criminal penalties to deter and address violations.

This bill would protect facilities providing abortion services from harassment, and would keep Hawai'i's health care facilities secure, orderly, and responsive for anyone who needs care.

Thank you for hearing HB 1961-HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

■ -- Jack Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA



To: Hawaii State House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

RE: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1961 HD1 Relating to Health Care

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

The members of AAUW of Hawai'i thank you for hearing this measure. We strongly support HB1961 HD1 which would protect the providers of gender-affirming health care services in Hawai'i from abusive litigation and adverse actions.

This legislation is a necessary and compassionate response to the escalating attacks on gender affirming and reproductive health care across the country.

By passing this bill, Hawai'i will:

- ✓ Ensure access to gender-affirming care for all who need it
- ✓ Protect families from unjust legal actions and custody disputes
- ✓ Shield health care providers from out-of-state prosecutions and disciplinary actions
- ✓ Uphold Hawaii's core values of inclusion, privacy, and medical freedom

Please pass this measure so the patients can get the health care they need and the providers can provide the health care their patients need.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Younghee Overly  
AAUW of Hawai'i Public Policy Committee

*The American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Hawai'i is an all-volunteer, statewide chapter of a national organization with close to 4000 members and supporters across all four counties - Hawai'i, Honolulu, Kaua'i, and Maui. AAUW has state chapters in all 50 states and our mission is to advance gender equity through education and advocacy. Economic security for women is our goal.*



February 21, 2026

House's Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 2:00 PM

RE: **STRONG SUPPRT for House Bill 1961 HD 1**

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe and fellow committee members,

Pride at Work – Hawai'i is an official chapter of [Pride at Work](#) which is a national nonprofit organization that represents LGBTQIA+ union members and their allies. We are an officially recognized constituency group of the AFL-CIO that organizes mutual support between the organized Labor Movement and the LGBTQIA+ Community to further social and economic justice. We write in **strong support of House Bill 1961 HD 1**.

Pride at Work – Hawai'i strongly supports House Bill 1961, which protects access to health care facilities, ensures the uninterrupted delivery of medical services, and establishes clear accountability when interference causes harm.

As an organization representing māhū, and LGBTQIA+ workers and our allies across Hawai'i, we approach this bill through the lens of worker safety, patient dignity, and the right of all people to access health care without fear or obstruction. Health care workers, many of whom are union members and frontline essential workers, deserve workplaces free from harassment, intimidation, and disruption. Patients deserve the same respect and security when seeking care.

Interference with health care facilities places workers and patients at risk. When entrances are blocked, services are disrupted, or staff are harassed, it is not an abstract political statement—it is a workplace safety issue and a public health concern. These actions can delay care, escalate conflict, and force workers into unsafe situations that should never be part of their job.

For māhū, and LGBTQIA+ workers and patients, the stakes are even higher. Māhū and LGBTQIA+ individuals already experience barriers to health care access and are overrepresented in frontline health care roles. When interference targets facilities that provide reproductive, sexual, or gender-affirming care, it compounds discrimination and creates a chilling effect that discourages both patients from seeking care and workers from remaining in these critical roles.

House Bill 1961 takes a reasonable and necessary approach. It preserves the right to lawful expression while clearly prohibiting conduct that interferes with access to care or disrupts the normal functioning of health care facilities. By establishing a private right of action and empowering the Attorney General to seek injunctive relief, the bill ensures that affected

Pride at Work – Hawai'i's Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of Re: HB 1961 HD 1

individuals, workers, and facilities have real tools to prevent harm and respond when violations occur.

A strong health care system depends on safe workplaces and unfettered access to care. Pride at Work – Hawai'i believes this bill is essential to protecting both.

For these reasons, Pride at Work – Hawai'i urges the Committee to pass House Bill 1961 HD 1.

Mahalo for your consideration and your commitment to the health and safety of Hawai'i's workers and communities.

In Solidarity,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)

President

[Pride at Work – Hawai'i](#)



**HA‘AHEO, ‘OHANA, KAULIKE, UI**  
Pride Family Justice Activate  
**WHERE PRIDE BECOMES POLITICAL POWER**

Website: [www.hokupac.org](http://www.hokupac.org) ♦ Email: [info@hokupac.org](mailto:info@hokupac.org)

February 21, 2026

House’s Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs  
Hawai‘i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 2:00 PM

**RE: STRONG SUPPORT for House Bill 1961 HD 1 – Relating to RELATING TO HEALTH CARE**

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepeo and fellow committee members,

This testimony on behalf of **HOKU PAC**, Hawai‘i’s LGBTQ+ political action committee dedicated to building queer political power and advancing policies that protect our communities. We write in **strong support of House Bill 1961 House Draft 1**.

HOKU PAC offers strong support for House Bill 1961, which protects individuals’ access to health care facilities, safeguards the uninterrupted delivery of medical services, and establishes clear legal remedies when interference causes harm.

At its core, House Bill 1961 is a civil rights and public safety measure. No person should be obstructed, harassed, or intimidated when seeking medical care, and no health care provider or facility should be prevented from carrying out its lawful purpose. Interference with access to health care undermines personal autonomy, erodes public trust, and places vulnerable individuals at heightened risk.

For the māhū and LGBTQIA+ community, the consequences of interference are especially severe. LGBTQIA+ people—particularly māhū, transgender, and gender non-conforming individuals—already face systemic barriers to care. Efforts to block access to health care facilities, disrupt services, or intimidate patients and providers compound these inequities and send a dangerous message about who is deemed worthy of care and protection.

House Bill 1961 strikes an appropriate and constitutional balance. It does not restrict peaceful assembly or free expression. Instead, it draws a clear line against conduct that interferes with access to health care or disrupts the functioning of medical facilities. By establishing violations as a petty misdemeanor, creating a private right of action, and authorizing the Attorney General to seek injunctive and equitable relief, the bill ensures accountability while prioritizing prevention and safety.

HOKU PAC believes Hawai‘i must remain a place where health care decisions are made between patients and providers—not dictated by harassment, obstruction, or fear. Protecting access to health care is essential to bodily autonomy, community well-being, and the values of dignity and equality that our state strives to uphold.

For these reasons, HOKU PAC respectfully urges your strong support for House Bill 1961 HD 1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

*Paid for by HOKU PAC – Not Authorized by any Candidate or Candidate Committee*



## STONEWALL CAUCUS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII

### TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1961 HD1

#### Relating to Health Care – Interference with Health Care Facilities

#### To the Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, we submit this testimony in **strong support** of HB1961 HD1.

HB1961 HD1 is a vital measure to protect the safety, dignity, and constitutional rights of patients, health care providers, and staff by ensuring unobstructed access to health care facilities throughout our state. No individual should be forced to endure harassment, intimidation, threats, or physical obstruction when seeking or providing medical care. For many in our community, particularly LGBTQ+ individuals, women, immigrants, people with disabilities, and those seeking reproductive or gender-affirming care, accessing health care already presents significant barriers. Acts of interference and harassment compound these challenges and create unsafe environments that undermine both physical and mental health.

HB1961 HD1 establishes clear and reasonable standards to prevent:

- Physical obstruction of clinic entrances and exits,
- Disruptive and intimidating conduct,
- Harassment through repeated communications, and
- Threats against patients, providers, and facilities.

By creating meaningful criminal penalties and civil remedies, this bill sends a strong message that Hawai'i will not tolerate conduct that endangers public health or interferes with medical services.

Importantly, HB1961 HD1 carefully balances public safety with constitutional protections by preserving lawful labor demonstrations and respecting lawful expression. The bill targets harmful conduct, not speech, ensuring that legitimate advocacy remains protected while patients and providers are shielded from abuse.

The Stonewall Caucus recognizes that safe access to health care is a cornerstone of equity and justice. When people are denied safe entry to clinics, their autonomy, privacy, and well-being are compromised. This is especially harmful to marginalized communities who already face disproportionate health disparities.

By enacting HB1961 HD1, the Legislature affirms Hawai'i's commitment to compassion, safety, and human dignity. The bill strengthens our state's role as a leader in protecting health care access and reinforces our shared responsibility to care for one another.

## Testimony in Strong Support of HB1961 HD1

For these reasons, the Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee to pass HB1961 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony and for your continued dedication to the health and safety of our communities.

**Respectfully submitted,**

Abby Simmons (she/her)  
Chair  
Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i



## Protect Democracy Move Forward

[www.indivisiblehawaii.org](http://www.indivisiblehawaii.org)

[info@indivisiblehawaii.org](mailto:info@indivisiblehawaii.org)

To: COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 2:00 pm  
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 325  
Re: Testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 1961, HD1**

Dear Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair, Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

Members of Indivisible Hawai'i thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 1961, HD1.

Protesters continue to harass patients and providers at Planned Parenthood health centers, especially in Honolulu. Protesters lean on patients' and providers' cars, yell slurs, and stand in front of patient vehicles to prevent safe access entering and exiting the clinic. Given the extreme and growing polarization of our times, we cannot assume this kind of behavior will remain limited to Planned Parenthood only. Hawai'i needs a bill to provide the police more tools to intervene in situations like this.

I strongly support a bill included in the Women's Legislative Caucus package that will make it unlawful for a person to interfere with access to a health care facility, including prohibiting physical obstruction, disturbing the peace, trespassing, telephoning a clinic repeatedly, or threatening administrative staff, providers, and patients. Fundamentally, patients and providers should not be afraid of being harassed for accessing or providing legal health care services. We strongly support this bill.

Sincerely,  
Indivisible Hawai'i Healthcare Team

*The mission of the 14-chapter Indivisible Hawai'i Statewide Network (IHSN) is to protect Hawai'i and democracy by defending civil rights, communities and values, most importantly, Hawai'i's Constitutionally protected spirit of Aloha. In October 2025, IHSN with other partners turned out over 22,000 residents on all major islands to say No Dictators! and to stand up for democracy. This call-to-action was part of Indivisible national's mobilization of more than 7 million across the country as the voice of the people, committed to election integrity and to evolving as a place of equity, opportunity and peace.*

# VISIBILITY BRIGADE HONOLULU Rush Hour Resistance

Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 1961

Aloha Respected Committee Members,

My name is Ben Lessard and I am one of the leads of Visibility Brigade Honolulu. My group members and I request that you support HB1961 to protect people from harassment at healthcare facilities. It is important that legal protections are established so that bad behaviors are deterred from those wishing to do harm to vulnerable members of our community.

The people of Hawai'i simply ask that this Legislative Body support a safe space that supports regular business operations free of intimidation or harassment. Healthcare staff also deserve to feel protected. We ask that you vote to support HB1961 as we all have family and friends who work in the healthcare field, and we all know how important it is to be able to receive healthcare without discrimination.

Thank you for continuing to promote equality for all people with your vote.

Ben Lessard

Visibility Brigade Honolulu

visibilitybrigadehonolulu@gmail.com

#VISIBILITYBRIGADE  
HONOLULU



Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 1961

Aloha Distinguished Committee Members,

My name is Tara Nash and I am the lead of Indivisible Leeward Oahu. My members and I humbly request that you support HB1961 to ensure that all residents of Hawai'i have protected access to healthcare. This also sets up barriers to deter people from obstructing facilities by providing a route for civil actions against offenders. HB1961 establishes penalties such as petty misdemeanors which are much needed against offenders so that there is a consequence for their actions. Access to healthcare must remain a safe process that is non discriminatory. Staff of healthcare facilities also are placed in harm's way when not properly protected by the laws of this state; this can be easily avoided by strengthening these protections.

We have members, family and friends who are all healthcare workers and they deserve our support as essential. HB1961 guarantees uninterrupted access to medical services, which is a right that should be afforded to everyone including staff; please vote in support.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Tara Nash

Indivisible Leeward Oahu

[indivisibleleewardoahu@gmail.com](mailto:indivisibleleewardoahu@gmail.com)

Indivisible  
LEEWARD OAHU



**Testimony to the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs  
Tuesday, February 24, 2026; 2:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1961, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.**

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** House Bill No. 1961, House Draft 1, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

This bill, as received by your Committee, would protect safe and unobstructed access to health care for patients and their providers by prohibiting persons from interfering with another person's access to a health care facility and establishing civil and criminal penalties for violations.

This measure would take effect on July 1, 3000.

As employers, FQHCs have an obligation to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of their employees, contractors, volunteers, patients, and patients' friends and family who accompany or visit patients at FQHC facilities. To the extent that this measure serves as a deterrent to violence perpetrated against health care workers, HPCA wholeheartedly supports this effort.

Yet, it should also be noted that when violence is committed against a health care professional, especially when it occurs at a health care facility, a crime is committed not only against the individual, but against all of society. When persons go to a health care professional, it is when that person is most vulnerable -- he or she is sick, or injured, or stressed from concern over a loved one. These places have

**Testimony on House Bill No. 1961, House Draft 1**  
**Tuesday, February 24, 2026; 2:00 p.m.**  
**Page 2**

long been held as sanctuary. During war, hospitals were marked on their rooftops with red crosses so that they would not be bombed.

Violence committed against a health care professional or at a health care facility causes sick or injured persons to hesitate before seeking help, which might exacerbate their condition. It also dissuades persons from entering the field of health care. At a time when Hawaii is facing unprecedented shortages in physicians, nurses, specialists, and other health care professionals, especially in rural areas, incidents of violence against health care professionals or at health care facilities may likely cause youths to consider other fields for future employment.

**For this reason, the HPCA urges your favorable consideration of this measure.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or [eabe@hawaiiipca.net](mailto:eabe@hawaiiipca.net).



To: House Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Committee  
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 2 pm  
Place: Hawai'i State Capitol, Rm. 325 and videoconference  
Re: Testimony of Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates – Hawai'i in strong support of HB 1961HD1

Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates – Hawai'i stands in strong support of HB 1961 HD1, a bill that will prevent protesters and harassers from disrupting access to health facilities, including by physically obstructing entrances or exits or threatening to inflict injury on the patients, providers, administrators, or property. PPAA also requests a technical amendment to avoid duplication and confusion in statute.

Patients and providers should not be afraid of being harassed for accessing or providing legal health care services. Yet, incidents of vandalism, assault and battery, threats of harm or death threats, stalking, and harassment targeting abortion and gender affirming health centers, providers, and patients have continuously increased over the past several decades, including the targeted murder of individual abortion providers.

Medical care should be a personal decision determined by a patient and their provider, not dictated by violent actors and harassment. Yet at the Honolulu Planned Parenthood, protesters consistently block the entrance and exit of the health center – protesters lean on patients' and providers' cars, yell slurs, and stand in front of vehicles to prevent access to the clinic.

Unfortunately, examples like this are all too common for abortion and gender affirming care providers nationwide, and Planned Parenthood understands firsthand how protester harassment can escalate into violence. Between 2023 and 2024 alone, the National Abortion Federation recorded 3,582 instances of harassments, 169 acts of vandalism, 621 instances of trespassing, 269 death threats, and 12 bomb threats at abortion health centers. Hawai'i needs a bill to allow the police to interfere and stop this violence.

As more clinics have been forced to close across the country due to harmful state abortion bans post-Dobbs and gender affirming care bans, much of the violence and disruption is now targeted towards health centers in "protective states" like Hawai'i. Under the Trump Administration, political attacks on abortion and gender affirming care nationwide are only growing, which is spurring on even more violence. Anti-abortion and anti-trans activists and politicians are not stopping at banning abortion or gender affirming care at the state level - they are coming after Hawai'i patients and providers too.

Thankfully, this bill is more protective than federal standards and applies to all health facilities in Hawai'i, not just abortion and gender affirming care providers. In the last decade, we have seen protesters going after COVID and other vaccines, PrEP & PEP medications, substance abuse services, or any number hot-button health services. One straightforward way to protect providers and patients for all types of health care is by prohibiting interference with health care facilities, which allows law enforcement to ensure patients can access care without facing violence and allows providers to do their jobs without facing constant threats.

Lawmakers should continue to lead on sexual and reproductive health by taking steps here in Hawai'i to protect our patients and our providers. Hawai'i needs these civil and criminal penalties as a tool for enforcement, protecting access to critical health care services. PPAA urges you to vote yes on HB 1961 and pass this important bill out of committee.



**February 24, 2026 at 2:00 pm**  
**Conference Room 325**

**House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs**

To: Chair David A. Tarnas  
Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe

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

Re: **Testimony in Support**  
**HB 1961 HD 1, Relating to Health Care**

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), established in 1939, serves as the leading voice of healthcare on behalf of 170 member organizations who represent almost every aspect of the health care continuum in Hawaii. Members include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities and durable medical equipment suppliers. In addition to providing access to appropriate, affordable, high-quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 30,000 people statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this measure, which creates a new state law that makes it illegal to interfere with access to health care facilities or disrupt their normal operations. We appreciate the intent, which is to ensure that patients, providers, and staff can enter, leave, and operate health care facilities without obstruction, intimidation, harassment, or threats.

Hospitals, clinics, and other care settings must be places where patients, families, and health care professionals can safely enter, deliver, and receive care without fear of obstruction, intimidation, or disruption. This measure helps reinforce that fundamental principle by establishing clear protections for safe and unobstructed access to health care facilities. We appreciate the legislature's continued commitment to protecting access to health care services across Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this measure.

*American College of  
Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
District VIII, Hawai'i (Guam &  
American Samoa) Section*



TO: Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs  
Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair  
Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

DATE: Tuesday, February 24th, 2026

PLACE: Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 325

FROM: Hawai'i Section, ACOG  
Dr. Tiffinie R. Mercado, MD, FACOG, Chair  
Dr. Ricardo A. Molerio Bravo, MD, FACOG, Legislative Chair

**Re: HB1961 HD1 Relating to Healthcare: Health Care Facilities; Interference; Disruption; Petty Misdemeanor; Private Right of Action; Civil Remedies; Criminal Penalties; Attorney General**

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and honorable Committee Members,

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Hawai'i Section (ACOG Hawai'i), which represents physicians dedicated to providing safe, accessible, and evidence-based reproductive health care across our state, respectfully expresses our strong support for HB1961 HD1.

Abortion care is a routine and essential component of full-spectrum obstetric and gynecologic practice. It is grounded in the same evidence-based principles that guide prenatal care, miscarriage management, and treatment of pregnancy-related complications. Yet despite its medical legitimacy, abortion care remains uniquely stigmatized. For decades, patients seeking care have encountered protestors outside of health care facilities who use aggressive language, graphic signage, and targeted confrontation intended to shame or dissuade them. These encounters do not occur in a vacuum — they can heighten emotional distress, delay time-sensitive medical care, and create confusion through the dissemination of medically inaccurate or misleading information.

Importantly, the impact of these demonstrations is not limited to patients alone. Health care workers — physicians, nurses, medical assistants, social workers, and administrative staff — are also routinely subjected to intimidation, verbal harassment, filming without consent, and threats as they enter and exit their workplaces. This contributes to a climate of fear and burnout within a workforce already experiencing critical shortages. History has demonstrated that rhetoric and intimidation around reproductive health can escalate into violence. The 2009 assassination of Dr. George Tiller, an obstetrician-gynecologist who provided abortion care in Kansas, remains a sobering reminder that threats directed at clinicians are not theoretical concerns but real risks with devastating consequences. While Hawai'i has long been a place that values compassion and mutual respect, we cannot assume immunity from the broader national climate of hostility directed at reproductive health providers.

Legislation such as HB1961 HD1 is not about restricting speech or limiting peaceful expression. Rather, it is about establishing reasonable boundaries that protect the safety, privacy, and dignity of patients and the health care professionals who serve them. No individual seeking medical care — whether for prenatal services, miscarriage management, contraception, or abortion — should have to navigate harassment, misinformation, or intimidation at the doors of a health facility. Likewise, no clinician or staff member should fear for their personal safety simply for providing lawful, evidence-based medical care.

Health care decisions, particularly those involving pregnancy and bodily autonomy, are deeply personal and often time sensitive. They deserve to be made in consultation with qualified medical professionals in environments that

are calm, confidential, and free from coercion. We trust our patients to make the decisions that are right for their lives and families, and we have an ethical obligation to ensure that when they entrust us with their care, they can do so in settings that are safe, supportive, and respectful.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your continued commitment to advancing equitable, evidence-based health care for the people of Hawai'i.

Respectfully submitted,

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
Hawai'i Section (ACOG Hawai'i)



Submitted Online: February 23, 2026

**TO:** House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs  
Representative David Tarnas, Chair  
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

**FROM:** Eva Andrade, President

**POSITION:** Opposition to HB 1961 HD1 Relating to Healthcare

My name is Eva Andrade, and I serve as President of Hawaii Family Forum, a nonprofit, pro-family education organization committed to preserving and strengthening families in Hawai‘i. We respectfully oppose HB1961 HD1.

Let me begin by saying clearly: no one should ever be threatened, harmed, or physically blocked from receiving medical care. Violence and intimidation are wrong. Hawai‘i already has laws that address those behaviors.

Our concern is not just about protecting safety — it’s also about protecting freedom.

HB1961 HD1 creates a new crime for “interfering” with access to a health care facility and includes conduct described as “reckless.” That word is broad and subjective. When criminal penalties — including mandatory jail time — are attached to language that can be interpreted in different ways, people of faith become understandably concerned.

Across our state, individuals and churches peacefully pray, offer counsel, or express deeply held beliefs near certain medical facilities. They do so respectfully and without violence. Many see this as a moral and spiritual calling — an act of compassion rooted in their faith. When laws are written broadly, even unintentionally, they can create fear that simply being present, praying, or expressing conviction could lead to arrest or lawsuits.

This bill also allows facilities and others to bring civil lawsuits, even without proving financial harm, and permits attorney’s fees to be recovered. For ordinary citizens — especially volunteers and ministries — the risk of costly litigation can be enough to silence them, even if they believe they are acting peacefully and lawfully.



Religious liberty is not only about what happens inside church walls. It is about whether citizens can live out their faith in the public square without fear of punishment for peaceful expression.

We respectfully urge the Legislature to ensure that any law in this area is narrowly written, clearly defined, and careful not to chill constitutionally protected speech and religious activity. Hawai‘i can protect access to medical care while also protecting fundamental freedoms. Those values do not have to be in conflict.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask you to oppose HB1961 HD1 unless it is significantly narrowed to safeguard religious liberty and peaceful expression.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Protect Democracy

Move Forward

[www.indivisiblehawaii.org](http://www.indivisiblehawaii.org)

[info@indivisiblehawaii.org](mailto:info@indivisiblehawaii.org)

To: COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 2:00 pm  
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 325  
Re: Testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 1961, HD1**

Dear Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair, Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

As a retired physician and a member of Indivisible Hawai'i, I thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 1961, HD1.

Protesters continue to harass patients and providers at Planned Parenthood health centers, especially in Honolulu. Protesters lean on patients' and providers' cars, yell slurs, and stand in front of patient vehicles to prevent safe access entering and exiting the clinic. Given the extreme and growing polarization of our times, we cannot assume this kind of behavior will remain limited to Planned Parenthood only. Hawai'i needs a bill to provide the police more tools to intervene in situations like this.

I strongly support the bill included in the Women's Legislative Caucus package that will make it unlawful for a person to interfere with access to a health care facility, including prohibiting physical obstruction, disturbing the peace, trespassing, telephoning a clinic repeatedly, or threatening administrative staff, providers, and patients. Fundamentally, patients and providers should not be afraid of being harassed for accessing or providing legal health care services.

Sincerely,

Robert Justice, M.D., Member of the Indivisible Hawai'i Healthcare Team

*The mission of the 14-chapter Indivisible Hawai'i Statewide Network (IHSN) is to protect Hawai'i and democracy by defending civil rights, communities and values, most importantly, Hawai'i's Constitutionally protected spirit of Aloha. In October 2025, IHSN with other partners turned out over 22,000 residents on all major islands to say No Dictators! and to stand up for democracy. This call-to-action was part of Indivisible national's mobilization of more than 7 million across the country as the voice of the people, committed to election integrity and to evolving as a place of equity, opportunity and peace.*



February 23, 2026

Position: **SUPPORT** of **HB1961 HD1**, Relating to Health Care

**To:** Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair  
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

**From:** Llasmin Chaine, LSW, Executive Director, Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women

**Re:** Testimony in **SUPPORT** of **HB1961 HD1**, Relating to Health Care

Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2026, 2:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 325, State Capitol

The Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women is dedicated to advancing gender equity and ensuring that all individuals have safe and uninterrupted access to essential health care services. The Commission **supports HB1961 HD1** as it **addresses the growing need to protect patients, providers, and staff from interference and disruption at health care facilities, barriers that disproportionately impact women and gender-diverse individuals seeking timely care.**

By establishing clear prohibitions against obstructing access or disrupting operations at health care facilities, this **bill provides vital safeguards** for those who may already face social, economic, or logistical obstacles to receiving care. The measure **creates a comprehensive framework to deter harmful conduct and ensure accountability.** These measures align with best practices observed in other jurisdictions that have sought to protect patients' rights and promote public health.

HB1961 HD1 also recognizes the importance of empowering individuals and facilities to seek redress when harmed by interference, and offers multiple avenues for enforcement. **Additional protections enabling individuals to access health care are needed and essential for wellbeing.** The bill's approach is balanced, focusing on preventing unlawful conduct without impinging on lawful protest or free expression.

The Commission appreciates the Legislature's commitment to protecting access to health care and **urges passage of HB1961 HD1.**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.



**Chair Tarnas**  
**Vice Chair Poepoe**  
**Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs**

**Tuesday, February 24th, 2026**  
**2:00 PM**

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1961 HD1  
RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.**

Aloha Members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

The Hawai‘i State Youth Commission was first created through Act 106 in 2018, “to advise the governor and legislature on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the youth of the State.” The Hawai‘i State Youth Commission’s Public Health legislative committee is in **strong support** of **HB1961**.

For young people in Hawai‘i, stigma-free access to health care is critical to well-being. Many youth rely on health clinics for education and preventive care, and any intimidation or harassment at these facilities can discourage them from seeking care when they need it most. Youth can face additional barriers, like limited transportation, school and work scheduling, and fear of being judged, which means that a single negative or unsafe experience can have a long-term effect on whether they seek necessary care in the future.

HB1961 addresses these concerns by clearly prohibiting behavior that blocks entrances or exits, disrupts facility operations, and threatens patients or providers while preserving the ability of individuals to engage in lawful demonstrations. These protections help ensure that health care

facilities remain places where youth and their families can focus on their health decisions with their providers, instead of having to face hostile conditions at the door. This measure sends a clear message that obstructing or disrupting access to healthcare facilities is not acceptable, and that the State has a responsibility to protect people across all communities.

For these reasons, the Hawai'i State Youth Commission is in strong support of HB1961 and respectfully urges the Committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

The Hawai'i State Youth Commission

[hawaiistateyc@gmail.com](mailto:hawaiistateyc@gmail.com)



February 23, 2026

Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair  
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Chair, Vice Chair  
Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

**Re: H.B. 1961 Relating to Health Care**

**Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2026, 2:00 PM, Conference Room 325 & Videoconference**

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and the Members of the Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs:

Hawaii Women Lawyers is a lawyer's trade organization that aims to improve the lives and careers of women in all aspects of the legal profession, influence the future of the legal profession, and enhance the status of women and promote equal opportunities for all.

**Hawaii Women Lawyers submits testimony in strong support of H.B. 1961 Relating to Health Care.**

We strongly concur with the Legislature that safe access to health care services is vital for the health and safety of all persons in Hawaii. Individuals seeking or providing health care should be able to access health care facilities without fear of intimidation and harassment.

Hawaii is already geographically challenging in terms of providing care across many population sectors. It is therefore absolutely critical that we ensure safe and unobstructed access to health care for patients and their providers regardless of their race, age, condition, or socioeconomic status. This is especially true for those healthcare facilities that provide critical services in support of reproductive rights, including Planned Parenthood and independent clinics.

Hawaii Women Lawyers commends and thanks the Legislature for both prioritizing both patients' rights to a safe environment and affirming medical professionals' ability to do their important work without interference or intimidation.

**For the above reasons, we strongly support H.B. 1961 Relating to Health Care and respectfully request that the Committee pass this measure.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure

P.O. Box 2072 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96805  
Email: hawaiiwomenlawyers@gmail.com

## **TESTIMONY OF NAHELANI PARSONS ON BEHALF OF ESSENTIAL ACCESS HEALTH IN SUPPORT OF HB1961 HD1**

Aloha Chair Tarnas and Vice Chair Poepoe,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB1961 HD1.

Essential Access Health is the Hawai'i grantee for the federal Title X family planning program and supports the delivery of a broad range of evidence-based sexual and reproductive health services, including patient-centered contraceptive counseling and prescribing; STI screening, testing, and treatment; and pregnancy options counseling. We distribute family planning funding to a provider network that includes federally qualified health centers, Native Hawaiian health centers, University of Hawai'i at Hilo student health, and Planned Parenthood.

Safe and unobstructed access to health care facilities is fundamental to the health and safety of our residents. HB1961 HD1 establishes clear protections to ensure that patients and providers can access and deliver care without fear of obstruction, harassment, intimidation, or disruption. By prohibiting intentional interference with access to or from a health care facility, as well as disruption of a facility's normal functioning, this measure strengthens safeguards for both patients and frontline health care workers.

Providers in our Title X network serve communities that already face barriers to care, including individuals with low incomes, rural residents, and young people. Even minor disruptions, whether physical obstruction, repeated harassing calls, or threats directed at patients, staff, or facilities, can delay care, compromise privacy, and create an environment of fear. HB1961 HD1 appropriately establishes both criminal penalties and civil remedies, including a private right of action and authority for the Attorney General to seek injunctive relief, ensuring meaningful enforcement and accountability.

Importantly, the bill balances these protections with appropriate exceptions, including for lawful labor demonstrations and the right to strike. This approach protects constitutional rights while ensuring that access to health care remains safe and uninterrupted.

In a time when health care providers nationwide are facing increased threats and harassment, Hawai'i has the opportunity to affirm that our health care facilities are places of safety, dignity, and respect. This measure provides clear standards and enforcement mechanisms that support both patient access and provider security.

We respectfully urge this Committee to pass HB1961 HD1.

Sincerely,

Essential Access Health

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 6:55:34 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
James E Raymond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you -- I am a member of Indivisible Windward.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 7:08:10 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kehaulani Coleman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 7:21:13 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Emma Lowrey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Writing in strong support of this bill. I am a member of Indivisiblr Hawaii. Mahalo.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 9:17:07 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kathleen Dickson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB1961 (S2845). People continue to harass patients and healthcare workers at Planned Parenthood health centers especially in Honolulu. They lean on patients' and providers' cars, yell slurs, and stand in front of vehicles, preventing safe access entering and exiting the clinic.

I strongly support a bill included in the Women's Legislative Caucus that will make it unlawful for a person to interfere with access to any healthcare facility.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 9:57:20 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of HB1961, a critical measure to protect the fundamental right of every individual in Hawai‘i to access healthcare safely, freely, and without fear of intimidation or obstruction.

Healthcare facilities are sacred spaces of healing, privacy, and critical service. They must remain safe havens for patients, providers, and staff. This bill directly addresses dangerous disruptions by:

- **Safeguarding Access to Care:** By prohibiting interference with a person’s access to or from a health care facility, HB1961 protects the most vulnerable among us. Patients seeking time-sensitive, private, and often emotionally difficult care—including reproductive services, gender-affirming treatments, cancer therapy, or end-of-life care—should never have to run a gauntlet of harassment or obstruction. This bill ensures their safe passage is a matter of law.
- **Protecting Facility Function:** Disrupting the normal functioning of a healthcare facility is not a protest; it is an attack on public health and safety. It endangers patients by delaying emergency services, diverting critical staff resources, and creating an environment of chaos. Making such disruptions a petty misdemeanor provides law enforcement and prosecutors with a necessary and proportionate tool to uphold order and safety for all.
- **Creating Meaningful Recourse:** The establishment of a private right of action for harmed individuals and facilities, along with the authorization for the Attorney General to seek injunctive relief, creates a robust enforcement framework. It empowers those directly victimized by this conduct to seek justice and provides a powerful deterrent against organized efforts to shut down healthcare access.

In an era where healthcare providers and patients are increasingly targeted, Hawai‘i must take a clear stand. No one should be blocked, filmed, harassed, or intimidated when seeking lawful medical care. No nurse or doctor should fear for their safety while entering their workplace.

HB1961 strikes the appropriate balance, protecting constitutionally protected expression in public spaces while drawing a firm line at conduct that actively blocks, harasses, or disrupts healthcare delivery. It affirms that the right to access healthcare is paramount.

I urge you to pass HB1961. Protect our patients, protect our providers, and protect the sanctity of healthcare in Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 9:59:01 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
JANE TOLLEFSRUD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please protect the freedom of all Hawaiian residents to access health care by making sure there is no interference in their ability to physically get to and from any health care facility. Please support accountability- those who are disruptive &/or destructive to persons or facilities should be penalized, and possibly charged.

Thank you!

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 10:03:39 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Clayton Kamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Committee Members:

I am a member of Indivisible Hawaii and am writing in **strong support** of HB 1961 HD1. A women's personal healthcare and reproductive decisions are private matters that should be protected from interference. It pains me to think that there exist narrow-minded people in our society who believe they have the right to interfere with the health care decisions of others. Shame on them!

Please support HB1961 HD1.

Mahalo,

Clayton Kamida

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 10:05:25 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gail Morrison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an individual and member of Indivisible Hawaii, I strongly support a bill included in the Women’s Legislative Caucus package that will make it unlawful for a person to interfere with access to a health care facility, including prohibiting physical obstruction, disturbing the peace, trespassing, telephoning a clinic repeatedly, or threatening administrative staff, providers, and patients. Fundamentally, patients and providers should not be afraid of being harassed for accessing or providing legal health care services.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 10:12:12 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
DeWaine Tollefsrud	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha all,

I am writing in support5 of SB 1961 that protects our families' right to determine what is the best course of action as it relates to our collective personal health decisions. Our decisions are our own and the public-at-large has no right to interfere in any legal decision that has been duly considered by individuals and families. To be subjected to insults, slurs, and demonizing outside care facilities, especially after making difficult decisions is reprehensible and should not be tolerated.

Please support SB 1961.

Mahalo for your time and service.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 10:17:04 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mala Wingerd	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I strongly support HB 1961 (SB2845).**

I am asking you to support the rights of your constituents to obtain access to healthcare without being harassed, degraded, assaulted, diminished, or emotionally abused - by a few zealots! This is one of the hardest decisions a woman will make in her life. She deserves respect.

And WHY I believe this? Having taught College Biology for decades, which included genetics, physiology, and development - I STRONGLY support an individual's right to choose AND to obtain LIFE SAVING medical treatment that 'may' interfere with the development of an implanted embryo (or early stage fetus). People need to take a basic Physiology class and learn that these are NOT "babies", let alone *viable* babies! And those who adhere to the "heartbeat" law are also mistaken, it is NOT yet a heart. It is the random development of cells that beat together through chemical communication, and will NOT become a functioning heart until around birth. These same cells will beat in unison in a Petri dish as well, but do not grow into a heart in the dish.

And what about the large number of women who are FORCED to make this choice due to their young age (giving birth will often kill both the young girl and her "baby") due to rape, &/or serious complications w/in a woman's own bodies. So it's ok to allow a woman (or girl) to die in childbirth, or bleed to death in bed w/her two year old or in a parking lot, rather than destroy a few random cells or non-functional fetus.

Know that within the first 3 months we can barely distinguish the embryo+ from those of lower animals. Even the tissues of the pharyngeal pouches (which become gills in fish) don't begin to close up and begin to differentiate into bird or mammal structures for at least 4 weeks *after* implantation (not "conception").

We (women) are NOT incubators. We are not here to serve the whims of others, especially men who have zero risk of pregnancy. We are autonomous humans who deserve all the rights, healthcare options, respect & dignity of any man! Let's stop selling viagra and start promoting healthier forms of birth control!

OH, and for those who want to use the bible and religion to proclaim murder? It IS **murder** to allow a woman to die for lack of treatment. It IS **murder** to kill practitioners. It is **assault** to bomb or make threats against others. It is **healthcare** to remove a 'developing' **non-viable**

embryo/fetus. AND - The bible clearly states that a "baby" is not a baby until it takes it's first breath. Maybe ya'll should actually LEARN your scriptures as well as your science. AND if you choose to NOT have an abortion, good, that is YOUR CHOICE! No one wants to force this on you, it is not our right.

I would honestly be happy to fly over to your offices and TEACH you all (in simple terms) the scientific reality of accurate embryonic/fetal development.

Thank you for your time!

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 1:18:47 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cheryl Rzonca	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1961 and ask you to Please vote against HB1961. This bill is not only redundant, as we have other existing laws that cover this, but it is very broad and will be difficult to enforce.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 2:13:29 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Eileen Cain	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please vote for this bill, which is included in the Women’s Legislative Caucus package that will make it unlawful for a person to interfere with access to a health care facility, including prohibiting physical obstruction, disturbing the peace, trespassing, telephoning a clinic repeatedly, or threatening administrative staff, providers, and patients. Fundamentally, patients and providers should not be afraid of being harassed for accessing or providing legal health care services. Mahalo.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 2:55:42 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Larry Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support.

Larry Smith

3178 Kaohinani Dr.

Honolulu, Hi 96817

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 3:44:23 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brett Kulbis	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Chair Tarnas and Committee Members,

My name is Brett Kulbis, I'm a 26yr retired Navy Veteran, who took a solemn oath to defend the Constitution from all enemies foreign and domestic, and that oath didn't expire when I retired. I live in Ewa Beach.

I STRONGLY OPPOSE BILL HB-1961 HD1.

HB-1961 HD1 poses serious risks to core constitutional rights, to free speech and peaceful assembly under the First Amendment. By making it unlawful to “interfere” with access to or “disrupt” the normal functioning of a health care facility through broad categories of conduct, the bill sweeps in expressive activity—such as praying, holding signs, or speaking with willing listeners on public sidewalks—that has long been recognized as protected speech in traditional public forums. The terms “interfere,” “disrupt,” and “unreasonably disturbs the peace” are vague and overbroad, inviting arbitrary and discriminatory enforcement against disfavored viewpoints and exposing ordinary citizens to criminal prosecution and civil suit simply because someone inside the facility finds their message unwelcome.

HB-1961 HD1 also creates a powerful set of penalties that will chill protected expression. It imposes mandatory jail time even for a first petty-misdemeanor offense and allows facilities, employees, and property owners to sue without proving actual damages, while authorizing enhanced per-day damages and attorney’s fees. When combined with the statute’s vague standards, these provisions effectively deter citizens from engaging in peaceful advocacy near health care facilities out of fear that their speech may later be characterized as “reckless interference” or “disruption.” This kind of chilling effect on speech around matters of profound public concern—such as life, health care policy, and morality—cuts against the strong constitutional protection that political and religious expression is supposed to receive.

Finally, HB-1961 HD1 is structurally unbalanced in a way that raises additional constitutional concerns. It expressly exempts “actions taken as part of a labor demonstration or when exercising the right to strike,” meaning labor-related picketing enjoys a statutory safe harbor that is denied to other speakers at the very same locations. By shielding one category of protest while exposing others to enhanced criminal and civil liability, the bill invites viewpoint or speaker-based discrimination in practice. The government may regulate truly obstructive or

violent conduct in a content-neutral manner, but it may not selectively burden disfavored speech while protecting favored protest activity.

For these reasons, I urge you to defer indefinitely HB-1961 HD1.

Respectfully,

Brett Kulbis

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 4:07:19 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jesse Hutchison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Patients and providers should not be afraid of being harassed for accessing or providing legal health care services.**

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 4:22:42 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kristy Gund	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB1961 (SB2845).

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 4:49:57 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mecca Monson-Gere	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I submit this testimony in strong support of HB1961, Relating to Health Care and safety.

As a woman in this community, I firmly believe that healthcare is a private matter, and all medical decisions should be made solely between a patient and their trusted doctor, free from political or public interference.

When individuals seeking care are met with intimidation or harassment outside of a facility, it fundamentally compromises their ability to receive necessary medical attention. When a facility's operation is disrupted, the safety and well-being of all patients are put at risk.

By establishing civil and criminal penalties for such interference, HB1961 is not about restricting speech; it is about guaranteeing the physical safety and privacy required for medical treatment. It is about affirming that in Hawai'i, we value the principle that healthcare access must remain secure and dignified for everyone.

I urge the committee to pass HB1961 and uphold the right of every resident to receive necessary care without fear or obstruction.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Mecca Monson-Gere

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 4:53:53 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lily Troy MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 1961

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 4:57:07 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Pamela Vera	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I politely ask that you would oppose this bill.

Personally I don't see the need for this, as violence and obstruction are ALREADY illegal.

I believe the language to be too vague/broad which would allow emotions to rule instead of facts.

I believe this bill would add numerous civil lawsuits - without proof of harm that would be expensive and difficult to conduct - further clogging our justice system.

Please oppose this bill,

Thank you,

Pamela Vera

Lahaina, HI 96761

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 5:46:33 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Judith White	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this important protection for healthcare access.

Judith White, Kapaa

Member, Kauai Indivisible

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 6:28:15 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
john savino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 1961

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 7:06:03 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michele Golojuch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in full support

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 8:56:55 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Muftiah Martin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha State Legislators,

I'm a former reproductive health clinic employee. Access to reproductive health care, including birth control and abortion services, is so important for the health of society. It empowers women (and men) to make their own decisions about if, and when, to become parents, which results in happier and emotionally healthier families and in turn, a healthier society. Mahalo for considering this legislation. I look forward to its passage!

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 8:57:58 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cory Harden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha legislators,

I strongly support this bill. Protestors are harassing patients and health care workers at Planned Parenthood centers and at facilities providing gender-affirming care. Patients should be able to access health care without fear and worry.

mahalo,

Cory Harden

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 8:59:23 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Linda Miyata	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

**I respectfully oppose HB1961 HD1 as it creates a new law that makes it illegal to interfere with someone’s access to a health care facility or to disrupt how that facility operates . It applies to actions such as physically blocking entrances or exits, making repeated phone calls intended to disrupt operations, or threatening staff, patients, or property. A violation would be a petty misdemeanor, with fines and possible jail time that increase for repeat offenses . The bill also allows patients, facilities, employees, and property owners to file civil lawsuits — even without proving financial damages — and authorizes the Attorney General to seek court orders to stop alleged violations . The committee has delayed the effective date to allow further discussion.**

**Thank you for voting NO on HB 1961,**

**Linda**

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 12:39:26 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alice Abellanida	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill! This is a violation of the 1st amendment of the Constitution. I urge you to kill this bill.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 6:29:58 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Duffy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Respectfully **oppose** this bill. No one disputes the fact that patients and health care providers deserve safety and unobstructed access to facilities. Threats, violence, harassment, and obstruction are already illegal under Hawaii law. Assault, disorderly conduct, harassment, trespass, and terroristic threatening statutes provide ample enforcement tools.

H.B. 1961 is unnecessary and duplicative.

More concerning, the bill lowers the intent standard to include “reckless” interference and uses undefined terms such as “interfere” and “disrupt.” These broad and subjective terms risk sweeping in constitutionally protected activity, including peaceful protest, sign-holding, sidewalk counseling, or prayer on public sidewalks.

The United States Supreme Court has repeatedly emphasized that public sidewalks are traditional public forums deserving the highest First Amendment protection.

Hawaii can protect both public safety and constitutional rights. This bill risks undermining the latter while duplicating protections already in place.

For these reasons I am **opposed** to this bill.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 12:12:08 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Colleen Inouye	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Rep Tarnas, Chair, Rep Poepoe, Vice Chair and the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

Please support HB1961 HD1!

Colleen F Inouye MD FACHE FAAPL FACOG

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 12:50:40 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cynthia J. Goto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 1:32:09 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary Smart	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1961.

The US Constitution gives citizens the right to assembly, talk, sing, protest, and/or pray in public. If there is public space near a health provider, an individual has a right to be there.

Intimidation, harassment and interference are vague concepts that criminalize peaceful behavior that is legal but another individual doesn't like.

This bill could be used as weaponized lawfare, especially against people of faith. Files revealed the FBI had specifically targeted members of some religions, especially traditional Catholics.

It is not currently a crime nor should it ever be a crime for kapuna and others to pray in public spaces. That includes public spaces near health care facilities.

Americans have a right and a duty to alert others when immoral activity is occurring in their community.

Do not pass HB1961.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 1:39:27 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Olivia Manayan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and honorable Committee Members,

My name is Dr. Olivia Manayan. I am a board-certified OB/GYN who provides abortion care across the state, including at Planned Parenthood Hawai'i. I write to you today in **strong support** of HB1961 HD1.

Despite being a key component of the practice of evidence-based, full-scope OB/GYN care, abortion care is often stigmatized. For many years, protestors against abortion have stood outside of clinics, often using aggressive language and signage to intimidate patients, in an attempt to dissuade them from seeking care. The presence of anti-choice protestors outside of clinics which provide this vital care does not only exacerbate the stigma that patients who seek abortion care face, but it also threatens patient safety. Aside from spewing verbally violent rhetoric, protestors provide information to patients that is objectively false and clinically misleading.

Ultimately, the decisions that a pregnant person makes regarding her health and her bodily autonomy are private and need not be privy to the scrutiny of others; no person should be harassed for seeking healthcare. We trust our patients to make decisions that are best for their life and their family, and we want to ensure that when our patients entrust us with their care, that they may do so in a setting where they feel safe, supported, and empowered.

In addition to the safety of our patients, the aggressive nature of anti-abortion protestors threatens the safety of abortion care providers. As you may be familiar, our country has a history of showing violence, sometimes towards fatal ends, to abortion providers. I would be lying if I said that every time I enter the Planned Parenthood clinic and am harassed by the antagonistic rhetoric of protestors, who are often filming on their phones, that I do not fear for the safety of myself and my family. By removing these threats to safety, you can improve the safety of healthcare workers who work at clinics like ours, ensuring that patients are able to get the care they need and deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am always available to answer questions for clarification.

Me ke aloha pumehana,

Olivia Manayan, MD MPH  
Obstetrics & Gynecology  
Honolulu, HI

Committee on Judicial and Hawaiian Affairs  
Chair David Tarnas Vice-Chair Mahina Poepoe  
and Committee Members  
Rep. Au Belatti, Eli Cochran, Mark Hashem, Kirstin Kahaloa, Jackson Sayama,  
Greg Takayama, Diamond Garcia and Garner Shimizu

**HB1961 HD1**

**Report Title:** Health Care Facilities; Interference; Disruption; Petty Misdemeanor; Private Right of Action; Civil Remedies; Criminal Penalties; Attorney General

My name is Rita Kama-Kimura and I stand in strong opposition to this bill.

Peaceful protesting is the right of every law-abiding citizen. Note I said peaceful. It is our right to protest something we find offensive, harmful and life threatening to an innocent human being.

If you are so worried about disruptive non-peaceful protesting, there are many examples out there.

If I may, the destruction, the taking, the ending of innocent human life (under the guise of healthcare) IS NOT HEALTH CARE!

So, I again ask you to stop this bill from moving any further!

Respectfully,  
Rita Kama-Kimura

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 1:41:24 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of HB1961 HD1. I believe people should be able to access healthcare without harassment. Mahalo for taking my views into consideration.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 5:29:01 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
TERI SAVAIINAEA	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas and Members of the Committee,

I, Teri Kia Savaiinaea respectfully submit this testimony in opposition to HB1961.

Blocking entrances, threatening individuals, and interfering with lawful access are already illegal under existing Hawai'i law. This measure adds additional layers of criminal and civil liability, including penalties for conduct deemed "reckless," which raises concerns about how broadly and subjectively it could be applied.

People have a constitutional right to assemble, protest, and express their views. While safety and access to health care facilities are important, legislation in this area must be narrowly tailored and must not duplicate existing laws or create a chilling effect on lawful, peaceful expression.

I respectfully urge careful reconsideration and ask that you vote no on HB1961.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Teri Kia Savaiinaea

Wai'anae resident

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 8:06:17 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alfred Hagen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I oppose HB1961.

Hawaii already has a law on its books for what's mostly described in HB1961. And, except for the penalties, this bill lacks specificity. The bill needs to define such terms as "intentional", "knowingly", "reckless". What determines blocking an entrance? Standing still in front of an entrance 5, 10, 15 seconds? A minute? Longer? How are claims substantiated? Who's believed? Are witnesses required? Are video and/or photo evidence the criteria for guilt or innocence? Much too subjective and broad.

Penalties are much too harsh. Civil lawsuits, AG injunctions? Serious stuff. And, then there's the real possibility of violating the First Amendment of the US Constitution.

This bill has questionable merit, therefore, I oppose its passage.

Respectfully,

Alfred Hagen

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 8:56:17 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeremiah Santos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**1. Violence and obstruction are already illegal.**

Blocking entrances, threatening people, harassment, and trespass are already crimes under Hawai‘i law. We do not need a new law to punish conduct that is already unlawful. Instead of strengthening enforcement of existing laws, this bill creates a new layer of penalties that may be unnecessary.

**2. This bill allows jail time — even for a first offense.**

A violation would be a petty misdemeanor and includes **mandatory jail time**, starting with at least 24 consecutive hours for a first offense . That is serious punishment. Before adding criminal penalties that require jail, lawmakers should ensure the language is extremely clear and narrowly tailored.

**3. The language is broad and includes “reckless” conduct.**

The bill does not just punish intentional obstruction — it also includes conduct considered “reckless” . That lower standard raises concern that peaceful expressive activity could be swept in if someone later claims it disrupted operations.

**4. It creates new civil lawsuits — even without proof of harm.**

The bill allows facilities, employees, property owners, or patients to file civil lawsuits and recover damages and attorney’s fees — even if no financial damages are proven . That could expose ordinary citizens to costly legal battles for conduct that may fall into gray areas.

## **5. It expands government enforcement power.**

The Attorney General is authorized to bring actions for injunctions and other relief . Combined with criminal penalties and private lawsuits, this creates multiple layers of enforcement that may chill lawful public expression.

## **6. Even the committee delayed the effective date.**

The Health Committee changed the effective date to July 1, 3000 “to encourage further discussion” . That signals lawmakers recognize there are still unresolved concerns.

## **Bottom Line**

Everyone agrees patients should not be threatened or physically blocked from receiving medical care. The question is whether this bill goes beyond stopping real violence and instead creates overly broad penalties that could affect peaceful citizens exercising their rights. Lawmakers should proceed carefully and ensure existing laws are sufficient before creating new criminal and civil liabilities

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 9:13:58 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Christopher Lott	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this like it's sister bill of not holding anyone accountable for encouraging children to surgically remove their body parts during puberty.

Similarly you want no opposition to abortion, even if it's people holding signs and peacefully praying in the vicinity.

Where will your culture of death bring you next? Assisted suicide?

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 9:38:43 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dani Mathisen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a practicing Obgyn I support this bill.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 10:21:03 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cindy R Ajimine	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Committee Chair & Members:

I am writing to **VERY STRONGLY OPPOSE** this bill.

Blocking entrances, threatening people, harassment, and trespass are already crimes under Hawai'i law. We do not need a new law to punish conduct that is already unlawful. Instead of strengthening enforcement of existing laws, this bill creates a new layer of penalties that may be unnecessary. Our law enforcement officers are already overloaded

It creates new civil lawsuits — even without proof of harm. As written, it allows facilities, employees, property owners, or patients to file civil lawsuits and recover damages and attorney's fees — even if no financial damages are proven. This would expose ordinary citizens to costly legal battles for conduct that may fall into gray areas.

Please do NOT pass this bill. Thank you!

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 10:31:45 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Keira Nash	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Support HB1961 HD1 because every resident in Hawaii should be able to access healthcare. Please vote in support to keep Hawaii as a leader in equality. Thank you for your time.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 10:35:51 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bejana Mehr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write in support of HB1961 because there should be safe zones at healthcare facilities. No one should feel unsafe while seeking medical treatment. Please vote to support HB1961, thank you for your time.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 10:37:21 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Claire Yamashiro	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am opposed to HB 1961 because:

- Violence and obstruction are already illegal.
- This bill allows jail time - even for a first offense.
- The language is broad and includes reckless conduct.
- It creates new civil lawsuits - even without proof of harm.
- It expands government enforcement power.
- Even the committee delayed the effective date.

Thank you for opposing bill HB 1961,

Claire Yamashiro

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 11:50:51 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Vernelle Oku	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill as it violates the 1st Amendment.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 2:38:52 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Loretta Tanioka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Legislators,

I am writing to you today with the help of my family. I am 83 years old and spend my days in bed, relying on others for everything. While I cannot leave my home often, I know how frightening it is for someone in my position, or even someone much younger, to face a crowd or a blocked entrance when they finally do make it to the doctor. When a person is sick or frail, the simple act of getting from the car to the clinic door can be an exhausting journey. To have someone intentionally stand in the way or cause a disruption is more than just a nuisance; it is a threat to our health. HB 1961 is about protecting the peace and safety that every patient deserves. It is our kuleana to make sure that our hospitals and clinics are safe havens for everyone, especially the most vulnerable among us. Please support this bill for the sake of all our kūpuna and families.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 2:40:53 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tonya Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Tonya, and I am writing in strong support of HB 1961. At 43, I look back at my journey from a childhood in poverty to earning my college degree as a series of hurdles I had to overcome with absolute focus. When you are working your way up from nothing, you don't have the luxury of time or the patience for unnecessary disruptions. Healthcare appointments are often the only window a working person has to address their well-being before getting back to the job. No one should be physically blocked or intimidated when trying to enter a clinic. This bill ensures that healthcare facilities remain places of professional care, not arenas for interference. For those of us who have fought hard for every inch of progress, having a safe, unobstructed path to essential services is a matter of basic respect and economic stability. I urge you to pass HB 1961.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 2:43:08 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Eric Derrick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Committee,

My name is Eric. I've spent time in the system. One thing you learn when you're trying to move forward with your life is the importance of clear rules and staying out of trouble. When I go to work or take care of my health, I just want to do my business and get home. I support HB 1961 because it's about basic order. It shouldn't be legal for people to block a doorway or mess with the normal functioning of a shop, a school, or especially a healthcare facility. If someone needs a doctor, they should be able to get in and out without being harassed or stopped. This bill sets a clear standard that interfering with someone else's access to care is wrong. We all deserve to move through our community without being blocked by someone else's agenda. Please vote yes on HB 1961.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 6:10:36 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shanda Brack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Shanda Brack, and I am testifying in strong support of HB1961 as both a nurse practitioner and as someone who has personally relied on Hawai'i's health care system as a patient.

I know what it feels like to be in a vulnerable position seeking medical care, and I know how important it is to be able to walk into a clinic or hospital focused on your health — not on whether you will be confronted, delayed, or made to feel unsafe. That sense of safety is not abstract; it directly affects whether people seek care at all. People outside a clinic have literally NO IDEA what health problems someone might have walking in the door. I picture accompanying my pregnant niece to an appointment because she has noticed pain or bleeding. She's frightened for her baby. If she encounters a crowd blocking the door, scolding or yelling at her, or attempting to prevent her from entering the clinic, this will lead to more stress on her and the baby. She may choose to delay care and come back another time. Could that be a reason she loses her baby?

As a nurse practitioner, I have seen how even small disruptions can have serious consequences for patients and health care teams. I can think of a patient who told me she used to be afraid to come into the clinic because she was worried about who would see her come in and feared being judged. She has a complicated list of medical conditions and there is a very real possibility that delay of care could lead to hospitalization or death for her.

HB1961 provides important protections by prohibiting interference with health care facilities and by creating meaningful enforcement mechanisms. These protections are essential to ensuring continuity of care, protecting health care workers, and safeguarding patients' rights to access medically necessary services without obstruction.

This bill strikes an appropriate balance by protecting access to care while respecting lawful activities, and it sends a clear message that patient safety and uninterrupted health care delivery are priorities for our state.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to support HB1961.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your commitment to protecting access to health care in Hawai'i.

Respectfully,

Shanda Brack, APRN

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 7:57:37 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ronnie Texeira	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am an Obstetrician–Gynecologist practicing in Hawai‘i, and I write in strong support of HB1961 HD1.

As physicians who provide comprehensive reproductive health care—including contraception, miscarriage management, abortion care, prenatal care, and treatment of high-risk pregnancies—we see firsthand how essential it is for patients to have timely access to evidence-based medical services. Reproductive health care is a fundamental component of overall health care.

Abortion care is a safe and medically appropriate part of comprehensive reproductive health services. It is also frequently indistinguishable from miscarriage management and other urgent pregnancy-related care.

Hawai‘i has long recognized the importance of protecting access to reproductive health services. HB1961 HD1 helps ensure that patients can continue to access safe, confidential, and medically appropriate reproductive care in our state. In a healthcare system already facing workforce shortages and geographic barriers—particularly for patients on neighbor islands—it is critical that we maintain policies that support providers in delivering care according to established medical standards.

Every patient deserves the ability to make personal medical decisions in consultation with their healthcare provider, free from unnecessary interference. Protecting access to abortion and other reproductive health services protects patient autonomy, supports maternal health, and promotes equitable healthcare outcomes across our communities.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support for HB1961 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 8:08:05 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lora Burbage	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I OPPOSE HB1961.

This bill has the potential for abuse to those who are wanting to express their freedom to speak out on deeply held concerns. It seems extreme and punitive especially when there is no bodily harm involved since that would already fall under assault.

Please OPPOSE this bill.

Mahalo,

Lora Burbage

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 8:30:21 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bliss Kaneshiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am an Obstetrician–Gynecologist practicing in Hawai‘i, and I write in strong support of HB1961 HD1.

As physicians who provide comprehensive reproductive health care—including contraception, miscarriage management, abortion care, prenatal care, and treatment of high-risk pregnancies—we see firsthand how essential it is for patients to have timely access to evidence-based medical services. Reproductive health care is a fundamental component of overall health care.

Abortion care is a safe and medically appropriate part of comprehensive reproductive health services. It is also frequently indistinguishable from miscarriage management and other urgent pregnancy-related care.

Hawai‘i has long recognized the importance of protecting access to reproductive health services. HB1961 HD1 helps ensure that patients can continue to access safe, confidential, and medically appropriate reproductive care in our state. In a healthcare system already facing workforce shortages and geographic barriers—particularly for patients on neighbor islands—it is critical that we maintain policies that support providers in delivering care according to established medical standards.

Every patient deserves the ability to make personal medical decisions in consultation with their healthcare provider, free from unnecessary interference. Protecting access to abortion and other reproductive health services protects patient autonomy, supports maternal health, and promotes equitable healthcare outcomes across our communities.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support for HB1961 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Bliss Kaneshiro

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 9:21:27 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elaine Chan	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am an Obstetrician–Gynecologist practicing in Hawai‘i, and **I write in strong support of HB1961 HD1.**

As physicians who provide comprehensive reproductive health care—including contraception, miscarriage management, abortion care, prenatal care, and treatment of high-risk pregnancies—we see firsthand how essential it is for patients to have timely access to evidence-based medical services. Reproductive health care is a fundamental component of overall health care.

Abortion care is a safe and medically appropriate part of comprehensive reproductive health services. It is also frequently indistinguishable from miscarriage management and other urgent pregnancy-related care.

Hawai‘i has long recognized the importance of protecting access to reproductive health services. HB1961 HD1 helps ensure that patients can continue to access safe, confidential, and medically appropriate reproductive care in our state. In a healthcare system already facing workforce shortages and geographic barriers—particularly for patients on neighbor islands—it is critical that we maintain policies that support providers in delivering care according to established medical standards.

Every patient deserves the ability to make personal medical decisions in consultation with their healthcare provider, free from unnecessary interference. Protecting access to abortion and other reproductive health services protects patient autonomy, supports maternal health, and promotes equitable healthcare outcomes across our communities.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support for HB1961 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,  
Elaine Chan, MD

Obstetrician-Gynecologist  
Honolulu, Queens Medical Center

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 9:57:40 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joie Yonamine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting testimony in strong support of HB1961 both as an individual and as a member of the Indivisible Hawaii State Network (IHSN). HB1961 will make it unlawful for interference with access to a health care facility, including prohibiting physical obstruction, disturbing the peace, trespassing, telephoning a clinic repeatedly, or threatening administrative staff, providers, and patients.

Most days on my way to work driving into town, I see protestors outside the Planned Parenthood health center on Beretania. These protestors harass patients and providers, yell slurs, and inhibit safe access entering and existing the clinic. Planned Parenthood provides essential reproductive and sexual healthcare to already vulnerable populations, who should be able to seek care without fear, intimidation, or harassment.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass this bill and continue Hawai'i's leadership in defending compassionate, evidence-based health care.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Joie Yonamine, Manoa

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 10:06:21 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
James Wallace	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

I oppose HB1961. This is going against the Constitution of whom our "Law makers" do all the time on the regular basis. This is the First Amendment, The Freedom Of Speech!! Going against to constitution is full blown communist and that should be in a law to jail communist minded bill writers. Its a waste of time and tax payers money. The Crime is actually in planned parenthood not outside with Peaceful Prayers Warriors. They do abortions for minors and not report to police. Planned Parenthood should be investigated. Who knows maybe they sell Baby Body parts and cover it up.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 10:08:06 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Teresa Fredericks	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Praying in public places is religious freedom. Praying in front of Planned Parenthood saves babies.

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

HEARING: Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 2 pm

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE and Conference Room 325, State Capitol

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT: HB 1875, HD1, RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.**

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, Rep. Cochran of Maui, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christine Andrews, and I am a long-term resident of Wailuku, Maui. I write to you today in **support of HB 1875, HD1**, relating to health care, which expands the protections established under Act 2, SLH 2023, to include gender-affirming health care services, including clarifying permitted disclosures of protected health information to address changes in federal regulations; establishes protections against abusive litigation; prohibits medical malpractice insurers and health carriers from taking certain adverse actions against health care providers solely on the basis that the health care provider provides lawful reproductive health care services or gender-affirming care services.

I am someone who did not think much about the rights or needs of transgender youth until my own children educated me about it when they were in middle and high school. I learned more when I volunteered for an event within my spiritual community and I was taught about how important support for transgender people is and how at risk they are of severe mental health issues related to lack of acceptance. Over the course of the past five years, I have come to have several transgender youth within my extended family. I have learned through these experiences that transgender youth who are affirmed in their gender by their families do better in school, feel safer in their communities, establish healthy relationships with their parents and peers, and are better equipped to plan for their future.

Tragically, denying them this support increases their likelihood of dropping out of school, increases their risk for substance use and suicide, and worsens symptoms of depression and anxiety. According to the 2024 Hawai'i Sexual and Gender Minorities Health Summary<sup>1</sup>,

- Less than half (45%) of transgender youth have an adult outside of school or teacher they can talk to.
- More than 1 in 3 transgender or unsure gender youth have attempted suicide in the past year.
- Cisgender youth are 3 times more likely than transgender or unsure gender youth to feel that they will complete a post-high school program.

I have witnessed how positive support, acceptance, and access to gender affirming care has improved the quality of life, confidence, and overall wellbeing of my family members who identify as transgender. As a family member, community member, and ally, I request that you support this vulnerable population by protecting their access to what can be life-saving care by voting in **support of HB 1875, HD1**.

Mahalo,

Christine Andrews, JD

Wailuku, Maui

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<sup>1</sup> 2024 Hawai'i Sexual and Gender Minorities Health Summary

<https://health.hawaii.gov/harmreduction/files/2024/03/Presentation-SGM-Youth-in-HI-2017-2019-FINAL-VERSION-2-3-4-2024.pdf>

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:03:02 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ron Brown	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this testimony. People have a right to express their opinions but the behavior of protestors at Planned Parenthood sites is reprehensible and goes well beyond what is appropriate for free expression.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:24:31 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**HB1961 HD1 creates a new law that makes it illegal to interfere with someone’s access to a health care facility or to disrupt how that facility operates . It applies to actions such as physically blocking entrances or exits, making repeated phone calls intended to disrupt operations, or threatening staff, patients, or property. A violation would be a petty misdemeanor, with fines and possible jail time that increase for repeat offenses. The bill also allows patients, facilities, employees, and property owners to file civil lawsuits — even without proving financial damages — and authorizes the Attorney General to seek court orders to stop alleged violations. The committee has delayed the effective date to allow further discussion.**

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:45:22 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

**Strong Opposition** to HB1961 which appears to be a targeted effort to specifically sideline prolife efforts to warn unsuspecting parents of what lies ahead for them if they walk into the Honolulu Planned Parenthood.

Cigarette boxes have warning labels - Planned Parenthood does not.

HB1961 seeks to give unilateral power and authority to the Planned Parenthood staff to determine what *they* define as "interference, access, disrupting" and is in violation of rights embedded under the Constitutional First Amendment to the freedom of speech, press, assembly and petition.

Furthermore, it provides no recourse or remedy to those who will be *falsely accused* - under HB1961, if Planned Parenthood accuses or complains, the accused is guilty as charged/alleged.

This legislature should not be (mis)used to strong-arm, deter, discourage and frighten citizens from exercising their First Amendment rights in this state.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony.

Most respectfully submitted ~

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:47:14 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Martha Morishige	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The legislators must remember there are already laws that make violence and obstruction illegal. The state doesn't need this, another law, which would be too broad and even includes jail time for "first" offenders.

The first amendmet right to peaceful protest should be honored and the state should not weaken citizens' right to pray at medical facilities and be peaceful protestors.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:59:56 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Janet Teare	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill to protect our neighbors access to Any health care. I am a member of East Hawaii Indivisible. Thank you.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 12:11:06 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
James Reid	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 12:13:03 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Arielle Howell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

I am an OBGYN resident doctor at the University of Hawai'i residency program. I am writing to express my support for HB1961.

In my field, having timely access to healthcare is essential to healthy and safe outcomes. OBGYN work encompasses pregnancy care, women's health, and gynecologic related topics. As one can imagine, timely access to care for pregnancy is crucial in the safety of patients. Individuals preventing patients from feeling comfortable in accessing care can lead to delays in access to abortion care, cancer screening/care, and other critical types of healthcare. This can lead to real medical and lifelong consequences for patients.

This bill helps ensure that patients, staff, and emergency responders can safely and unobstructedly enter health care facilities. It's about safety, dignity, and access.

I respectfully ask for your support of HB1961. Thank you!

Arielle Howell, MD

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 12:29:26 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ryan Chase	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am submitting this in strong support. Everyone deserves to seek healthcare or go to their job without fear for their safety. Please vote yes to protect our access to healthcare and improve safety.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 12:34:15 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jonathan Kama'i	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee,

As servants of the state of Hawaii I address you with great respect as such.

I am strongly opposed to bill HB1961. Amongst many issues in this bill, one I will address.

The 1st ammendment is dangerously under attack. Our freedom of speech is threatened and the language in this bill gives a foothold for "bad actors" to take advantage and allow corruption or even committ corruptible acts leaving the most vulnerable to suffer unprotected rendering our 1st ammendment right powerless. The submission of this bill can be considered a threat in itself. As "We the people" I strongly urge you to not let this bill pass through ever. Be a good steward servant and malama (take good care) of "we". Be accountable right where you stand and not pass it through. Thank you for receiving my testimony. I pray I get a chance again to thank you for not sending this bill through.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 12:39:14 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Madison Masek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Protect individuals receiving healthcare! Make the bill effective this year!

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 12:51:09 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vlad Sosa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I oppose this bill:**

**1. Violence and obstruction are already illegal.**

**Blocking entrances, threatening people, harassment, and trespass are already crimes under Hawai'i law. We do not need a new law to punish conduct that is already unlawful. Instead of strengthening enforcement of existing laws, this bill creates a new layer of penalties that may be unnecessary.**

**2. This bill allows jail time — even for a first offense.**

**A violation would be a petty misdemeanor and includes mandatory jail time, starting with at least 24 consecutive hours for a first offense. That is serious punishment. Before adding criminal penalties that require jail, lawmakers should ensure the language is extremely clear and narrowly tailored.**

**3. The language is broad and includes “reckless” conduct.**

**The bill does not just punish intentional obstruction — it also includes conduct considered “reckless” . That lower standard raises concern that peaceful expressive activity could be swept in if someone later claims it disrupted operations.**

**4. It creates new civil lawsuits — even without proof of harm.**

**The bill allows facilities, employees, property owners, or patients to file civil lawsuits and recover damages and attorney’s fees — even if no financial damages are proven. That could expose ordinary citizens to costly legal battles for conduct that may fall into gray areas.**

**5. It expands government enforcement power.**

**The Attorney General is authorized to bring actions for injunctions and other relief. Combined with criminal penalties and private lawsuits, this creates multiple layers of enforcement that may chill lawful public expression.**

**6. Even the committee delayed the effective date.**

**The Health Committee changed the effective date to July 1, 3000 “to encourage further discussion”. That signals lawmakers recognize there are still unresolved concerns.**

#### **Bottom Line**

**Everyone agrees patients should not be threatened or physically blocked from receiving medical care. The question is whether this bill goes beyond stopping real violence and instead creates overly broad penalties that could affect peaceful citizens exercising their rights. Lawmakers should proceed carefully and ensure existing laws are sufficient before creating new criminal and civil liabilities.**

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 12:58:37 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bruce Ellinwood	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Bullying and harrassment ae unacceptable, especially when directed at those seeking medical help.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 1:06:23 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Patricia Bilyk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly SUPPORT HB1961 Protecting Access to Health Care Facilities .

Persons seeking health care should not be prevented in ANY way from accessing it.  
Mahalo for hearing this bill on a very fundamental right for all persons in Hawaii

Patricia L Bilyk, RN, MPH, MSN

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 1:28:19 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Christina Lai	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is curtailing our freedom of speech. It will not allow people to protest (peacefully) in public areas or in front of any facility. Even peacefully holding a sign outside a facility can be construed as interfering w another person's access. There are already rules in place for this. We do not need another rule specifically protecting healthcare facilites, since the rule existing already covers this.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 1:28:26 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Matthieu Kalua	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Matthieu Kalua, and I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, an aspiring reproductive health physician, and a member of Planned Parenthood Generation Action at UH Mānoa, a student-led reproductive health access organization on campus. I am writing in SUPPORT of HB1961 HD 1.

This bill would protect patients and providers by prohibiting individuals from interfering with the safe entry and exit from healthcare facilities. As a volunteer at the Planned Parenthood health center on Beretania, I have been verbally and physically harassed by protestors when entering and leaving the health center. While protesting is covered by our first amendment right, threatening the health and safety of others is not.

Patients, staff, and volunteers should not have to be fearful when entering healthcare facilities to receive the care they need. This bill would protect all healthcare facilities, which is why I urge you to PASS HB 1961 HD 1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Matthieu Kalua

AYMAN EL-SWAIFY PUBLIC TESTIMONY  
HB1961 HD1 - RELATING TO HEALTH CARE

Good Afternoon, Committee Members. My name is Ayman El-Swaify and I am OPPOSED to House Bill 1961 HD1.

I feel like this Bill is an attempt at a solution in search of a problem. We certainly have multiple laws on the books which would permit fines or arrests the instances that this Bill describes; when one's attempt to exercise first amendment rights interferes with those of another.

I am concerned that these types of laws can result in overreach of legitimate first amendment rights when taken too far. Such as preventing peaceful protests that make access to healthcare "inconvenient" or "uncomfortable" due to the mere presence of a protest that is taking place.

The bill allows facilities, employees, property owners, or patients to file civil lawsuits and recover damages and attorney's fees — even if no financial damages are proven. That could expose ordinary citizens to costly legal battles for conduct that falls into gray areas.

Government must undoubtedly ensure that its citizens are protected from physical harm (or in this case, access to care); but government should not endeavor to try and protect us from being offended or uncomfortable by those whose opinions differ from our own.

Thank you.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 1:54:06 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marie Iding	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislature,

I very strongly support this bill. It is egregious to deny or interfere with access to health care. Furthermore, denying access increases healthcare costs as persons afraid to seek our preventative care will only be seen when their medical issues escalate to ER visits.

Thank you,

Marie Iding

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 1:55:29 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michael Paul	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and JHA Committee Members,

I am writing in STRONG support of HB1961.

People deserve to seek medical care without facing harassment. I personally have had to face such harassment when seeking medical that others did not agree with. People camping out on the sidewalks of medical facilities for the purposes of harassing or dissuading people from medical care is wrong and this bill would help to curtail that behavior.

Mahalo for your time,

Michael Paul Resident of House District 27

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 1:57:43 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara J. Service	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Please pass this bill to protect providers and consumers as related to reproductive health care.**

**Mahalo!**

**Barbara J. Service**

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 2:12:03 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
C Chang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members,

My name is Celine, and I support HB1961.

No one should be harassed, intimidated, or blocked from accessing health care. Patients deserve to enter facilities safely, and providers deserve to do their jobs without disruption. This bill helps protect both.

Please pass HB1961 to keep our health care spaces safe and accessible for everyone.

Mahalo

C Chang

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 2:14:31 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nikos Leverenz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and JHA Committee:

I am writing in strong support of HB 1961, HD 1, which prohibits persons from interfering with another person's access to or from a health care facility or disrupting the normal functioning of a health care facility.

This measure represents a reasonable time, place, and manner restriction on expressive conduct to better ensure that women and others seeking needed medical care not be obstructed or otherwise harassed.

During this Lenten season of renewal, those seeking to force their ideological or sectarian beliefs upon others should endeavor to reflect more deeply upon their own capacities to advance peace in a temporal world driven by greed, hatred, and ignorance. See, e.g., Mt 5:9; Lk 6:27; Jn 14:27.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 2:29:35 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Valerie Y. Matsuda	Catholic Church	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As citizen of the United States I believe the Constitution states freedom of Speech.

This bill denies that right.

I oppose it!!!

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 2:46:24 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Earle Satoru Matsuda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We (Valerie Y. Matsuda-wife) totally oppose of HB1961.

thank you

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 3:11:23 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kim Nguyen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an educator and ally, I strongly support HB 1961 because it protects the safety, dignity, and well-being of students, families, and the health care providers who serve them. I fully support.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 3:30:56 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michele Nihipali	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee members,

HB 1961 protects patients and providers by preventing protestors from blocking entrances or exits, threatening patients or providers, or interfering with health care facilities.

At the Honolulu Planned Parenthood health center, protestors have blocked driveways, leaned on vehicles, and shouted slurs at patients and staff. No one should face intimidation just to receive medical care. This bill will protect ALL health care facilities.

Access to health care should not be obstructed.

Please pass HB 1961.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michele Nihipali

54-074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

To: Hawaii Legislature COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Re: HB 1961 Relating to Healthcare DISAGREE

February 23, 2026

I am writing as a citizen who is concerned that this bill will prohibit the allowance of free speech, by allowing people who are praying peacefully on public sidewalks outside of abortion clinics to be arrested. This is clearly in violation of the First Amendment. Please vote down this measure.

Thank you.

Victoria Schneider MD

February 23, 2026

Dear Representatives of the Hawaii State Legislature:

I respectfully submit this personal testimony in opposition to “HB 1961 Relating to Health Care.”

While everyone agrees that violence, threats, and physical obstruction are wrong and already illegal under current Hawaii law, this bill goes further by creating additional criminal penalties. As written, this measure adds new layers of criminal and civil liability, including for conduct deemed “reckless,” which raises concerns about how broadly it could be applied. Would it apply to acceptable behavior under US Constitutional law, where free speech and peaceful demonstrations, are not only lawful, but acceptable, as demonstrated by labor unions, for example? Peaceful and respectful demonstrations, to include prayer, must continue to be protected. Please ensure any legislation in this area is specifically tailored by protecting constitutional rights, and does not duplicate existing criminal laws.

Please vote NO to HB 1961.

Sincerely,

Agnes T. Tauyan

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 6:13:29 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Loree Jean Searcy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am opposed to HB1961

This bill is in opposition to the first amendment, freedom of rightful assembly and freedom of speech. Never should these become illegal and a misdemeanor offense even when in front of a Planned Parenthood Clinic.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 7:29:33 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Emily Kulaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Emily Kulaga and I am currently a senior at UH Manoa and I am also involved with Planned Parenthood Generation Action at UH, a student led group dedicated to reproductive justice and accessibility to safe reproductive healthcare for all. I am writing in strong support of HB1961. This bill protects patients and providers by preventing protestors from blocking entrances or exits, threatening patients or providers, or interfering with health care facilities. As a volunteer at Planned Parenthood, I have been harrassed by protesters countless times. The exit from Planned Parenthood onto Beretania is already quite dangerous and having a man standing next to my car and yelling at my makes the situation more stressful and more dangerous than it already is. As I have previously mentioned, this has happened to me and to patients who are receiving care countless times. No one should face intimidation just to receive medical care. This bill will protect all health care facilities. Therefore, I strongly urge you to pass HB1961 and protect our community's right to safe healthcare. Mahalo, Emily Kulaga

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 7:56:27 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
KEALA FUNG	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1961!

Keala Fung, Honolulu HI

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 8:15:11 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Elaine E Rossi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear friends,

Every person should be able to enter a clinic, hospital or other health care facility without any physical barrier. They should also be able to enter without being frightened or dissuaded by the presence of others blocking g access to the door.

I witnessed people blocking access to a care facility, and allowing this behavior with no consequence does not represent our kuleana to respect each other.

Please pass HB1961.

Aloha.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 9:53:11 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jesika H.	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Prohibits persons from interfering with another person's access to or from a health care facility or disrupting the normal functioning of a health care facility. Makes violations a petty misdemeanor. Establishes a private right of action. Authorizes the Attorney General to bring an action for injunctive or other equitable relief. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

As we know this bill is directed towards those who execute peacefully their First Amendment right outside of the Planned Parenthood facility in downtown Honolulu. At no time does the peaceful warriors for life "interfere" with anyone's access to healthcare. They also do not "disrupt" the normal functioning of the health care facility. Abortion is not healthcare. It is the murder of an unborn child. Not only that but it poses health hazards for the mother as well. I strongly oppose this bill.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 10:23:54 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lynn Otaguro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support passage of HB 1961, that will make it unlawful for a person to interfere with access to a health care facility, including prohibiting physical obstruction, disturbing the peace, trespassing, telephoning a clinic repeatedly, or threatening administrative staff, providers, and patients.

Protesters are harassing patients and providers at Planned Parenthood health centers, especially in Honolulu. This is not right. Patients deserve access to health care without harassment. Care providers should be allowed to work without interference. Please support this bill.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 10:31:17 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sara Harris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am an Obstetrician–Gynecologist practicing in Hawai‘i, and I write in strong support of HB1961 HD1.

As physicians who provide comprehensive reproductive health care—including contraception, miscarriage management, abortion care, prenatal care, and treatment of high-risk pregnancies—we see firsthand how essential it is for patients to have timely access to evidence-based medical services. Reproductive health care is a fundamental component of overall health care.

Abortion care is a safe and medically appropriate part of comprehensive reproductive health services. It is also frequently indistinguishable from miscarriage management and other urgent pregnancy-related care.

Hawai‘i has long recognized the importance of protecting access to reproductive health services. HB1961 HD1 helps ensure that patients can continue to access safe, confidential, and medically appropriate reproductive care in our state. In a healthcare system already facing workforce shortages and geographic barriers—particularly for patients on neighbor islands—it is critical that we maintain policies that support providers in delivering care according to established medical standards.

Every patient deserves the ability to make personal medical decisions in consultation with their healthcare provider, free from unnecessary interference. Protecting access to abortion and other reproductive health services protects patient autonomy, supports maternal health, and promotes equitable healthcare outcomes across our communities.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support for HB1961 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sara C Harris, MD

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 10:37:32 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kim Cordery	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

I APPOSE HB1961 as this bill puts restraints on someone who is

praying outside the abortion clinic/Planned Parenthood. This infringes on our 1st ammendment-freedom of speech.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 10:49:44 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jean Leong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:06:12 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sonia Blackiston	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I urgently ask you to support HB 1961 before disrupting protesters take it too far and cause harm to someone. In Honolulu, protesters block the drive way to the health center, which can lead to traffic issues and potentially traffic accidents. They harass patients, staff and people simply walking down the sidewalk. No one should have to feel concerned for their safety when accessing health care. Your support on this bill matters. Please do the right thing and support this measure.

Mahalo,

Sonia Blackiston

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:14:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jennifer Milholen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

No one should face intimidation just to receive medical care. We must take more action to protect women, health providers, and any patients seeking care. Mahalo for your supporting HB1961

Jennifer

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 7:18:19 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
jonathan pudiquet	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I don't agree with this bill. This is not a solution but suffocating people rights.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 8:55:29 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Heidi Knouf	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair and Members of the Committee, I respectfully submit testimony in opposition to HB1961. While I understand the goal of ensuring safe access to health care facilities, I am concerned that the language of this bill could unintentionally infringe upon constitutionally protected freedoms, including the right to peacefully express religious beliefs, minister to others, or provide counsel according to one's conscience. Families and communities rely on the ability to live in accordance with moral and religious convictions without fear of legal consequences. Legislation should carefully balance safety with these fundamental freedoms, and I believe HB1961, as currently written, could upset that balance. For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to not allow this bill to pass.

## **HB 1961 Relating to Health Care**

I write in opposition to HB 1961 because its ambiguity in the term “reckless”. This can significantly broaden the definition of what constitutes disruptive behavior. What really is peaceful, non-violent, and non-interfering presence at such locations could be construed as “reckless and disruptive” behavior.

Patients should never be threatened or physically blocked from receiving medical care. However, the issue is the ambiguity of this bill that would essentially hinder the basic rights of freedom of speech and peaceful assembly. In other words, the bill should be specific in defining “reckless” behavior.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 10:12:26 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Rick Kariya	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please reconsider the implications of this absurd bill. A law-abiding citizen as myself can go to jail because I use my right to peacefully and lovingly oppose the killing of innocent life on a sidewalk? Simply standing, praying, holding a sign, waving at supportive cars can send me to jail? That is laughable in this country to even consider, but the fact that this bill has been proposed to include me as a criminal for politely expressing my freedom of opinion is truly astonishing. Please use both common sense and legal precedents to insure that this bill is immediately voted down for the sake of all our freedom of speech rights in this great land. Mahalo for hearing me out.

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 11:09:34 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice Berry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,**

My name is Janice Berry, and I respectfully submit testimony in **strong support of HB1961.**

Every person in Hawai‘i deserves to access health care safely and with dignity. Seeking medical care is often already a vulnerable and deeply personal experience, and individuals should be able to enter and exit health care facilities without intimidation or obstruction. No one should feel fear, shame, or distress simply for trying to access legally provided medical services.

From both personal observation and community work, I have seen how even small barriers or hostile environments can feel overwhelming for individuals already navigating stress, uncertainty, or emotional strain. For some, especially those already experiencing anxiety, trauma, or mental health challenges, aggressive or intrusive encounters at the entrance to a health care facility can heighten distress and make it harder to seek help. Encounters that feel intimidating or invasive may discourage people from accessing the care they need — sometimes when they need it most.

When people delay or avoid care because they feel unsafe or judged, the consequences can be serious. Health concerns may worsen, emotional distress may increase, and individuals and families may experience greater long-term impacts that could have been prevented through timely, supportive access to services. From a public health perspective, ensuring safe access to care promotes early intervention, reduces preventable health crises, and supports healthier communities overall.

HB1961 helps ensure that patients, families, and health care workers can move through health care spaces with dignity and safety while maintaining an appropriate balance with constitutional rights. Protecting safe access to care is an essential step in maintaining a compassionate and functional health system in Hawai'i.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to **pass HB1961**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Janice Berry

Honolulu, Hawai'i

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 11:53:52 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Steve Holck	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

There is freedom to make your position known in public areas and zero reason to ban peaceful protest unless you are wanting to illegally control your constituents.

VOTE NO on this absurd bill....FREEDOM OF SPEECH!

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 11:58:55 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am an Obstetrician–Gynecologist (OBGYN) practicing in Hawai‘i, and I write in strong support of HB1961 HD1.

OBGYNs provide comprehensive reproductive health care including contraception, miscarriage management, abortion care, prenatal care, and treatment of high-risk pregnancies and see firsthand how essential it is for patients to have timely access to evidence-based medical services. Reproductive health care is a fundamental component of overall health care.

Hawai‘i has long recognized the importance of protecting access to reproductive health services. HB1961 HD1 helps ensure that patients can continue to access safe, confidential, and medically appropriate reproductive care in our state. In a healthcare system already facing workforce shortages and geographic barriers—particularly for patients on neighbor islands—it is critical that we maintain policies that support providers in delivering care according to established medical standards.

Every patient deserves the ability to make personal medical decisions in consultation with their healthcare provider, free from unnecessary interference.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support for HB1961 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Joy Vink, MD

Maternal Fetal Medicine/Obstetrics & Gynecology

**HB-1961-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 12:00:29 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Abram Moreno	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

I oppose HB1961 because it's unconstitutional and opposes the 1st Amendment free speech.