



## DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 101 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814  
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March 24, 2015

### TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND HOUSING

#### House Bill 1236, House Draft 1 - Relating to Persons with Disabilities

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) is a statewide Governor-appointed Board with a majority of its members being persons with disabilities or family members. The Board's mission is to advocate and promote full inclusion, independence, equal access, and improved quality of life for persons with disabilities in society. This testimony represents a position voted upon by the Legislative Committee of the Board.

DCAB supports House Bill 1236, House Draft 1 that establishes the Department of Human Services (DHS) Medicaid Buy-In Program for workers with disabilities and appropriates funds for outreach and training relating to the programs. The bill also appropriates funds for a Department of Health Medicaid Buy-In Pilot Program to be effective from July 1, 2016 until June 30, 2018.

Many adults with disabilities do not want to risk losing Medicaid health benefits by becoming employed. This bill would address that issue in allowing Medicaid recipients with disabilities who find jobs to buy-in to Medicaid while earning up to \$2,000 per month that the Medicaid Task Force agreed upon in DHS drafted Hawaii Administrative Rules. Our office supports efforts such as this bill that improves employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

BARBARA FISCHLOWITZ-LEONG  
Chairperson  
Legislative Committee

FRANCINE WAI  
Executive Director

# WILLIAM M. MIHALKE

03/23/15

March 23, 2015

Dear Senators:

Please pass HB 1236 HD1, with the following considerations:

- a) In our sister states that have Medicaid Buy-in for working persons with disabilities, 70% - 80% are already in the Medicaid system, and would be no additional cost to the State.
- b) As such, a pilot of 100 people would likely cost the state, on estimate, the capitation rate of QExA, times 20-30 individuals, as we are already paying for most of the people that would access the new program.
- c) The pilot seems better suited to sit in DHS, rather than DOH, particularly given the system changes that have occurred since ACA.
- d) The pilot could either fall under the State Plan as an independent group, fee-for-service, or under the 1115-waiver, and this should be left at the discretion of DHS.
- e) The new program would create new taxpayers, and would reduce the need for other benefits for the individuals that utilize the program.
- f) Individuals that are working generally have better health outcomes, and in the long run cost the state less in healthcare costs.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful deliberation on this matter.

Aloha nui loa,

William Mihalke

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 23, 2015 8:30 PM  
**To:** HSH Testimony  
**Cc:** anniemoriyasu@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1236 on Mar 24, 2015 13:20PM

**HB1236**

Submitted on: 3/23/2015

Testimony for HSH on Mar 24, 2015 13:20PM in Conference Room 016

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Annie Moriyasu	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Hawaii needs to have this Buy-In. People with disabilities must be able to work without the fear that they would lose medical benefits. Please pass this bill!

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**HB1236**

Submitted on: 3/23/2015

Testimony for HSH on Mar 24, 2015 13:20PM in Conference Room 016

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lisa Marie Tam	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please enable, not disable, Hawaii's current and future workers with disabilities by establishing the department of human services medicaid buy-in program and appropriate the necessary funds for outreach and training relating to the program. Hawaii workers with disabilities need a medicaid buy-in program. Please consider that it is an important and affordable way for Title II (SSDI) and Title XVI (SSI) beneficiaries who return to work to access Medicaid services. Medicaid provides essential services that many of Hawaii's working disabled require, and are willing to pay a premium for, in order to continue working themselves toward financial self-sufficiency and away from relying on free public benefits.

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LAP

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**HB1236**

Submitted on: 3/23/2015

Testimony for HSH on Mar 24, 2015 13:20PM in Conference Room 016

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Chin Lee	Individual	Support	No

Comments: The Medicaid Buy-in program, available in 45 states, is essential to persons with disabilities who wish to return to work. With a Medicaid Buy In program in Hawaii, persons with disabilities will be able to enjoy higher earnings, accumulate assets and contribute to the society without fear of losing health care support.

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Representative Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Representative Josh Green, Vice Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Housing

Abraleen Keliinui, ph. 808-554-1410

Tuesday, March 24, 2015

Support for H.B. No. 1236, H.D. 1, Relating to Persons with Disabilities

My name is Abraleen Keliinui. I am a graduate student with the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I am testifying in support of H.B. 1236, H.D. 1, Relating to Persons with Disabilities, which would establish the department of human services Medicaid buy-in program for workers with disabilities and appropriates funds for outreach and training relating to the program. Establishes and appropriates funds for a department of health Medicaid buy-in pilot program to be effective from July 1, 2016, until June 30, 2018. (HB1236 HD1)

I am a single parent with a 23 year old, high-functioning autistic daughter. She graduated from high school in 2011 then graduated from Lanakila Pacific's Food Service Training Program in 2012. For the past three years she has been working at the Hale Aina Dining Facility on Hickam Air Force Base. As a result of her new employment, she was terminated from receiving Medicaid assistance. She averages 26.5 hours every week at a pay rate of \$11.14 per hour. Her medical and dental premiums total \$102.00 every pay period. Her bi-monthly take home pay after deductions is \$450.00.

I was not pleased with DHS decision to terminate Medicaid services for my daughter. However, I also knew I could not nor did I want to stop her from working. My daughter is very happy with her job. She expresses how much she has learned and how she continues to try to be patient and understanding with her co-workers, who are also individuals with disabilities, working alongside her. She has gained more self-esteem and confidence in her capabilities of learning and understanding her job responsibilities.

It would be to the State best interest to establish the Medicaid buy-in program and the Medicaid buy-in pilot program to help promote and support employment among individuals with disabilities. Therefore, I urge the committee to pass H.B. 1236, H.D. 1. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.