



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

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KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

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March 30, 2026

LATE

TO: SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Vice Chair

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

RE: **SCR 27 – Relating to Medical Residency Program on Maui**

HEARING: Monday, March 30, 2026 @ 1:07 pm; Conference Room 225

POSITION: SUPPORT INTENT with COMMENTS

Testimony:

SCR 27 urges Maui Health to work with key partners including JABSOM to create a full-time medical residency program on Maui. It could help Maui train and keep more doctors locally, given the serious primary care physician shortage there, which in turn is essential to improving access to care on the island over time. We believe this expansion of medical residency training could initially be funded using Rural Health Transformation funding. Over time, such a residency program will generate far more value than its cost because the residents in training will also provide a significant amount of health care during their residencies. The costs relates mainly to funding the faculty needed.

Thank you for hearing this measure.

■ -- Jack Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

LATE

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Monday, March 30, 2026 at 1:07 p.m.

By

T. Samuel Shomaker, Dean

and

Lee Buenconsejo-Lum, MD

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs & Chief Academic Officer

and

Kelley Withy, MD, Professor, Department of Family Medicine and Community Health,
Hawai'i/Pacific Basin Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Director

John A. Burns School of Medicine

and

Vassilis Syrmos, PhD

Interim Provost

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

**SCR 27/SR 24 – URGING MAUI HEALTH TO COLLABORATE WITH
STAKEHOLDERS TO ESTABLISH A FULL-TIME MEDICAL RESIDENCY PROGRAM
ON THE ISLAND OF MAUI**

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair McKelvey, and Members of the Committee:

The John A. Burns school of medicine (JABSOM) **supports SCR 27/SR 24** which urges collaboration between Maui Health, the administrators of the Hawai'i Rural Health Transformation Plan, the John A. Burns School of Medicine, and other stakeholders to establish a full-time medical residency program on the island of Maui. JABSOM recognizes the great need as well as benefits of expanding residency training to the neighbor islands and especially Maui.

Hawai'i is experiencing an alarming shortage of physicians. The shortage impacts the neighbor islands disproportionately, with Maui facing a critical overall physician shortage of forty-one percent, representing a deficit of approximately one hundred seventy-nine full-time equivalent physicians according to the 2025 Physician Workforce Assessment. Primary care, internal medicine, and some specialty physician shortages represent the greatest area of need. This shortage, along with shortages in other health processes, greatly impairs access to care, and may result in more poorly controlled chronic diseases. JABSOM has shown that eighty per cent of graduates who complete their medical school and residency training, also known as graduate medical education, in the State remain in Hawai'i to practice.

There are considerable public benefits and positive outcomes achieved by expanding capacity for training medical students especially on the neighbor islands with the goal of having these students ultimately remain in Hawai'i to practice. Collaboration between public and private entities has demonstrated success on Kaua'i and Hawai'i Island. Through a similar collaborative effort, a medical residency program may be established on Maui. JABSOM has been working with Maui Health and other Maui-based stakeholders for more than a year to achieve the necessary infrastructure, policies, and processes so that they can be successful in achieving a medical residency program in a primary care specialty.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

March 29, 2026

Aloha Chair Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Angus L.K. McKelvey, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

Maui Health is a not-for-profit organization that provides quality healthcare for all residents and visitors on Maui and Lanai, regardless of their health insurance coverage or ability to pay. Maui Health is comprised of several facilities, including Maui Memorial Medical Center, the only acute care hospital within Maui County, Kula Hospital and Lanai Community Hospital.

We want to offer our appreciation and support for these two resolutions, SR 24 and SCR 27, which acknowledge not only the State's significant shortage of primary care physicians and specialists, but also that Maui County faces:

- (i) a critical overall physical shortage of 41%, representing a deficit of approximately 179 full-time equivalent physicians; and
- (ii) a severe shortage in primary care, with a 35% deficit.

Other counties are fortunate enough to have primary residency programs that assist with this state-wide problem, particularly in rural areas. Maui county does not. Accordingly, Maui Health has been committed to having robust discussions with key stakeholders over the course of the past year to identify the best path towards this shared goal and is fully committed to continuing this engagement as urged in these resolutions moving forward.

As noted in both measures, the availability of specific Rural Health Transformation Program funds will be critically needed to create the financial pathway to support the high initial costs of establishing a medical residency program on Maui, and partnership with key collaborators will be required as well.

For the reasons outlined above, and with a strong commitment to ensuring quality healthcare for our residents, Maui Health supports these measures and thanks our Maui Senators for their leadership on this endeavor.

In kindness and appreciation,



Lynn Fulton

Chief Executive Officer