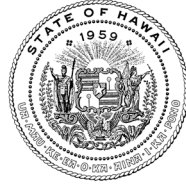


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA

April 9, 2026

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

Date: Thursday, April 9, 2026
Time: 10:55 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 211, State Capitol

From: Jade T. Butay, Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

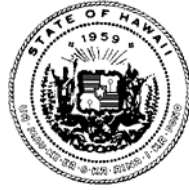
Re: H.B. 2114 HD1 SD1 RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES

The DLIR **supports the intent** of this measure, which seeks to improve coordination and planning through the establishment of the Hawai'i Benefits Hub Working Group. Strengthening cross-agency collaboration will help ensure that individuals and families can more effectively access needed services.

The Department will have the Director or a designee participate on the working group and contribute to its efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



RYAN I. YAMANE
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

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

TRISTA SPEER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

April 8, 2026

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

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 2114 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.**

Hearing: April 9, 2026, Time 10:55 a.m.
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) provides comments appreciating the intent and vision of the bill, the input and discussions with committee chairs, and the Legislature's continued investment in improving the State's technology resources to improve residents' experiences and access to services. DHS defers to the Office of Enterprise Technology Services (ETS) on its resource needs and requests amendments. DHS respectfully requests that a forthcoming appropriation not act to reduce or replace a priority identified in the executive budget.

DHS agrees with the scope of the SD1 amendments establishing a two-year Hawaii benefit hub working group to develop a plan for the governance and implementation of a Hawaii benefit hub. However, DHS cautions that continuing through 2026, DHS program and IT staff may not be able to provide the necessary business input in the two-year time frame. DHS is focused on hitting multiple programmatic deadlines in 2027 mandated by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), Public Law 119-21, as well as launching a new Benefit Eligibility System for financial and nutrition assistance programs.

DHS respectfully requests a general fund appropriation of \$1,050,000, to be expended by ETS, that will serve as the foundational scope of the initial work of the work group.

The proposed appropriations to ETS include:

(1) Phase I: Landscape and Readiness Assessment – \$225,000.

- Review Hawai'i's current public assistance systems, processes, and data needs.
- Examine how other states operate unified or coordinated benefits systems and identify best practices.
- Assess privacy, security, and federal compliance requirements.
- Identify where resident application processes can be simplified or streamlined.

(2) Phase II: Business, Functional, and Technical Planning – \$275,000.

- Define the business needs and user experience for a unified benefits application.
- Identify system functions, data standards, and technical requirements.
- Determine major dependencies or constraints across state and federal programs.

(3) Phase III: Implementation Roadmap and Sequencing Plan – \$300,000.

- Create a multi-year plan showing the order in which systems will be integrated.
- Estimate staffing, procurement, and funding needs.
- Set milestones and performance measures to track progress.
- Support technical workshops and coordination among agencies.

(4) Phase IV: Governance, Operations, and Sustainability Framework – \$100,000.

- Recommend a long-term governance structure for the benefits hub.
- Outline operational needs, including staffing, maintenance, privacy, and security.
- Identify long-term funding options.

(5) Project Management Oversight and Administrative Support – \$150,000.

- Fund one full-time project manager to oversee planning work and coordinate the working group.
- Support consultant coordination, project scheduling, reporting, and

documentation.

- Cover administrative needs required to support the working group.

Given the time frame of the work group into fiscal year 2027-2028 and the similar efforts going on across the country to comply with OBBBA, DHS renews a request to add a no lapse provision as follows

"The appropriation made by this Act shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal biennium for which the appropriation is made; provided that all moneys from the appropriation unencumbered as of , shall lapse as of June 30, 2028."

The no lapse provision would allow ETS and the work group more time to understand the landscape and procure appropriate services for the state.

As noted above, OBBBA significantly changed federally funded safety net programs, amongst other things. For example, OBBBA expanded and added work compliance requirements as a condition of eligibility and continued eligibility for services under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid.

In regard to SNAP, effective November 1, 2025, OBBBA increased the population subject to the work requirements under the Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) requirements to now include adults ages 18-64 (previously ages 18-54), adults in households with children age 14 years and older, and people who are experiencing homelessness, former foster youth under 24 years old that aged-out of foster care at age 18, and veterans. The last 3 groups were previously exempt from ABAWD requirements. As a result of these changes, an estimated 16,500 SNAP individuals aged 55-64, and an estimated 10,000 households with a child aged 14+ will be required to complete at least 80 hours of employment or work activity per month to retain their SNAP benefits.

As for Medicaid, OBBBA increased eligibility requirements for the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Expansion adults:

- Effective December 31, 2026, eligibility renewals increase to every 6 months from the current annual renewal.
- Effective December 31, 2026, states are required to establish work/community engagement requirements for ACA Expansion adults aged 19-64 as a condition of

Medicaid eligibility. Working, community service, or a work program, or at least half-time enrollment in an educational program, or a combination of these activities for 80 hours; or monthly income that is at least 80 times the federal hourly minimum wage; seasonal workers with average monthly income over previous 6 months that is at least 80 times the federal hourly minimum wage (\$580 per month).

With proper planning, a single secure hub or point of entry may benefit Hawaii residents and DHS by confirming compliance with work requirements, ensuring information is received and secured, and providing recipients with assurance that the DHS receives their efforts toward program compliance.

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



ALOHA CARE

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

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

Hearing: Thursday, April 9, 2026, 10:55am, Conference Room 211

RE: **HB2114 HD1 SD1 Relating to Human Services**

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of HB2114 HD1 SD1**. This measure would establish the Hawai'i Benefits Hub Working Group to develop a plan for the governance and implementation of the Hawai'i Benefits Hub and related referral, tracking, compliance, and coordination services.

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

AlohaCare's commitment to whole-person care and health equity includes addressing various social determinants of health. We believe that access to benefits is access to stability, and ultimately, stability is health. As part of the safety net, we know families face barriers in applying for and maintaining eligibility across programs. Many of these programs also require duplicative documentation, repeated verification, and different program rules. For families, having to navigate through these areas (while juggling work, caregiving, language barriers, disability, etc.) are expected to increase both challenges and administrative burden. AlohaCare supports a centralized hub that can address these barriers for our families.

The measure is also responsive to the realization that new federal administrative requirements, such as documenting community engagement hours, can create coverage loss and churn if individuals cannot easily report compliance or receive reminders. We are deeply concerned about avoidable coverage loss and disruption in access to care. For these reasons, AlohaCare supports this measure to help keep families connected to critical social and care supports.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in **support of HB2114 HD1 SD1**.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Thursday, April 8, 2026, 2026; 10:55 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211
Via Videoconference**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 2114, HOUSE DRAFT 1, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.

Chair Dela Cruz, Chair San Moriwaki, and Members of the Joint 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. 2114, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1, RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.

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 measure, as received by your Committee, would establish a working group to discuss a centralized platform that meets the requirements and operations of public assistance programs and develop a plan for the governance and implementation of the Hawaii Benefits Hub (Hub) and related referral, tracking, compliance, and coordinated services. This bill would also appropriate an unspecified amount of general funds and the hiring of an unspecified number of full-time equivalent permanent positions within the Office of Enterprise technology services for the purpose of establishing the Hub.

This measure would take effect on July 1, 3000.

Testimony on House Bill No. 2114, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1
Thursday, April 9, 2026; 10:55 a.m.
Page 2

During the interim following the Adjournment Sine Die of the 2025 Regular Session, House Resolution No. 1 (H.R. 1), also known as the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act", was enacted by Congress and signed into law on July 4, 2025. Among other things, H.R. 1 established work or volunteer requirements for all Medicaid recipients of at least 80 hours per month (or 20 hours per week), effective December 31, 2026. These changes to Medicaid appear to apply similar work requirements that had already been established under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The enactment of H.R. 1 appears to provide some conformity for both programs.

These changes to federal law will require State Medicaid and SNAP Programs to confirm the eligibility of program enrollees and recipients in meeting these new requirements. Among other things, various agencies will need to upgrade their information technology infrastructure and train staff to implement these changes to federal policy. Without adequate collaboration and coordination between MedQUEST and SNAP Program staff, enrollees and participants might have their benefits delayed or denied even if all work or volunteer requirements were met.

The Hub proposed under this bill would help to facilitate meaningful collaboration among the various programs by establishing a central point where employment and volunteer data can be stored and accessed to verify the qualifications of benefit applicants. Without such a centralized hub, countless staff hours will likely be duplicated and wasted by multiple programs seeking the same kinds of information.

It will be vital for the State to facilitate the implementation of the new work requirements. Delays will ultimately lead to the disenrollment of current Medicaid enrollees and shift them to the uninsured population. That would lead to greater costs borne by providers at emergency rooms and at FQHCs. Should that happen, the accessibility of basic health care services to the entire citizenry would be seriously jeopardized.

Accordingly, the HPCA urges your favorable consideration of this bill.

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.

HB-2114-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/8/2026 10:32:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/9/2026 10:55:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and WAM Committee Members,

As a local resident concerned with affordability, I write in **strong support of HB2114 HD1 SD1**. This measure would establish the Hawai'i Benefits Hub within the Office of Enterprise Technology Services to serve as a centralized portal for residents applying for state-managed social assistance programs.

As a public health professional, I support policies that make it easier for people to access and maintain the benefits they need to stay healthy and stable. For many of the individuals and families our organizations serve, accessing public benefits is not simple. Applicants are often required to provide the same information multiple times across different programs, comply with different eligibility rules, and complete repeated verification processes at regular intervals.

A more integrated benefits system could help reduce burdens both on individuals seeking care and on state systems, thereby improving lives and saving money through efficiency.

Please pass this measure.

Mahalo,

Thaddeus Pham