



March 3, 2026

Position: **SUPPORT** of **HB1977 HD1**, Relating to Health

To: Representative Chris Todd, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance

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

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1977 HD1, Relating to Health

Hearing: Thursday, March 5, 2026, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308, State Capitol

The Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women is committed to advancing the health, safety, and well-being of girls and women throughout Hawaii. The Commission **supports HB1977 HD1**, as it seeks to increase access to critical maternal and infant health information through a mobile application, directly supporting those who are prenatal, pregnant, or postpartum, empowering them with timely, reliable resources.

Access to timely, accurate information is a key determinant of positive health outcomes for mothers and infants. This bill facilitates the Department of Health's leverage of technology to bridge gaps in awareness and access and aligns with best practices in public health, which emphasize the importance of accessible, culturally relevant, and user-friendly information delivery, **especially for populations that may face barriers to care or support.** The proposed mobile application can serve as a centralized hub for connecting users to federal and state programs, educational materials, and local resources.

We appreciate the Legislature's attention to this issue, its support of efforts that advance equitable maternal and infant health statewide and respectfully urge this Committee to **pass HB1977 HD1.**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.



Committee on Finance
Chair Chris Todd, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi
Thursday, March 5, 2026; 2:00pm
Room 308
HB 1977 HD1 – RELATING TO HEALTH.

TESTIMONY

Leelynn Brady, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

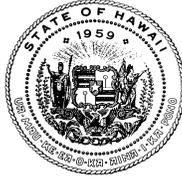
The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports HB1977 HD1.

The League supports policies that expand equitable access to public information and state services, particularly for Medicaid-eligible individuals and families. Establishing a maternal and infant health information mobile application has the potential to improve access to critical health resources and strengthen public health outcomes.

The League respectfully recommends that any mobile application procured pursuant to this measure include compliance with recognized digital accessibility standards to ensure usability for individuals with disabilities. As the State increasingly delivers services and information through digital platforms, accessibility is an essential component of equitable access and effective public administration.

With this consideration, HB1977 HD1 can further its goal of expanding access to information for all eligible individuals.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



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Testimony COMMENTING on H.B. 1977 H.D. 1
RELATING TO HEALTH

REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS TODD, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

March 5, 2026, 2:00 PM HST, Room 308

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (“Department”) requests that this measure,
2 which appropriates \$150,000 in general funds for fiscal year 2026-2027, be considered a vehicle
3 to provide this needed funding so long as it does not supplant the priorities and requests
4 outlined in the Governor’s executive budget request.

5 **Department Position:** The Department offers comments.

6 **Department Testimony:** The Family Health Services Division (FHSD) provides the following
7 testimony on behalf of the Department.

8 The Department appreciates the importance of this measure, which seeks to improve maternal
9 and infant health outcomes by leveraging technology to provide timely information and
10 resources to prenatal, pregnant, and postpartum individuals and their families.

11 The Department recognizes the value of access to accurate health information aligned with
12 clinical standards; multilingual availability to ensure equity for the state’s diverse population;
13 and data collection that can inform program improvements and identify service gaps.

14 Several elements will require careful planning and evaluation:

1 **Procurement and Vendor Standards:** The timeline in Sections 321-B and 2 may be challenging
2 given state procurement requirements and the need for vendors to meet clinical, technical,
3 privacy, and data security standards.

4 **Fiscal Sustainability:** While \$150,000 is identified for initial implementation, ongoing costs
5 could be significant. In 2025, Hawai'i had approximately 14,300 births, with about 4,680 (34%)
6 covered by Medicaid. At \$10 per user per month, annual costs for Medicaid families alone
7 would be about \$561,600. If 50% of all birthing families enrolled, costs could reach and/or
8 exceed \$858,000 annually - excluding maintenance and updates.

9 **System Integration and Data Privacy:** Aligning the application with existing systems across
10 state agencies may be complex. Additionally, collecting and transmitting de-identified data
11 requires the development of strong safeguards to maintain confidentiality and public trust.

12 The Department looks forward to collaborating with state agencies and community partners to
13 maximize benefits while addressing these considerations.

14 **Offered Amendments:** None

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