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The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
Regular Session of 2010
Committee on Finance

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
March 25, 2010

S.B. 2919, SD1, HD1 – RELATING TO THE
HAWAII STATE HOSPITAL

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 125, AFL-CIO strongly supports the purpose and intent of S.B. 2919, SD1, HD1 – Relating to the Hawaii State Hospital, with the exception of the effective of July 1, 2050. The effective date should be in effect as initially introduced, September 1, 2010. The purpose of this measure is to improve security at the Hawaii State Hospital and clarifies that the duties of the Department of Public Safety (PSD) includes providing security at the Hawaii State Hospital with the advice of the Director of Health. This measure requires a report from the Department of Health (DOH), with collaboration from PSD, to the legislature on its plan for the provision of short and long-term security measures.

The HGEA has filed several grievances against the DOH regarding security and safety issues such as assaults against staff by patients. There have been occasions where staff had to be transported by ambulance to receive proper treatment. The safety issues have been a long-standing problem. The intent of S.B. 2919, SD1, HD1 is to clarify the duties of the PSD to include security at the HSH. Currently in existence is Section 26-14.6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, which states in part, "Effective January 1, 1993, the functions and authority heretofore exercised by the director of health and the department of health relating to uniformed security employees and security contracts at various state hospitals throughout the State shall be transferred to the department of public safety." PSD's mission statement explicitly states, "The mission of the Department of Public Safety is to provide for the safety of the public and state facilities through law enforcement and correctional management."

The HGEA represents nearly 300 employees at the HSH who are within five (5) bargaining units. They include positions such as Blue Collar Supervisors, White Collar Employees, White Collar Supervisors, Registered Professional Nurses and Professional and Scientific Employees. S.B. 2919, SD1, HD1 with an effective date of September 1, 2010, would address the security and safety of the employees and patients of the Hawaii State Hospital.

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Recently, the beginning of this week, another elopement occurred at the HSH. Although the patient was captured, again, the question of security comes into play. Requiring the agencies to report to the legislature the short and long range plans for security at the hospital would press them to be accountable to the employees, patients and the community at large.

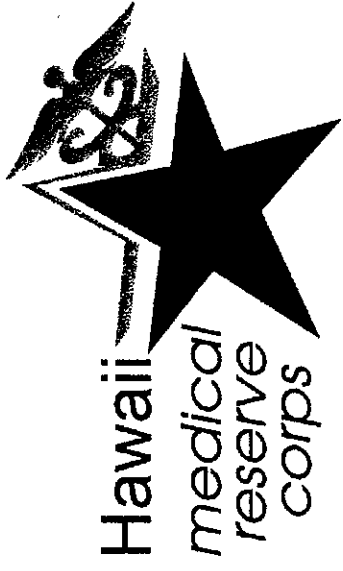
Thank you for allowing us to provide testimony in strong support of S.B. 2919, SD1, HD1.

Respectfully Submitted,



Nora A. Nomura
Deputy Executive Director

LATE



*Medical Reserve Corps:
 Hawaii's Volunteer Medical
 and Public Health Workforce*



Mission Statement

Establish teams of local volunteers
who can contribute their skills and expertise



for medical and public health services
throughout the year and during times of
community need.

MRC in Hawaii

- Supported by State Department of Health since 2007
- 4 units: Oahu MRC, Big Island MRC, Kauai MRC, and Maui County Health Volunteers (MCHV)
- Over 750 volunteers statewide; 400 volunteers on Oahu
- Working Partners include Public Health Nurses, Dept. of Emergency Management and county Civil Defense agencies, Healthcare Association of Hawaii, American Red Cross, Hawaii Humane Society and others



Volunteers participate in Operation Lightning Rescue at Honolulu International Airport.



Volunteers practice operations of a Point of Distribution clinic for response to an anthrax attack.



**Volunteers staff a community emergency preparedness fair
at Kokua Kalihi Valley clinic.**



**Volunteers work with the Dept of Health to vaccinate
Hawaii's school children for influenza.**



Volunteers work with partners to serve persons with special health needs during disasters.



Rep. Yamane welcomes Hawaii MRC volunteers and guests from state and local government, federal agencies, and the Pacific jurisdictions.

**Volunteers building strong, healthy,
and prepared communities!**