



April 15, 2026

To: Committee Chair Gregg Takayama  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Hawai'i State Legislature

From: Ira Ono, President  
Volcano Health Collaborative

Re: **SCR21, SD1**. Requesting Hawaii Health Systems Corporation Conduct A Feasibility Study For A Rural Health Clinic in Volcano, Hawaii

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of SRC21, SD1 which calls on Hawaii Health Systems Corporation's (HHSC) East Hawaii Regional Health Care System to study the feasibility of establishing a rural health clinic or comparable healthcare access point for the Volcano area on Hawaii Island.

The Volcano Health Collaborative was established in 2005 by dedicated Volcano residents who worked tirelessly to call attention to the need for health care services in the community. Those individuals have long passed away or moved out of the community seeking health care elsewhere. Today, we have renewed our efforts to call attention to the need for health care services in Volcano.

In 2025 the "Volcano Medical and Healthcare Needs Assessment" further validated the longstanding access barriers to timely and appropriate medical care. Our population is getting older and many residents who were so hopeful to see a healthcare facility in Volcano in 2005, are in their late 70's and early 80's. We are still waiting. And while we wait, we have more complicated medical conditions and face greater challenges driving the long distance to Hilo or Kea'au for medical, pharmacy, laboratory and X-ray services.

This resolution will address long standing geographic barriers to accessing timely and appropriate medical and healthcare services. A Volcano rural health clinic will mean that we do not have to delay seeking care because of the long drive. In the end, our health outcomes will benefit by having a health care provider in the community.

Please vote YES on SCR21, SD1.

Mahalo,

Ira Ono  
iraono@hawaii.rr.com



Lanikai Brewing Company  
175 Hamakua Drive, Unit C  
Kailua, Hawaii 96734  
www.lanikaibrewing.com

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SCR21 / SR18  
REQUESTING A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR A RURAL HEALTH CLINIC IN  
VOLCANO**

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

My name is **Steve Haumschild**, and I am a part-time resident of Volcano and a business owner of Lanikai Brewing Company Volcano. I am writing in strong support of SCR21 / SR18, which seeks to evaluate the establishment of a rural health clinic or similar access point for the Volcano community.

Volcano is a uniquely rural and geographically isolated community on Hawai'i Island. Despite its small population it serves a much larger and more complex population when considering both demographics and visitor traffic.

One of the most critical factors supporting this measure is the **age of our community**. Volcano has a **median age of approximately 68 years**, dramatically higher than the state average, with over **40% of residents aged 65 and older**. This is not a transient population—it is a community of kūpuna who require consistent, accessible primary care, chronic disease management, and timely emergency response.

At the same time, Volcano faces significant **geographic and healthcare access challenges**. The nearest major medical facilities are located in Hilo, approximately **28 miles away**, requiring a 40–45 minute drive under ideal conditions. For many residents—particularly elderly individuals, those with limited transportation, or during adverse weather or volcanic conditions—this distance represents a real barrier to care. Delayed treatment for otherwise manageable conditions often leads to preventable emergencies and increased strain on the broader healthcare system.

Beyond its resident population, Volcano sits at the gateway to **Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park**, one of the most visited destinations in the state. The area receives **millions of visitors annually**, dramatically increasing the number of individuals in need of potential medical services on any given day. These visitors engage in hiking, sightseeing, and exposure to volcanic environments, which carry inherent risks such as respiratory distress, injuries, and environmental exposure. Currently, emergency services are limited and largely centered within the park, underscoring the need for a more accessible, community-based healthcare presence.

Lanikai Brewing Company, Island Inspired™ Craft Beer  
Brewery/Distillery @ 175-C Hamakua Dr, Kailua, HI 96734  
Kailua @ 167 Hamakua Dr, Kailua, HI 96734 everyday 12p-10p  
Volcano @ 19-4005 Haunani Rd, Volcano HI 96785 everyday 11a-9p  
\*\*\*Coming soon Brewpub on North Shore of Oahu

As a business owner operating in Volcano, I see firsthand the intersection of these issues—an aging local population, a steady influx of visitors, and limited healthcare infrastructure. The absence of even basic primary care services in such a setting is a clear gap in our rural health system.

SCR21 / SR18 does not mandate immediate construction or funding of a facility—it simply takes the prudent and necessary step of conducting a feasibility study. This study will allow the State and the Hawai‘i Health Systems Corporation to evaluate practical solutions, including part-time providers, mobile clinics, or hybrid models that can appropriately serve this unique community.

Establishing a rural health clinic in Volcano would:

- Improve health outcomes for a disproportionately older population
- Reduce emergency response strain by enabling early intervention
- Support visitor safety in a high-traffic, high-risk natural environment
- Strengthen the overall East Hawai‘i regional healthcare network

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to support SCR21 / SR18.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Steve Haumschild, MBA

CEO & Brewmaster, Certified Cicerone®  
Lanikai Brewing Company, Lanikai Spirits both Island Inspired™  
Brewery/Distillery @ 175-C Hamakua Dr, Kailua, HI 96734  
Kailua @ 167 Hamakua Dr, Kailua, HI 96734 everyday 12p-10p  
Volcano @ 19-4005 Haunani Rd, Volcano HI 96785 everyday 11a-9p  
\*\*\*Coming soon Brewpub on North Shore of Oahu  
FB: Lanikai Brewing Company, Instagram: @lanikaibrewing

Lanikai Brewing Company, Island Inspired™ Craft Beer  
Brewery/Distillery @ 175-C Hamakua Dr, Kailua, HI 96734  
Kailua @ 167 Hamakua Dr, Kailua, HI 96734 everyday 12p-10p  
Volcano @ 19-4005 Haunani Rd, Volcano HI 96785 everyday 11a-9p  
\*\*\*Coming soon Brewpub on North Shore of Oahu

# COOPER CENTER COUNCIL

*PO Box 1000, Volcano HI 96785*

From: David Goodman, Treasurer  
Cooper Center Council  
P. O. Box 1000  
Volcano, Hawaii 96785

April 15, 2026

To: Committee Chair Gregg Takayama  
House Committee on Health  
2026 Hawai'i State Legislature

Re: **SCR21, SD1** Requesting Hawaii Health Systems Corporation Conduct A Feasibility Study For A Rural Health Clinic in Volcano, Hawaii

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and members of the Committee

I have been a resident of Volcano for twenty two years and have also served as Treasurer of the Volcano Cooper Center Council since 2010.

The Cooper Center, a county facility, serves as the community center for the town of Volcano. Cooper Center is the hub of all major activities in our community and attracts residents to its facilities throughout the year. During the Covid shutdown, it served as a distribution center for goods and services for people of the upper Puna area. As such, our volunteers and myself are keenly aware of the many needs of our rural community.

Volcano is one of the most isolated communities on the Big Island when it comes to health care. It is a half-hour drive to the nearest urgent care facility in Kea'au and close to an hour to the Hilo Medical Center emergency room, longer if there is traffic. Travel time for routine medical appointments is equally long. This isolation also applies to visitors to the Volcano National Park.

In addition, Volcano has become home to a growing community of senior citizens. For seniors, the distance to medical services is an even greater problem. Advancing age brings on many conditions that require increased medical attention while at the same time reducing their ability to drive the distances required to obtain treatment, especially at night.

The Volcano Community Association's "Volcano Medical and Healthcare Needs Assessment", which was completed in 2025, validates what the majority of residents here need. We are an aging community, many with chronic medical problems. We have challenges driving 60 miles roundtrip (two hour commute) into Hilo to see our doctor.

We support the proposal to have Hawaii Health System Corporation's East Hawaii Regional Healthcare study the feasibility of placing some kind of healthcare service in Volcano. This would be an important first step in providing the residents of Volcano and the surrounding communities access to basic health care services they so urgently need.

Please support and pass both SCR21 and SD1.

Mahalo,  
David Goodman  
Volcano, Hawaii

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:57:14 AM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
AUBREY HAWK	Rotary Club of Volcano	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aubrey Hawk

President-Elect 2026-27

Rotary Club of Volcano

PO Box 522

Volcano HI 96785

TO: Committee Chair Gregg Takayama and members of the House Committee on Health

RE: SCR21 SD1, Requesting HHSC conduct a feasibility study for a rural health clinic in Volcano, Hawaii

The Rotary Club of Volcano writes to express its support of SCR21 SD1. Given the rural location of our local resident community, the rapid growth in the area, and the influx of millions of visitors annually to Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, the feasibility of a Rural Health Clinic should be studied and seriously considered.

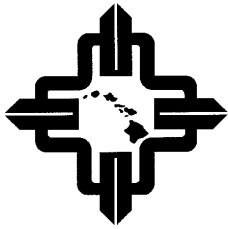
Please vote YES on SCR21 SD1.

Mahalo,

Aubrey Hawk

Rotary Club of Volcano

Volcano, Hawaii Island



**HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS**  
C O R P O R A T I O N

*"Quality Healthcare For All"*

**COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

Rep. Gregg Takayama, Chair  
Rep. Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair

April 17, 2026

10:30 AM

State Capitol

Room 329 & Via Videoconference

**Testimony in Support of SCR 21, SD1**

Requesting the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation's East Hawaii Regional Health Care System to conduct a feasibility study on establishing a rural health clinic or comparable rural health access point to serve the volcano community.

Edward N. Chu

President & Chief Executive Officer  
Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation

On behalf of the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation (HHSC) Corporate Board of Directors, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in **support of SCR 21, SD1**.

Residents of Volcano and surrounding areas face significant barriers to timely and consistent healthcare. Geographic isolation, limited transportation options, and long travel times to Hilo or other population centers create real challenges, especially for kūpuna, families with young children, and individuals managing chronic conditions. In urgent situations, these delays can have serious consequences.

A feasibility study is a prudent and necessary step. It allows the state and healthcare providers to assess community needs, evaluate cost-effective models (such as telehealth-supported clinics, mobile care units, or part-time provider rotations), and identify sustainable solutions tailored to a rural setting. Importantly, this measure does not mandate immediate construction or spending but ensures that decisions are informed by data and community input.

HHSC's East Region has already taken steps to explore the possibility of a rural health clinic in the Volcano area and they can provide more details on their findings. We appreciate the community's interest in this matter and look forward to advance this important issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SCR 21, SD1.



**HILO BENIOFF MEDICAL CENTER  
HONOKA`A HOSPITAL  
KA`U HOSPITAL  
Y. OKUTSU STATE VETERANS HOME**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2026**

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Rep. Gregg Takayama, Chair  
Rep. Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair

Rep. Terez Amato                      Rep. Jenna Takenouchi  
Rep. Daisy Hartsfield                Rep. David Alcos III  
Rep. Lisa Marten                      Rep. Diamond Garcia  
Rep. Ikaika Olds

AMENDED NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Friday, April 17, 2026  
TIME: 10:30 am  
PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE  
Conference Room 329  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street



**Testimony in Support of SCR 21, SD1 (SSCR3488)**

Requesting the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation's East Hawaii Regional Health Care System to conduct a feasibility study on establishing a rural health clinic or comparable rural health access point to serve the volcano community.

Dan Brinkman  
East Hawai'i Region CEO  
Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation

**I am writing in strong support of SCR 21, SD1**, which requests our region to conduct a feasibility study on establishing a Rural Health Clinic (RHC) or comparable access point to serve the Volcano community on behalf of the East Hawai'i Region of the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation (HHSC) that includes Hilo Benioff Medical Center, Kā'u Hospital, Honoka'a Hospital, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home, and our East Hawai'i Health Clinics network of RHCs, located in Hilo, Kea'au, Pāhoa and Kā'u.

Access to timely, reliable healthcare services remains a significant challenge for residents of Volcano and surrounding areas. Distance, transportation barriers, and limited local options often delay care, leading to avoidable emergency department visits



**HILO BENIOFF MEDICAL CENTER  
HONOKA`A HOSPITAL  
KA`U HOSPITAL  
Y. OKUTSU STATE VETERANS HOME**

---

and poorer health outcomes. Expanding access to primary and urgent care services closer to where people live is essential to improving the health of this community. While this resolution calls for a feasibility study, I would like to share that the East Hawai'i Region has already taken initial steps to explore this concept. Based on our preliminary assessment, we are supportive of establishing a rural health access point in Volcano. We have identified potential sites within the Volcano town center and believe the most appropriate model would be a Rural Health Clinic offering a combination of urgent care and primary care services, similar to the care model we currently operate in Pāhoa.

However, it is important to note that there is no immediate or simple solution. Development of a clinic in Volcano will require investment in physical infrastructure, as existing facilities are limited and may not meet clinical requirements. Legislative support will be critical to moving this project forward.

Initial funding for site acquisition, site development and design would allow us to make substantial progress and obtain firm numbers on facility cost. We are requesting \$3M to support those efforts.

From an operational perspective, we believe such a clinic could be sustained over the long term, particularly if structured under the RHC model, which is designed to support rural providers. Establishing this access point would improve continuity of care, reduce strain on emergency services, and enhance overall health outcomes for the Volcano community.

We appreciate the Legislature's attention to rural healthcare access and support the intent of SCR 21, SD1. We look forward to continuing to work with community partners and policymakers to further evaluate and, ultimately, advance this important initiative.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 11:31:04 AM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Susan Cabral	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. An Urgent Care facility would be a tremendous benefit for residents in Volcano, as well as visitors.

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 11:32:29 AM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly support this bill because of the need in the Volcano area for Urgent Care for residents as well as visitors.

Kathleen Mishina  
P O Box 1257  
Volcano, Hawaii  
April 15, 2026

To: Committee Chair Greg Takayama  
House Committee on Health

Re: **SCR21 SD1**: Requesting Hawaii Health System Corporation Conduct A Feasibility Study For A Rural Health Clinic In Volcano, Hawaii

Aloha, Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and members of the Committee:

I am a resident of Volcano Village and a retired public health/community health nurse. Volcano is medically underserved.

We have an urgent need for geographically accessible health care services in Volcano. The majority of residents do a 30-60 mile roundtrip commute to obtain primary medical care, medications, lab tests, X-rays, or to receive urgent care.

In the 2025 "Volcano Medical and Healthcare Needs Assessment" community survey, 55% percent of respondents stated they would transfer their care to a local Volcano provider if he/she were available.

In 2020, the Volcano US Census Census Designated Places (CDP) population exceeded those of Pahala CDP and Honoka'a CDP for the same period. Yet, Honoka'a and Pahala both have at least one medical provider, as well as lab, pharmacy, and X-ray. The isolated community of Hawaiian Ocean View Estates in Ka'u which has a comparable population as the Volcano area, has an accessible mobile health care van. Volcano has been overlooked and underserved for years.

In addition, the majority of Volcano residents are aging. The 2020 census recorded majority of residents over age 60. At the same time, Volcano's younger population is also growing with more homes being constructed in Volcano's neighboring subdivisions of Fern Forest, Royal Hawaiian Estates, Mauna Loa Estates, Volcano Golf Course, Ohi'a Estates, Cymbidium Acres, and within old Volcano Village.

Mail delivery is through USPS Volcano. The waiting list for a post office box is 1.5 years and a large number of newcomers on this list receive their mail through general delivery. The student body of the DOE charter school, Volcano School for Arts and Sciences, is growing and a high school is being planned.

Finally, Volcano Village is one mile from the entrance of the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. The park attracts millions of visitors annually. Visitors also occupy a large number of vacation rentals in the community. Due to the importance of visitors for a stable Volcano economy, having a rural health clinic here will provide a safety net, as well as an added value, for visitors.

It is time for a rural health clinic in Volcano. Planning requires time and funding to reach this long term goal. A feasibility study to chart the next steps is strategic, while also serving to identify reasonable short term solutions. The Volcano Community Association, the Volcano Health Collaborative, other community non-profits, and residents are willing to assist HHSC in the proposed feasibility study.

Please pass SCR21 SD1.

Thank you.

Kathleen Mishina, volunteer  
Volcano Health Collaborative  
Volcano Community Association

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 12:30:07 PM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew J Sutton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Andrew J Sutton  
POB 1352

Volcano HI, 96785  
[anuhea0856@@gmail.com](mailto:anuhea0856@@gmail.com)  
4/17/2026

To: Committee Chair Senator San Buenaventura  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Hawai'i State Legislature  
Re: SCR21/SD1. Requesting Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation Conduct A Feasibility Study For A Rural Health Clinic in Volcano, Hawai'i

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair McKelvey, and members of the Committee:  
I am writing in support of SCR21/SD1, which calls on Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation's (HHSC) East Hawai'i Regional Health Care System to study the feasibility of establishing a rural health clinic or comparable healthcare access point for the Volcano area on Hawai'i Island.

These companion resolutions are a purposeful step towards addressing the long running healthcare services shortfall in East Hawai'i, especially in the comparatively isolated areas spanning the Puna/Ka'u Districts. Those of us living in Volcano drive at least 60 miles round trip to reach healthcare providers. This significant distance has been made worse in recent years by rapidly increasing traffic congestion, the aging-up of the Volcano community, and the extra burden of competition for healthcare services with visitors to Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park and Volcano Village itself. While a local clinic in Volcano would be very helpful, true healthcare-- a facility that incorporates a wellness component in addition to disease treatment could make a world of difference in our community and reduce the current unnecessary burden on Urgent Care offices and the Ka'u and Hilo Hospital's Emergency Departments.

Please vote YES on SCR21/SD1.  
Mahalo,

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 1:03:55 PM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Christy Schuerch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Takayama and members of the Committee,

I am writing to strongly urge you to vote Yes on SCR21. As a Volcano resident, I have been dismayed that health care is available at best in Hilo (a 60 mile roundtrip), or alternately on Oahu or the Mainland. This has made the possibility to age in place here in Volcano very difficult to imagine for many of us. We love our village, but we do not love the lack of medical services.

Sincerely, Christy Schuerch, Volcano

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 1:38:15 PM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sherrill Glass	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Sherrill E. Glass

P.O. Box 1052

Volcano, HI 96785

808-967-8553

April 15, 2026

To:Committee Chair Senator San Buenaventura

Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

Hawaii State Legislature

Re: SD1 & SCR21 Requesting Hawaii Health Systems Corporation Conduct A Feasi-bility Study For A Rural Health Clinic in Volcano, Hawaii

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair McKelvey, and members of the com-mittee:

I am writing this testimony in strong support of SD1/SCR21 requesting the feasi-bility study for a rural health clinic in Volcano, Hawai`i. Personally, I need to drive 50 miles round trip to visit doctors in Hilo. This is a hardship for myself (72) and for my wheelchair-bound husband (67). A rural health clinic here in Volcano would al-leviate a lot of hardship by seniors and other patients living in this area. It would also help the 1.5 million visitors to the nearby Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and Kilauea Military Camp each year with minor injuries and illnesses. At the same time reducing inappropriate utilization of urgent care and emergency room. I urge you to please vote yes on SCR21/SD1.

Mahalo,

Sherrill E. Glass

Volcano, Hawaii Island

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 1:52:26 PM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bradley Weisz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- SCR21 is critically important to all of Volcano's residents as well as it's surrounding communities and villages. Timely, reliable and affordable medical services would greatly improve the quality of life immediately for thousands of Americans in the Kau District area. Possibly partnering with the Kilauea Military Camp would enable the services to be even more effective, responsive and affordable. Thank you for allowing us to participate in this incredible opportunity. All the Best, Brad Weisz

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 3:05:11 PM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Health Committee Members:

I am writing in STRONG support of SCR21, SD1, which calls on Hawaii Health Systems Corporation's (HHSC) East Hawaii Regional Health Care System to study the feasibility of establishing a rural health clinic or comparable healthcare access point for the Volcano area on the Island of Hawaii.

I have lived in Volcano for 35-plus years, and made the decision to stay here in retirement. However, now in my 70s, I am realizing that I may not be able to spend the rest of my life here because if/when I am no longer able to drive to Hilo, I will have no easy access to medical care. Thus, I strongly support establishing a health clinic in the Volcano community.

This resolution will address long standing geographic barriers to accessing timely and appropriate medical and healthcare services, especially for senior citizens. As we age, the 60-mile round-trip drive into Hilo for primary medical care becomes increasingly difficult, if not impossible. A Volcano rural health clinic will greatly help meet our medical needs.

A rural health clinic in Volcano will also reduce inappropriate utilization of urgent care and emergency rooms, and improve health outcomes for all residents in the Volcano area, both young and old. Families with children need quick and easy access to medical care as much as we senior citizens need it.

Locating a clinic in Volcano will also provide a safety net for the millions of people who visit Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and Kilauea Military Camp and may need health care for injuries or respiratory effects from Kilauea Volcano's gas emissions.

Please vote YES on SCR21, SD1.

Thank you,

Janet Babb, Volcano, Hawai'i

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 6:20:55 PM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marsha Hee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

April 15, 2026

To: Committee Chair Gregg Takayama

House Committee on Health

2026 Hawai'i State Legislature

Re: SCR21, SD1 Requesting Hawaii Health Systems Corporation Conduct A Feasibility

Study For A Rural Health Clinic in Volcano, Hawaii

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and members of the Committee:

I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of SCR21, SD1, which calls on Hawaii Health Systems Corporation's (HHSC) East Hawaii Regional Health Care System to study the feasibility of establishing a rural health clinic or comparable healthcare access point for the Volcano area on Hawaii Island.

This resolution will address long standing geographic barriers to accessing timely and appropriate medical and healthcare services. The majority of Volcano residents drive 60 miles round trip into Hilo to receive primary medical care. A Volcano rural health clinic will also help reduce inappropriate utilization of urgent care and emergency rooms, and improve health outcomes for all residents in the Volcano area.

In addition, locating a clinic in Volcano will provide a health care safety net for millions of visitors to the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and Kilauea Military Camp, who may sustain injuries, require non-urgent medical care, or experience respiratory effects from Volcanic activity.

Please vote YES on SCR21, SD1.

Mahalo,

Marsha Hee

Volcano, Hawaii Island



**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 6:29:19 PM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Howard Shapiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

April 15, 2026

To: Committee Chair Gregg Takayama

House Committee on Health

2026 Hawai'i State Legislature

Re: SCR21, SD1 Requesting Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation Conduct A Feasibility

Study For A Rural Health Clinic in Volcano, Hawai'i

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and members of the Committee:

I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of SCR21, SD1, which calls on Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation's (HHSC) East Hawai'i Regional Health Care System to study the feasibility of establishing a rural health clinic or comparable healthcare access point for the Volcano area on Hawai'i Island.

This resolution will address long standing geographic barriers to accessing timely and appropriate medical and healthcare services. The majority of Volcano residents drive 60 miles round trip into Hilo to receive primary medical care. A Volcano rural health clinic will also help reduce inappropriate utilization of urgent care and emergency rooms, and improve health outcomes for all residents in the Volcano area.

In addition, locating a clinic in Volcano will provide a health care safety net for millions of visitors to the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park and Kilauea Military Camp, who may sustain injuries, require non-urgent medical care, or experience respiratory effects from Volcanic activity.

Please vote YES on SCR21, SD1.

Mahalo,

Howard Shapiro

Volcano, Hawai'i Island



**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 7:07:49 PM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Janie McQueen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Janie McQueen

11-3869 10th St.

Volcano, HI 96785

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

808-854-9750

April 15, 2026

To: Committee Chair Gregg Takayama

House Committee on Health

2026 Hawai'i State Legislature

Re: SCR21, SD1 Requesting Hawaii Health Systems Corporation Conduct A Feasibility Study For A Rural Health Clinic in Volcano, Hawaii

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and members of the Committee:

I am writing to strong support SCR21, SD1, which calls on Hawaii Health Systems

Corporation's (HHSC) East Hawaii Regional Health Care System to study the feasibility of establishing a rural health clinic or comparable healthcare access point for the Volcano area on Hawaii Island.

This resolution will address longstanding geographic barriers to accessing timely and appropriate medical and healthcare services. Most Volcano residents drive 60 miles round trip into Hilo to receive primary medical care. Many just forgo preventive healthcare—a practice the state of Hawai'i has long espoused – because it's too difficult to get to appointments. These people are often those who reach for emergency care out of default.

Volcano is positioned equidistant from Kea'au and Pahala – and both of those comparatively smaller communities offer solid healthcare options for their residents. Volcano is growing and isn't a sleepy village. The demographics are constantly changing. People of all ages live here, and all deserve easier access to medical care than we currently have.

A Volcano rural health clinic will not only help reduce inappropriate utilization of urgent care and emergency rooms but improve health outcomes for all residents in the Volcano area.

In addition, locating a clinic in Volcano will provide a health care safety net for millions of visitors to the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and Kilauea Military Camp, who may sustain injuries, require non-urgent medical care, or experience respiratory effects from Volcanic activity.

Please vote YES on SCR21, SD1.

Mahalo nui loa,

Janie McQueen

Volcano, HI

## SCR21, SD1

Suzanne Evans  
19-4047 Kalanikoa Rd  
PO Box 117  
Volcano, HI 96785

To: Committee Chair Gregg Takayama, House Committee on Health,  
2026 Hawai'i State Legislature

Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, House Committee on Health,  
2026 Hawai'i State Legislature

Members of the House Committee on Health, 2026 Hawai'i State Legislature  
Committee:

Re: **SCR21, SD1** Requesting Hawaii Health Systems Corporation Conduct A

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and members of the  
Committee:

I am writing in strong support of SCR21, SD1, which calls on Hawaii Health Systems Corporation's (HHSC) East Hawaii Regional Health Care System to study the feasibility of establishing a rural health clinic or comparable healthcare access point for the Volcano area on Hawaii Island.

This resolution will address these concerns:

1. **The long standing geographic barriers to accessing timely and appropriate medical and healthcare services.** The majority of Volcano residents drive 60 miles round trip into Hilo to receive primary medical care.
2. **The overuse of urgent care.** Volcano rural health clinic will also help reduce inappropriate utilization of urgent care and emergency rooms.
3. **Need for better health outcomes,** A clinic would provide accessibility to care and support follow-up care, This would improve health outcomes for all residents in the Volcano area.
4. **Visitor safety net.** A clinic in Volcano will provide a health care safety net for millions of visitors to the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and Kilauea Military Camp, who may sustain injuries, require non-urgent medical care, or experience respiratory effects from Volcanic activity.

For these reasons, I encourage you to please vote YES on SCR21, SD1.

Mahalo,

Suzanne Evans  
[Beyersuz5@gmail.com](mailto:Beyersuz5@gmail.com)  
808-785-2839

]

**SCR21, SD1**

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 10:13:44 PM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jeffrey Mermel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy and members of the Committee:

I write in full SUPPORT of SCR21, SD1 which calls upon HHSC East Hawaii Regional Health Care System to study the feasibility of establishing a rural health clinic or comparable healthcare access point for the Volcano area here on Hawaii Island.

As a 50 year resident of Volcano. I've watched our population grow, while the needed medical support services have actually shrunk. To get the primary care services we need, most of us have to drive a 60 mile round-trip to Hilo.

A rural health clinic located in Volcano will alleviate the strain on urgent care facilities and emergency rooms.

Next door, the Volcanoes National Park gets over 1.3 million visitors a year and many of them could also benefit from a health clinic located nearby.

Please vote YES on SCR2, SD1.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Mermel

President Emeritus

Volcano Community Association

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 6:52:48 AM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Kunz, MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Representative Gregg Takayama,

I am writing in support of SCR21. I am a resident of Volcano, Hawaii. I am 78 years old and in better health than many of my neighbors. Yet I too put off seeking health services because of the drive to Keaau or Hilo. And so many of my aging neighbors and friends cannot or should not drive, and they have virtually given up on seeking care short of a life threatening emergency. Many of these folks are impaired elderly and have difficulty managing their daily lives: seeking health care is not an option, they just slowly fade away -some never leaving their home. One neighbor and friend has his family bring him groceries every 2 weeks, otherwise he is just sheltring in his decaying home. They can't bring him other services. Her has so many medical issues and he just does not have the energy to seek help when so far away. Of course, in addition to direct medical care, he could benefit ftrom the many other care services that those in more urban areas have available. If there was a health provider in Volcano, even part-time, his life could be vastly improved. He does not bother to seek refills of his medications he was last prescribed years ago. He cannot drive and is too disabled to get to the local bus stop and take the bus. And he could navigate anywhere without an assistant in this. Even if we had a social worker or nurse here in Volcano a couple 1/2 days a week, that would make such a difference. And this man is hardly the only case, there are several dozen I am aware of - and I don't matriculate much anymore. So here we have a geographically isolated population without the ability to attend to their often very grave medical and even social issues - from advncing dementia, immobility and chronic medical conditions that could be stabilized and sometimes resolved with a minimum of support. It is very difficult to watch this play out. It's actually heartbreaking and I wish I had my own heath back as it was years ago so I could do something, Aging has it's price. I am blessed at my age to have the health and healthcare that I can access. My neighbors deserve this as well. They deserve to be cared for,

Please pass this resolution!

Sincerely,

Kevin

Kevin Kunz

Volcano Hawaii

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 7:53:08 AM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

The Volcano community and adjoining areas have zero health professionals. The closest medical aid is in Keaau, which is over 20 miles away, and that is an urgent care facility. Most residents have to go to either Hilo or Pahala.

Determining the medical needs of this community is essential to be able to move forward to ultimately creating some sort of regular, on-going medical service(s).

Please support this bill.

M. Elaine Lee

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 8:45:44 AM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Diane Ley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**April 16, 2026**

**Honorable Greg Takayama, Chair**

**Honorable Sue Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair**

**Committee on Health**

**State House of Representatives**

**Honolulu, Hawaii**

**RE: Testimony in Support of SCR 21, SD1, Requesting the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation's East Hawaii Regional Health Care System to Conduct a Feasibility Study on Establishing a Rural Health Clinic or Comparable Rural Health Access Point to Serve the Volcano Community**

**Dear Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy and Committee Members,**

**As a resident, lessor, and business owner in Volcano since the early 1970s, I have witnessed decades of transition in our community. My background in County, State, and Federal administrative roles—focused on economic development and community well-being—has given me a clear vantage point on our region's history and its future needs. Today, a most pressing "gap" in infrastructure is the lack of accessible healthcare.**

**The greater Volcano area is currently "geographically straddled" between distant healthcare hubs. Residents must travel 45 minutes to Pahala or 45 to 75 minutes to Hilo, depending on traffic. For our growing population of young families and retirees, as well as**

**the million-plus visitors to the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and Kilauea Military Camp, this distance is more than an inconvenience—it is a significant risk.**

**I support these resolutions for the following key reasons:**

- **Demographic Demand: The Volcano population is expanding, and local institutions—including the Volcano School of Arts & Sciences and the Volcano Golf Course—create high-density "points of need" that currently lack nearby medical support.**
- **Economic Impact: Healthcare is not just a social service; it is an economic driver. A local clinic would create jobs and further stabilize the community.**
- **Infrastructure Barriers: Limited public transit makes the long drive to Hilo or Pahala-Naalehu impossible for many of our most vulnerable residents.**
- **Community Readiness: Organizations like the Volcano Community Association and the Volcano Health Collaborative are already organized, capable, and ready to partner with the State to bridge this gap.**

**A feasibility study conducted by the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation is the essential next step to quantify these needs, identify potential sites, and explore public-private partnerships.**

**I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of SCR 21, SD1 to ensure the health and safety of the Volcano community. Mahalo nui loa.**

**Diane L. Ley**

**Volcano**

Melissa Kunz  
19-4100 Kalani Honua Loop  
Volcano, HI 96785

April 16, 2026

To: Committee Chair Senator San Buenaventura  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Hawai'i State Legislature

Re: **SCR21 & SD1**. Requesting Hawaii Health Systems Corporation Conduct A Feasibility Study For A Rural Health Clinic in Volcano, Hawaii

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and members of the Committee:

As a Volcano resident and new parent, I am seeking ways to support my family's well-being for the long term while living in and stewarding the place we care most about. I strongly support SCR21/ SD, which calls on Hawaii Health Systems Corporation's (HHSC) East Hawaii Regional Health Care System to study the feasibility of establishing a rural health clinic or comparable healthcare access point for the Volcano area on Hawaii Island.

In the last year since my daughter was born, my family has experienced firsthand the burden of traveling to and from Hilo for routine and urgent care. While Volcano tends to be known as a community of retirees, working people live and are employed here, too. Driving to Hilo and back for a single medical appointment takes multiple hours out of a regular workday. While we'd drive any distance for our child, the reduction in income and family time is a major disincentive for me and my spouse to seek routine medical care for ourselves. This resolution will address the barriers of distance and time to healthcare, and support the availability of the regular preventive care Volcano families like ours need.

Please vote YES on SCR21/ SD.

Mahalo,

Melissa Kunz  
Volcano, HI

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:24:49 AM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michelle Kunz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of SCR21, SD1, which calls on Hawaii Health Systems Corporation's (HHSC) East Hawaii Regional Health Care System to study the feasibility of establishing a rural health clinic or comparable healthcare access point for the Volcano area on Hawaii Island.

This resolution will address long standing geographic barriers to accessing timely and appropriate medical and healthcare services. The majority of Volcano residents drive 60 miles round trip into Hilo to receive primary medical care. A Volcano rural health clinic will also help reduce inappropriate utilization of urgent care and emergency rooms, and improve health outcomes for all residents in the Volcano area.

In addition, locating a clinic in Volcano will provide a health care safety net for millions of visitors to the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and Kilauea Military Camp, who may sustain injuries, require non-urgent medical care, or experience respiratory effects from Volcanic activity.

Please vote YES on SCR21, SD1.

Mahalo,

Michelle Kunz  
Honolulu, Hawaii

Reed Bertollette  
19-4217 Ke Koa Nui Blvd  
PO Box 705  
Volcano HI 96785  
808-769-2193  
reed@bertopro.com  
3/28/2026



To: Committee Chair Senator San Buenaventura  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Hawai'i State Legislature

Re: **SR18 & SCR21**. Requesting Hawaii Health Systems Corporation Conduct A Feasibility Study For A Rural Health Clinic in Volcano, Hawaii

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair McKelvey, and members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of SR18/SRC21, which calls on Hawaii Health Systems Corporation's (HHSC) East Hawaii Regional Health Care System to study the feasibility of establishing a rural health clinic or comparable healthcare access point for the Volcano area on Hawaii Island.

This resolution will address long standing geographic barriers to accessing timely and appropriate medical and healthcare services. The majority of Volcano residents drive 60 miles round trip into Hilo to receive primary medical care. A Volcano rural health clinic will also help reduce inappropriate utilization of urgent care and emergency rooms, and improve health outcomes for all residents in the Volcano area.

In addition, locating a clinic in Volcano will provide a health care safety net for millions of visitors to the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and Kilauea Military Camp, who may sustain injuries, require non-urgent medical care, or experience respiratory effects from Volcanic activity.

Please vote YES on SR18/SCR21.

Mahalo,  
Reed  
Volcano, Hawaii

**LATE**

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 2:46:39 PM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Diane Ware	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and members of the Committee:

My name is Diane Ware. I am 78 years old and resident of Volcano since 1990. I am in strong support of SR18/SRC21, which calls on Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation's (HHSC) East Hawai'i Regional Health Care System to study the feasibility of establishing a rural health clinic or comparable healthcare access point for the Volcano area on Hawai'i Island.

This resolution will address long standing barriers to accessing timely and appropriate medical and healthcare services for Volcano which had a population of over 4,000 in 2020 and growing. The GP draft predicts a population over 10,000. The majority of Volcano residents drive 60 miles or more round trip into Hilo to receive primary medical care. Many elderly residents that can't drive avoid healthcare services entirely. A Volcano rural health clinic will also help reduce inappropriate utilization of urgent care and emergency rooms, and improve health outcomes for all residents in the Volcano area.

Mahalo for your support to pass this measure,

Diane Ware Volcano Golf Course subdivision

**LATE**

**SCR-21-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 4:55:37 PM

Testimony for HLT on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am a long-time resident of Volcano Village on the Big Island. I want to express my strong support for Senate Concurrent Resolution SCR21,SD1. concerning health care in the Volcano area. Current health care facilities and resources in the area are too few and too far away.

**LATE**

Written Testimony  
House Committee on Health (HLT)

April 17, 2026 10:30a.m.

By  
Limweidihwen Santos

**SCR21 SD1** REQUESTING THE HAWAI‘I HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION'S EAST HAWAI‘I REGIONAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON ESTABLISHING A RURAL HEALTH CLINIC OR COMPARABLE RURAL HEALTH ACCESS POINT TO SERVE THE VOLCANO COMMUNITY.

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Lee Loy, and members of the committee.

Aloha Chair and members of the committee, my name is Limweidihwen Santos, I am a social work student at UH Manoa but I am not representing the interest of UH for this testimony. I am submitting this testimony in support of: *requesting the Hawai‘i health systems corporations East Hawaii regional health care system to conduct a feasibility study on establishing a rural health clinic or comparable rural health access point to serve the volcano community.*

The Hawai‘i Department of Health reports that 95.1% of the state’s land area is rural, yet clinics, hospitals, specialists, and mental health providers are clustered in urban centers, forcing rural residents to travel long distances, often by plane or winding roads, just to access basic care.

Likewise, Hawai‘i Volcanic National Park is about 30 miles from Hilo, which is roughly about a 45-minute drive, while travel from Kona is about 95 miles and can take at least 2 hours one way. For many Volcano residents, that means that every medical appointment can become a major logistical and financial burden, especially for kūpuna, families with young children, and people without reliable transportation.

The need is not only geographic but also social and economic. In Hawai‘i County, the uninsured rate is 8.5%, and community health assessments have found that rural residents face limited specialty services, fewer primary care providers, and continue to face health disparities and risks -making the need more urgent.

Hawai‘i Department of Health guidance notes that people with respiratory conditions, older adults, and children are especially vulnerable during volcanic activity and vog exposure, and residents are advised to limit outdoor activity and seek care when symptoms worsen. Local access to routine care, medication refills, respiratory evaluation, and urgent triage can prevent small problems from becoming emergencies.

The Hawaii Health Systems Corporation (HHSC) already has a strong regional foundation in East Hawai‘i, including Hilo Benioff Medical Center, Honoka‘a Hospital, and Ka‘ū Hospital, and Ka‘ū Hospital demonstrates that rural health clinics can successfully extend care in remote communities. A feasibility study would allow the region to determine the best model for

Volcano, whether that is a full rural health clinic, urgent care-style access point, telehealth hub, or another practical option.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support for SCR21 SD1. A feasibility study is an essential first step toward improving access, reducing avoidable emergencies, and ensuring that Volcano residents receive the care they need close to home.

Thank You for the opportunity to testify in support of **SCR21 SD1**.