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February 10, 2020

Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Chang, and Committee Members:

RE: SB 2617 Relating to Emergency Services

Ka'u Hospital is a small rural facility serving a very large geographic area. Although the traditional population centers of Pahala and Naalehu are fairly stable, the number of residents in Ocean View have grown enormously (including a large Micronesian population), and so has traffic (and the potential for traffic-related injuries). While Ocean View can be serviced by either Ka'u Hospital or Kona Community Hospital, the need for urgent care in Ka'u is clear.

I know you have limited resources and unlimited priorities, but a year ago this Committee and the full Senate passed a bill, SB 1410, to help Ka'u, recognizing that it would constitute a small investment of funds with life-saving rewards. SB 1410 died in Finance, but we hope you will try again.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Kim
MAYOR

SB-2617

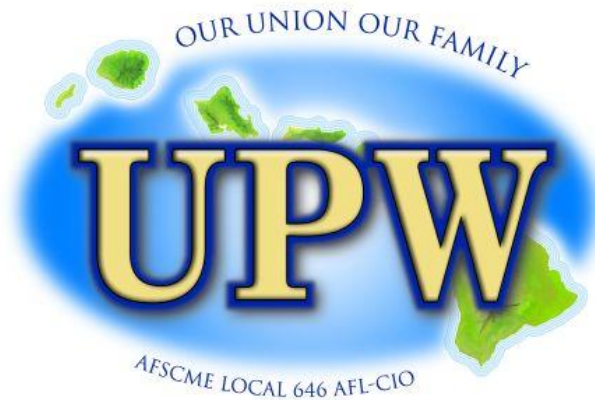
Submitted on: 2/10/2020 1:39:41 PM

Testimony for CPH on 2/12/2020 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Malia Espinda	Testifying for Dr. Linda Rosen, CEO, HHSC	Support	Yes

Comments:

HHSC supports this measure.



THE HAWAII STATE SENATE
The Thirtieth Legislature
Regular Session of 2020

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

DATE OF HEARING: Wednesday, February 12, 2020
TIME OF HEARING: 9:00 AM
PLACE OF HEARING: State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Conference Room 229

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 2617
Relating to Emergency Services

By DAYTON M. NAKANELUA,
State Director of the United Public Workers (UPW),
AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO

My name is Dayton M. Nakanelua, State Director of the United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO. The UPW is the exclusive bargaining representative for approximately 13,000 public employees, which include blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 01 and institutional health and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and various counties. The UPW also represents about 1,500 members of the private sector.

SB 2617 Appropriates \$700,000 to the Hawaii health systems corporation to expand the Kau Rural Health Clinic to improve access to urgent care and outpatient behavioral health service.

The UPW supports this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

SB-2617

Submitted on: 2/10/2020 1:44:27 PM

Testimony for CPH on 2/12/2020 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elena Cabatu	Testifying for Hilo Medical Center	Support	Yes

Comments:

SB-2617

Submitted on: 2/10/2020 4:35:11 PM

Testimony for CPH on 2/12/2020 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marilyn Harris	Testifying for Ka'u Hospital	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Marilyn Harris and I am the Administrator of Ka'u Hospital.

Thank you so very much for hearing this bill. Your support for this bill is very important to our community and we are very grateful for you attention.

Ka'u Hospital is a small critical access hospital located in Pahala on the Big Island. We are part part of the East Hawaii Region of Hawaii Health Systems Corporation. Our entire building is not much larger than one floor of the legislature yet our service area is as large as the entire island of Oahu. We have a four-bed 24/7 emergency department and 21 inpatient beds for acute/rehab and long-term care. We also have a family practice rural health clinic within our hospital that is located right next to the emergency department.

As the only hospital in the district, our job is to provide access to health care. We'd like to help our patients to access the right level of care at the right time. Frequently patients go to the ER for family practice issues because they have been unable to get an appointment with a primary care provider. If we can provide more urgent care options for patients and channel them to the right level of care when they need it, then we will be saving both patients and the health care system money. It will also free up emergency department resources for true emergency care. We see over 3,000 patients in our ER each year and that number is growing about 8% annually.

If we receive the funding identified in SB2617, our hope is to be able to add to the resources in our clinic and ER so that the can routinely take more of those urgent care or "sick" visits and possibly extend our hours to match community need more closely. In addition, we would use these funds to bring behavioral health services to our clinic. Currently, if one of our clinic patients require behavioral health services, they are referred to specialists in Hilo or Kona – both of which are 1.5 hours away by car .There is no public transportation to and from our area.

I know there are many demands for funding so I thank you for considering investing in health care for the people of Ka`u.

SB-2617

Submitted on: 2/11/2020 9:58:39 AM

Testimony for CPH on 2/12/2020 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Julie Tulang	Testifying for Hilo Medical Center Foundation	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2617

Submitted on: 2/10/2020 3:21:44 PM

Testimony for CPH on 2/12/2020 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Clarysse Kami Nunokawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2617

Submitted on: 2/11/2020 6:21:32 PM

Testimony for CPH on 2/12/2020 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Candace C Casper	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please, please, please pass this bill We really need an Urgent Care facility in Ka'u. We have to drive 90 minutes to get to urgent care. There are many times I need to be seen, but don't want to incur the cost and hassle of the Emergency Room. The drive to Kona or Hilo is awful if you are not feeling well.

SB-2617

Submitted on: 2/11/2020 6:38:52 PM

Testimony for CPH on 2/12/2020 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James H. Casper	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB2617. The population living on the southern portions of Kau and Puna District face a long drive to either Hilo or Kona hospitals.

While the Kau Rural Health Clinic provides citizens with some services, lacking an emergency room decreases survivability for those in desperate need of life saving emergency care. Emergent care for someone with a traumatic injury in that first golden hour often means the difference between life or death for the injured person(s). Being rural in nature, sometimes accidents occur in remote places and time is lost just getting to a hospital. I believe it is critical for the Kau Rural Health Clinic to be upgraded to include an emergency room.

Our clinic also lacks adequate outpatient behavioral health services. Facilities in Hilo and Kona are already (it seems) overstressed with long wait times for appointments, not to mention the traveling to Hilo or Kona for support. I think it would benefit our population to have these services and it would help ease the workload burden on the existing facilities on the island.

I strongly urge the passage of this bill. It is sorely needed for the southern half of the Big Island.

SB-2617

Submitted on: 2/11/2020 7:14:21 PM

Testimony for CPH on 2/12/2020 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elnur Gajiev	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a mental health practitioner intimately familiar with the region and the needs therein, I strongly offer my support for the passing of this measure. The resources within the diverse and large region of Ka'u with regard to mental health care, along with urgent care, are incredibly sparse and would benefit significantly from the addition of such services suggested, as well as much more. If any further testimony might be required, I would gladly offer my support to this initiative.

Sincerely,

Elnur Gajiev, PsyD