



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM
‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony
Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Bonnie Irwin, PhD
Chancellor

and

Rae Matsumoto, PhD
Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

HB 2161 HD1 – RELATING TO PHARMACY

Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2161 HD1. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) strongly supports HB 2161 HD1, which establishes the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP) Special Fund to create a Hawai'i Center for Pharmacy which will support workforce assessments and strategic collaborations to advance the profession of pharmacy, as part of an intentional effort to improve access to quality health care for the people of Hawai'i. We also support the amendments proposed by the Hawai'i Pharmacists Association.

No legislative appropriations are being requested to establish the proposed Center. Instead, the bill will allow for a workforce assessment fee as part of licensing requirements that would create a foundational base to hire a Director and provide a sustainable mechanism for supporting the activities of a Hawai'i Center for Pharmacy. This proposed increase has been supported by the Board of Pharmacy in the previous two legislative sessions without opposition from the profession itself; even with the modest increases proposed, Hawai'i remains one of the most inexpensive states in the country to practice and conduct pharmacy business. The proposed Center thus represents a profession-driven solution that is modeled after the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing and Hawai'i Medical Education Council which have been instrumental in facilitating the ability of these professions to be proactive and strategic in formulating data-driven solutions for existing and emerging health care challenges in Hawai'i.

While physician and nursing shortages are widely recognized in Hawai'i, there is little awareness that impending shortages of pharmacy professionals should be a concern. Nationally, the profession is preparing for a shortage of pharmacy professionals, and it is concerning that Hawai'i lacks robust workforce assessment data for the pharmacy profession. Nevertheless, local pharmacist employers are already voicing challenges in filling positions, even in Honolulu and within health care systems which have historically

been impervious to such challenges. These warning signs signal an urgent need for the state to start generating actionable data in order to prevent insurmountable workforce shortages in pharmacy which would compound the situation that already exists for nursing and medicine.

The priorities for the Hawai'i Center for Pharmacy include:

- Workforce data and analysis for the profession (pharmacists, technicians, interns);
- Identification and evaluation of best practices and models of pharmacy innovations for adaptation and implementation appropriate for Hawai'i;
- Coordination and distribution of state and federal grants related to pharmacy and access to care;
- Collaboration with already established Centers for other health professionals in Hawai'i to help develop and deploy team-based care models across the state; and
- Annual reports to the legislature on pharmacy-related initiatives supported by the state.

The proposed Hawai'i Center for Pharmacy is important for helping to shape a strong and sustainable health care landscape in the state. In addition to taking proactive steps to mitigate an anticipated pharmacist shortage, the Center will also play a critical role in facilitating focused coordination of stakeholders to optimize and leverage the expertise of pharmacists to improve access to quality health care in the state.

Pharmacists are among the most accessible health care professionals, with about 90% of Americans living within 5 miles of a pharmacy. Patients visit community pharmacies about twice as often as primary care physician offices, with pharmacists strongly embedded as trusted resources in many remote communities, particularly across our neighbor islands. With a doctoral level of expertise and clinical training, pharmacists are recognized as critical members of health care teams, but are currently underutilized in Hawai'i.

The proposed Center for Pharmacy will work toward allowing pharmacists, who are essential members of health care teams, to better align with and contribute to this collective effort, especially for bridging access to preventative care and chronic disease state and medication therapy management. Initial efforts in these areas are underway with the joint leadership of the DKICP and the Hawai'i Pharmacists Association (HPhA), but a proper infrastructure to sustain and grow these initiatives are needed.

The Hawai'i Center for Pharmacy will be housed in the DKICP. Being housed within the University of Hawai'i system has worked well for the successful entities for medicine and nursing that already exist, and ensures that appropriate business systems are in place to manage funds (accept, disburse, leverage from different sources) and hire personnel. Also, the profession will be able to leverage the academic expertise and unique training and professional networks of the college that will be crucial for implementing data-driven approaches and innovative solutions to improve access to quality health care. The role of the college in training future pharmacists also offers

natural synergies for supporting the disbursement of scholarships and loan repayment initiatives to attract to Hawai'i and retain needed talent for service in medically-underserved areas of the state.

In summary, the needs of the state and evolution of pharmacy practice in Hawai'i are at a critical juncture. Passage of HB 2161 HD1 will support a data-informed, coordinated and intentional effort to position the profession of pharmacy to help fill existing health care gaps in Hawai'i. The DKICP is uniquely suited for housing the proposed Center which will proactively assess, train, and leverage pharmacists, working with pharmacy stakeholders across the state and country, to fill gaps in care related to medication management and safety. Pharmacists are embedded as trusted health care professionals in many remote communities, and many published studies have documented their positive impact on patient outcomes as the health care landscape has shifted to value- and team-based care models. The proposed Center would be instrumental in adapting effective approaches for the unique needs of Hawai'i and creating innovative solutions working in alignment with other stakeholders in today's rapidly evolving health care landscape. The people of Hawai'i deserve access to quality health care and we respectfully ask your support in allowing the profession of pharmacy to be part of the solution through this Center.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2161 HD1.



**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'ŌKELE

JOHN C. (JACK) LEWIN, MD
ADMINISTRATOR

February 18, 2026

TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE
Representative Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair
Representative Tina Nakada Grandinetti, 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 2161-HD1 -- RELATING TO PHARMACY

HEARING: Wednesday, February 18, 2026 @ 2:00 pm; Conference Room 329

POSITION: SUPPORT with COMMENTS

Testimony:

SHPDA supports HB 2161-HD1, with comments.

This bill intends to strengthen Hawai'i's pharmacist workforce by creating a dedicated funding source to support statewide workforce assessment and planning through the UH Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy. By establishing a special fund and an assessment fee tied to Board of Pharmacy licensure, the bill seeks to sustain data collection, recruitment and retention strategies, and targeted efforts to expand pharmacy services, especially in rural and medically underserved communities.

This bill would create practical public health benefits by enabling Hawai'i to use pharmacist workforce data to close service gaps, strengthen retention, and expand pharmacist-supported care, especially in rural and medically underserved communities. With dedicated resources and an accountable structure, the bill helps expand innovative pharmacy care models within value-based, team-based care, which can improve medication management, increase access to preventive services, and help reduce avoidable complications that lead to emergency visits or hospitalizations.

Lastly, data is currently being collected from UH for physicians and nurses, and we should have the same kind of workforce tracking data for pharmacists as well.

Thank you for hearing HB 2161-HD1 and mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

■ -- Jack Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA

LATE

Testimony of the Board of Pharmacy
Before the
House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Wednesday, February 18, 2026
2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 329 and Videoconference

On the following measure:
H. B. 2161 H.D. 1, RELATING TO PHARMACY

Chair Matayoshi and Members of the Committee:

My name is Christopher Fernandez, and I am the Executive Officer of the Board of Pharmacy (Board). The Board supports the intent of this bill and offers the following comments.

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) establish the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy Special Fund to support pharmacist workforce assessment and planning efforts; (2) establish the pharmacist workforce assessment fee, and (3) appropriates funds.

The Board wishes to note that in testifying on H.B. 223 (2025), it had requested clarity on the fee amount charged to license and permit holders for the fund. Referring to page 4, line 11 to page 5, line 4, the Board notes that this bill would establish fees for: (1) pharmacist licenses, (2) wholesale prescription drug distributor licenses and renewals, (3) in-state and out-of-state pharmacy permits and renewals. Board continues to request clarity on the amount each license and permit holder would contribute individually to the fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



Testimony in SUPPORT of H2161 presented before the
House Committee on Consumer Protection
Wednesday, February 18, 2026

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

Honorable Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express the **strong support of the Hawai'i Pharmacists Association for HB2161**, which proposes the establishment of a Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy special fund to create a Center for Pharmacy. We believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The proposed roles of the Center for Pharmacy include funding for 1.0 FTE to serve as the Executive Director for the Center for Pharmacy driven by a minor increase in licensing fees from all pharmacy related entities overseen by the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA). It should be noted that **even with these modest increases, Hawai'i still ranks among the lowest in the country in costs to practice and conduct pharmacy related business**. This position would prioritize much needed workforce assessment data for our profession, implement retention initiatives for pharmacists, and serve as an entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy models that would expand opportunities for the pharmacy workforce across our state and positively impact access to care.

The Hawai'i Pharmacists Association has worked with the Board of Pharmacy and the Daniel K. Inouye School of Pharmacy to mimic the flow of funds that have been successfully utilized for both nursing and medicine. Because of their respective centers, both nursing and medicine have a proactive role in developing and implementing innovative healthcare solutions. **The Center for Pharmacy special fund is a profession-driven, sustainable solution that matches the standard already granted to other healthcare professions in Hawai'i.**

As we navigate through a transformative period in healthcare, characterized by a shift towards value-based and team-based care models, it is imperative to recognize the indispensable role that pharmacists must play in patient outcomes and healthcare access. With shortages in various healthcare professions, and an anticipated pharmacist shortage in the coming decade, expanding opportunities to advance the profession by leveraging the expertise of pharmacists becomes even more critical in ensuring pharmacists that are trained in Hawai'i are incentivized to practice in our state after graduation.

Suggested amendments:

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

~~(1) Appropriations by the legislature~~

Legislative appropriations are not necessary to fund this profession driven initiative. We certainly support keeping the line item for future opportunities, but understand the financial constraints of the state and are open to removal to move this initiative forward.

Section 3 461 (b) The pharmacist workforce assessment fee shall be as follows:

- (1) \$100* for each renewed license as a pharmacist (n=2713)
- (2) \$200* for each new or renewed wholesale prescription drug distributor license (n=59)
- (3) \$200* for each new or renewed pharmacy permit under section 461-14 (n=238)
- (4) \$200* for each new or renewed permit under section 461-15 (n=854)

**licenses are renewed for 2 year periods, so pharmacist practice fees (1) will increase \$50/year and other entities (2-4) increase \$100/year.*

Total annual revenue generated from pharmacy related entities each two-year period: ~\$490,000

The immediate priority for the use of these funds is to hire a Center Director (1.0 FTE), an experienced pharmacist and administrator to oversee operations, generate new funding, stimulate collaborations, advance legislation, ensure compliance and reporting to stakeholders. The estimated annual salary for this position would be a pharmacist faculty (rank 3-4), \$160-195K. Additional funds would be used immediately to accumulate workforce data to drive additional funding streams towards progressive pharmacy initiatives across the state.

The Hawai'i Pharmacists Association urges the committee's support for HB2161, recognizing that the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy is a pivotal step towards properly leveraging the expertise of our profession and establishing Hawai'i at the forefront of pharmacy practice across the country.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Corrie L. Sanders". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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



MOLOKA'I DRUGS, INC.

EST. 1935

February 17, 2026

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161 HD1: Establishment of a Hawaii Center for Pharmacy

Dear Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and members of the Consumer Protection Committee,

As a rural healthcare provider, access to comprehensive, high-quality healthcare services is our mission at Molokai Drugs. On behalf of our patients and employees, I am testifying in favor of HB2161 HD1, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawaii.

For the past 17 years, Molokai Drugs has supported the Daniel K. Inouye UH College of Pharmacy (DKICP) in Hilo by being an intern preceptor site. **In fact, we have a DKICP year-four intern who just started today!** We do this to help grow the profession and hope that we can also "grow our own." One of the biggest reasons Molokai students do not attend pharmacy school is the pure expense of four years of off-island tuition, books, fees, etc. which is now over \$120,000. This does not include room and board.

One of the proposed roles of the new center will also include coordinating pharmacy student loan repayment programs by working in rural and/or underserved areas like Molokai as well as supporting the new online 5.5 year DKICP pharmacy program. By having a center, we will possibly find more Molokai-raised students going into the pharmacy profession.

Molokai Drugs has also been a training worksite for national certified pharmacy technician (CPhT) training. We recently worked with Good Jobs Hawaii, a partnership with the State of Hawaii and UH Community Colleges "to help people in Hawai'i attain a good quality job for generations to come." Molokai Drugs is also partnering with DKICP and the University of Hawaii Maui College with expanded CPhT development, which includes immunization training. This new center will also help implement retention initiatives for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, which has always been a concern of rural healthcare facilities.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful "center" models already in place in Hawaii for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

Thank you for your consideration and vote for HB2161 HD1.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Mikami Svetin
President
Molokai Drugs, Inc.
P.O. Box 558
Kaunakakai, HI 96748
Work 808-553-5790

HB-2161-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 12:09:16 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support HB2161 HD1. Mahalo

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Hearing on February 18, 2026

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD1

To the honorable **Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti and Members of the Committee,**

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161-HD1, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a faculty member and licensed pharmacist at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD1** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Lara Gomez

HB-2161-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 10:35:36 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Hearing on February 18, 2026

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD1

To the honorable Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161-HD1, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a pharmacy student at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds. While this will increase the cost

of my license, it will still be among the lowest in the nation, and I feel that it is a worthwhile investment

to ensure that my future profession and career can bring practices that are already available to people

in other states to our islands and help improve access to health care in our communities.

I respectfully urge your support of HB2161-HD1 and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Yu Erh Lin Chen

Student Pharmacist, DKICP XO Class of 2031

HB-2161-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 2:46:57 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

Hearing on Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Testimony in **SUPPORT** for HB2161, HD1

To the honorable Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti and members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2161 HD1, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawai'i's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

I respectfully urge your support of HB2161 HD1 and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nicole Young, PharmD

Associate Professor

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026
Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Hearing on February 18, 2026
Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD1

To the honorable **Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti and Members of the Committee,**

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161-HD1, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a practicing pharmacist and faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

Envisioning the potential of the Center for Pharmacy, I see the creation of opportunities related to the expansion of patient-centered interprofessional care teams, increasing access to healthcare services for our patients in rural communities, and improving overall safe and effective medication use for our state. This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD1** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION
Hearing on Wednesday, February 18, 2026
Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161

To the honorable Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and members of the Consumer Protection Committee,

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As pharmacist at Hawaii State Hospital serviced by PharMerica, I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

I am a Board-Certified Psychiatric Pharmacist who collaborates closely with psychiatrists, primary care providers, and interdisciplinary teams to optimize complex medication regimens, particularly for treatment-resistant and high-risk patients living with a mental health condition. My role includes evaluating medication efficacy and safety, managing side effects, addressing drug interactions, guiding medication selection and dosing, supporting deprescribing when appropriate, and improving adherence through patient-centered education. I also contribute to transitions of care, clozapine and long-acting injectable management, and evidence-based treatment planning for serious mental illness.

I helped create a Post-Graduate Year Two (PGY2) Psychiatric Pharmacy Residency Program that produced 10 board-certified psychiatric pharmacists, five of whom remained in Hawaii after graduation, demonstrating the workforce impact of targeted investments. Unfortunately, the program ended in 2024. A Center for Pharmacy could have possibly strengthened my ability to advocate for sustaining the program through workforce data, formal endorsement, and/or partnerships with other pharmacies to share resources and maintain the position.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

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

Mahalo,

Lehua Kay, PharmD, BCPP
Pharmacy Director Hawaii State Hospital, serviced by PharMerica Kaneohe

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Hearing on February 18, 2026

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD1

To the honorable **Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti and Members of the Committee,**

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161-HD1, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a pharmacy student at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds. While this will increase the cost of my license, it will still be among the lowest in the nation, and I feel that it is a worthwhile investment to ensure that my future profession and career can bring practices that are already available to people in other states to our islands and help improve access to health care in our communities.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD1** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Maria Paola Olvera-Muñoz

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2028

HB-2161-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 11:09:57 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Glick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION

Hearing on Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161

To the honorable Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and members of the Consumer Protection Committee,

I am writing to express my **STRONG support for House Bill 2161**, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a Community Pharmacist and pharmacy Student preceptor having practiced in Hawaii for more than 40 years at Hawaii Home Infusion and Lihue Pharmacy, I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

Envisioning the potential of the Center for Pharmacy, I see the creation of opportunities related to collaborative patient management and medication administration and management. We need to work toward using pharmacists to the fullest of their abilities and bringing awareness of the value we bring to healthcare. This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

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

Aloha and Mahalo for the work you do!

Kevin Glick, Pharm.D.

Lihue Pharmacy and Hawaii Home Infusion

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Hearing on February 18, 2026

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD1

To the honorable **Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti and Members of the Committee,**

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161-HD1, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD1** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dianqing Sun, PhD

Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences

Director of Distance Education



You're Someone Special

Testimony in Support of HB2161 – Establishment of a Center for Pharmacy

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Regular Session of 2026

Committee on Consumer Protection

Hearing: Wednesday, February 18, 2026

To the Honorable Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Megan Arbles and I am a licensed pharmacist at KTA Pharmacy serving patients on the Big Island of Hawai'i. I am writing in strong support of HB2161, which would establish a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i.

Pharmacists are among the most accessible healthcare providers in our communities, particularly across neighbor islands and rural areas. As a practicing pharmacist, I see firsthand how pharmacy teams are increasingly relied upon to support medication management, chronic disease care, preventive services, and care coordination—yet pharmacy lacks the same workforce infrastructure and statewide coordination that exists for other doctorate-level healthcare professions.

HB2161 represents a proactive, profession-driven solution to this gap. The proposed Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, coordination, and infrastructure necessary to assess workforce needs, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care models that improve patient outcomes. This is especially important given Hawai'i's current healthcare workforce shortages and the anticipated shortage of pharmacists in the coming decade.

Importantly, this initiative mirrors successful models already established for nursing and medicine in Hawai'i and does not rely on state general funds. Instead, it leverages a modest licensure fee increase to reinvest directly into strengthening the pharmacy profession and expanding access to care statewide.

Establishing a Center for Pharmacy will better position Hawai'i to support innovative pharmacy services, attract and retain local talent, and ensure pharmacists remain an integral part of the healthcare solution for our communities.

I respectfully urge your support of **HB2161**, and thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Arbles, PharmD

Pharmacist, KTA Pharmacy

KTASUPERSTORES.COM/PHARMACY

KTA Puainako Pharmacy: (808) 959-8700 | 50 E. Puainako Street, Hilo, HI 96720
KTA Pharmacy, Ponahawai: 808-865-0505 | 670 Ponahawai Street, Suite 211 • KTA Waimea Pharmacy: (808) 885-0033 | 65-1158 Mamalahoa Hwy., Kamuela, HI 96743
KTA Waikoloa Village Pharmacy: (808) 883-8434 | 68-3916 Paniolo Ave. (P.O. Box 384270), Waikoloa, HI 96738 • KTA Keauhou Pharmacy: (808) 322-2511 | 78-6831 Ali'i Drive, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740



You're Someone Special

KTASUPERSTORES.COM/PHARMACY

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Hearing on February 18, 2026

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD1

To the honorable **Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti and Members of the Committee,**

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161-HD1, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a pharmacy student at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds. While this will increase the cost of my license, it will still be among the lowest in the nation, and I feel that it is a worthwhile investment to ensure that my future profession and career can bring practices that are already available to people in other states to our islands and help improve access to health care in our communities.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD1** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shaun Marie Aquino', written in a cursive style.

Shaun-Marie Aquino

Student Pharmacist, DKICP Class of 2031

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE
Hearing on Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161

To the honorable Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti and members of the Consumer Protection & Commerce Committee,

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a practicing clinical pharmacist, residency program director, and preceptor, I see firsthand the critical role pharmacists play in improving patient outcomes, expanding access to care, and addressing provider shortages across our state. Yet, unlike our colleagues in medicine and nursing, our profession does not have a formal infrastructure dedicated to workforce development, strategic planning, data collection, and coordinated advancement of pharmacy practice.

Importantly, this bill establishes a profession-driven and profession-funded center. As someone who personally pays pharmacist licensing fees in Hawai'i and in two other states, I fully support this model. I recognize that meaningful progress requires investment. Even with the proposed structure, Hawai'i remains among the lowest in pharmacist licensure fees nationwide. I am more than willing to contribute to a modest increase in fees knowing that the return on investment would directly strengthen our workforce, expand training pipelines, and improve patient care across our islands.

A Center for Pharmacy would allow our profession to be proactive rather than reactive. Too often, pharmacists are brought into conversations about healthcare delivery after policies are already shaped. With a formal center, similar to the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing, we would have the infrastructure to:

- Collect and analyze workforce data
- Anticipate shortages and training needs
- Support residency and experiential education expansion
- Advance patient-centered practice models
- Collaborate meaningfully with other healthcare stakeholders

Pharmacists are among the most accessible healthcare providers in Hawai'i. We manage chronic diseases, provide preventive services, administer vaccines, support transitions of care, and improve medication safety. A dedicated Center for Pharmacy would help ensure that our state fully leverages this highly trained workforce to deliver more patient-centric, team-based care.

HB2161 is an investment in infrastructure, sustainability, and the future of healthcare delivery in Hawai'i. I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161** and thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Lily Van, PharmD, BCACP, CDCES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Hearing on February 18, 2026

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD1

To the honorable **Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti and Members of the Committee,**

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161-HD1, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD1** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah Taira". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the top and a small mark at the end.

Deborah Taira, ScD

Professor, DKICP



You're Someone Special

Testimony in Support of HB2161 – Establishment of a Center for Pharmacy

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Regular Session of 2026

Committee on Consumer Protection

Hearing: Wednesday, February 18, 2026

To the Honorable Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Travis Young, and I am a licensed pharmacist at KTA Pharmacy serving patients on the Big Island of Hawai'i. I am writing in strong support of HB2161, which would establish a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i.

Pharmacists are among the most accessible healthcare providers in our communities, particularly across neighbor islands and rural areas. As a practicing pharmacist, I see firsthand how pharmacy teams are increasingly relied upon to support medication management, chronic disease care, preventive services, and care coordination—yet pharmacy lacks the same workforce infrastructure and statewide coordination that exists for other doctorate-level healthcare professions.

HB2161 represents a proactive, profession-driven solution to this gap. The proposed Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, coordination, and infrastructure necessary to assess workforce needs, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care models that improve patient outcomes. This is especially important given Hawai'i's current healthcare workforce shortages and the anticipated shortage of pharmacists in the coming decade.

Importantly, this initiative mirrors successful models already established for nursing and medicine in Hawai'i and does not rely on state general funds. Instead, it leverages a modest licensure fee increase to reinvest directly into strengthening the pharmacy profession and expanding access to care statewide.

Establishing a Center for Pharmacy will better position Hawai'i to support innovative pharmacy services, attract and retain local talent, and ensure pharmacists remain an integral part of the healthcare solution for our communities.

I respectfully urge your support of **HB2161**, and thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Travis Young, PharmD

Pharmacist, KTA Pharmacy

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You're Someone Special

Testimony in Support of HB2161 – Establishment of a Center for Pharmacy

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Regular Session of 2026

Committee on Consumer Protection

Hearing: Wednesday, February 18, 2026

To the Honorable Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Christina Reuelman and I am a pharmacy technician at KTA Pharmacy located in Hilo, Hawaii. I am writing in strong support of HB2161, which would establish a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i.

As a pharmacy technician, I work on the front lines of patient care every day. Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are often the most accessible healthcare professionals, especially in rural and neighbor island communities. We see firsthand how critical pharmacy teams are in keeping patients healthy, managing medications, and filling gaps in care—yet pharmacy as a profession has historically lacked the same workforce planning and infrastructure that exists for nursing and medicine.

The proposed Center for Pharmacy would help address this gap by supporting workforce assessment, retention efforts, and modernization of pharmacy practice. This is especially important as Hawai'i faces ongoing healthcare workforce shortages and an anticipated shortage of pharmacists in the coming years. A coordinated, statewide approach will help ensure that local talent—including pharmacy technicians like myself—can continue to serve our communities and grow within the profession.

Importantly, this initiative is profession-driven and does not require state general funds, mirroring successful models already in place for other healthcare professions in Hawai'i. Establishing this Center will strengthen the pharmacy workforce and ultimately improve patient access and outcomes across the state.

I respectfully urge you to support HB2161. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Reuelman

Christina Reuelman

Pharmacy Technician, KTA Pharmacy

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026
Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Hearing on February 18, 2026
Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD1

To the honorable **Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti and Members of the Committee,**

I am writing to express my strong support for **House Bill 2161-HD1**, which proposes establishing a **Hawaii Center for Pharmacy**. As an Associate Professor at the University of Hawaii at Hilo's Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP) and a practicing pharmacist specializing in **geriatrics, substance use disorders, and mental health**, I believe this Center is essential to the future of healthcare in our state.

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

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

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

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

I respectfully urge your support of **HB2161-HD1**. Thank you for your time and for your consideration of this vital initiative.

Sincerely,

Chad Kawakami, Pharm.D., BCPS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGULAR SESSION OF 2026
Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Hearing on February 18, 2026
Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2161-HD1

LATE

To the honorable **Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti and Members of the Committee,**

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 2161-HD1, which proposes the establishment of a Center for Pharmacy in Hawai'i. As a pharmacy student at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP), I believe that the creation of such a Center is not only timely, but essential in addressing critical issues facing our healthcare system and the pharmacy profession.

The Center for Pharmacy would provide the data, infrastructure, and statewide coordination needed to assess workforce information, support retention, and modernize pharmacy practice so pharmacists can fully contribute to team-based, value-driven care that improves patient outcomes. The Center would serve as an independent entity to coordinate and scale progressive pharmacy practice initiatives and demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to leveraging our profession to address the existing and anticipated strains on Hawaii's healthcare workforce.

This bill represents a proactive, profession-driven solution that mirrors successful models already in place for nursing and medicine, without requiring state general funds. While this will increase the cost of my license, it will still be among the lowest in the nation, and I feel that it is a worthwhile investment to ensure that my future profession and career can bring practices that are already available to people in other states to our islands and help improve access to health care in our communities.

I respectfully urge your **support of HB2161-HD1** and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jarin Loristo

Student Pharmacist, **DKICP Class of 2031**