



HAWAII MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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Tuesday, March 1, 2011, 3:00 P.M., Conference Room 308

To: COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
Rep. Marilyn B. Lee, Vice Chair

From: Hawaii Medical Association
Dr. Morris Mitsunaga, MD, President
Linda Rasmussen, MD, Legislative Co-Chair
Dr. Joseph Zobian, MD, Legislative Co-Chair
Dr. Christopher Flanders, DO, Executive Director
Lauren Zirbel, Community and Government Relations

Re: HB 863 RELATING TO HEALTH

In Support

Chairs & Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Association supports this measure, which extends by one year the deadline for the Hawaii health authority to submit to the legislature a comprehensive health plan for all individuals in the State.

We hope that the provider community will have a meaningful place in the discussion about which benefits are necessary for patients to lead healthy and productive lives and how we can improve access to affordable health insurance for self employed and part-time workers.

We need to look at holistic approaches to altering our healthcare sector. The current structure has rendered the practice of medicine uneconomical in rural neighbor island communities and has resulted in decreased life spans for these populations.

One of our members who is a Cardiologists was denied a small business loan to practice on the Big Island because the bank did not believe that practicing medicine was a viable business. She was forced to commute to Oahu to practice. This is a direct result of the high population of Quest patients on the neighbor islands. If we don't improve Medicaid, our system will collapse.

Farming out medical decisions to "Managed Care" by insurance administrators so they can deny care, deny payment, reject prescriptions and generally make Patients and Physicians lives miserable is not the answer to savings in medicine.

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT - MORRIS MITSUNAGA, MD PRESIDENT-ELECT - ROGER KIMURA, MD
SECRETARY - THOMAS KOSASA, MD IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT - DR. ROBERT C. MARVIT, MD TREASURER
- STEPHEN KEMBLE, MD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - CHRISTOPHER FLANDERS, DO

We must eliminate administrative waste and transform our healthcare system into one that is sustainable. Reimbursement and malpractice reforms are sorely needed if we hope to avoid Hawaii's projected 50% shortage of doctors in the next decade. We are already short over 600 doctors and this is a direct result of reimbursements not meeting the cost of providing services and an increasingly intolerable level of administrative burden forced upon physicians by "Managed Care".

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HEALTH CARE FOR ALL HAWAII

3030 Holua Place Honolulu, Hawaii 96819

Email: healthcareforallhawaii@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.healthcareforallhawaii.org>

TESTIMONY

HB 863

ROOM 329

3/1/2011

3:00 PM

House Health Committee

Chair Yamane and Members of the Committee:

I urge your support for HB 863, changing the end date for the work of the Hawaii Health Authority.

For over 20 years A. Q. McElrath (one of the authors of the Hawaii Prepaid Act) has been advocating for revisions in the way Hawaii delivers healthcare to residents of the State - to adapt to the socio/political changes that have transpired since 1974. She has emphasized the need to "rationalize" a system that has become splintered, unequal in application, unaffordable for small employers and the self insured, and fundamentally broken.

(A simple analogy is what happens to a five year old computer that has never been defragmented – it stops working, or works so inefficiently it is no longer useful or effective at doing its task.)

Our healthcare system needs to be "defragged". A cohesive, coherent, affordable, data driven, and rational model needs to be implemented in Hawaii, and throughout the U.S. HB863 restarts the Hawaii Health Authority, a body charged with developing a plan to "defrag" Hawaii's healthcare non-system. With your support Hawaii can look forward to a rational, affordable, benefit and beneficiary driven, comprehensive plan by July 1, 2012.

Jory Watland, Coordinator
Health Care for All Hawaii

March 1, 2011

TO: HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE
MARCUS OSHIRO, CHAIR; MARILYN LEE, VICE-CHAIR
FOR HEARING ON MARCH 1, 2011; 3:00 AM
HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 308
HB 863 – RELATING TO HEALTH

TESTIMONY BY DENNIS ARAKAKI

Honorable Chair OSHIRO, Vice- chair LEE and members of the House Finance Committee, I am Dennis Arakaki, retired legislator, still passionate about healthcare in Hawaii and testifying in strong support of HB 863, re-authorizing the Hawaii Health Authority.

The timing of this bill could not have been any better when you consider President Obama's announcement at the National Governor's Association meeting yesterday, that he was willing to allow states the ability to opt out of its most controversial requirements including the mandate that most people buy insurance. A waiver would be allowed if states could find ways to expand coverage without driving up health care costs (and I would add without diminishing the quality of health care). He is willing to give states until 2017 to develop the plan and waiver. Well this is exactly why the Health Care Authority was proposed in the beginning. We would have been way ahead of the curve if this was implemented when it was passed in 2009. Whether this waiver is passed or not, it would be advantageous for the state of Hawaii to be prepared for changes coming down from the Federal Government, instead of having to comply to the mandates.

Hawaii has long been known as the "Health State". Hawaii led the way in the 1970's, being the first state to mandate the provision of health insurance coverage for all employees working 20 hours or more a week with the passage of the Hawaii Prepaid Health Act. As one of the original introducers of the Universal Health Bill over a decade ago in the House, I know that the inception of this landmark bill was due in no small part to the tireless efforts of the late labor and community organizer and University of Hawaii Regent Ah Quon McElrath, one of the architects of the Health Care Authority Act that this bill seeks to extend. Ah Quon recognized the changing economic times and that the Hawaii Prepaid Health Act was no longer enough. Unfortunately, AQ was not just slightly, but far ahead of her time. The bill was finally passed as HB 1504, HD1, SD2, CD1, vetoed by the Governor but overridden by the Legislature as Act 11 on July 15, 2009. Since then no action has been taken on the authority by the previous administration, obviously in opposition to the override and the authority. The need for the Hawaii Health Authority is more compelling than ever with National Health Care or "Obama Care" in the foreseeable future.

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Testimony on HB 863

House Finance Committee

March 1, 2011; 3:00 pm Hearing

While Hawaii's unemployment levels are below the rest of the country, we also have the highest rate of involuntary part - time employment. The current health care system is a poorly woven patchwork quilt, with little to show from its high costs in population health indicators. The United States is one of the only developed countries where health indicators have fallen in recent years. The health care system in the U.S. drastically needs reform, but politicians in Washington D.C. are offering the same tired ideas in response to the crisis. The great state of Hawaii needs to lead by example by providing health care to all of its residents through a comprehensive state health plan.

The creation and implementation of the Hawaii Health Authority is an essential step toward creating a rational plan for comprehensive healthcare services that lowers cost while expanding access to health services to everyone. While there is great hope with President Obama's health care plan for America's citizens, we have the opportunity to stay ahead of the curve and prepare for the federal plan. Let us not be forced into accepting a lower standard of health care by keeping the best of our current health care system.

The Hawaii Health Care Authority will bring together the finest minds, from the most significant backgrounds in healthcare to plan and prepare for a National Health Care system but also keeping the best of Hawaii's unique system of care and health financing. During these economically challenging times, the extension of this act provides an opportunity to put all the healthcare resources on the table in order to maximize those resources and eliminate duplicity and waste. It is time to envision a comprehensive system of care for all of Hawaii's citizens where no one is left out or left behind and precious resources are balanced between health, wellness and illness.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I wish the best of health to all of you.

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 28, 2011 7:23 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: leslieg@maui.net
Subject: Testimony for HB863 on 3/1/2011 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for FIN 3/1/2011 3:00:00 PM HB863

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Leslie Hartley Gise MD
Organization: PNHP
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: leslieg@maui.net
Submitted on: 2/28/2011

Comments:
Re HB 863

SUPPORT

I support HB 863 because:

It is a pathway to universal health care.

Universal health care is the right thing to do.

Real insurance, with one risk pool, pools the risk, covers everyone automatically, like Medicare, and covers everyone with less expense than any other plan.

FINTestimony

From: Leslie Gise [leslieg@maui.net]
Sent: Monday, February 28, 2011 7:26 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: leslieg@maui.net
Subject: HB863 Testimony in SUPPORT 3/1/11 3 pm Rm308

Leslie Hartley Gise MD
Contact person for Hawai'i for Physicians for a National Health Program (18,000 physicians nationally)

Re HB 863

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Real insurance, with one risk pool, pools the risk, covers everyone automatically, like Medicare, and covers everyone with less expense than any other plan.

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