

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
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Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
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WRITTEN
TESTIMONY ONLY

**Testimony in SUPPORT of H.B. 1148, H.D. 1
RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH**

SENATOR JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

SENATOR DONNA MERCADO KIM, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing Date, Time and Room Number: March 21, 2023 at 3:30 p.m.in Room 299/VIDEO

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (“Department”) requests that this measure be
2 considered as a vehicle to provide this needed funding so long as it does not supplant the
3 priorities and requests outlined in the Governors executive budget request.

4 **Department Position:** The Department strongly supports this measure and offers comments.

5 **Department Testimony:** The Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD) provides the following
6 testimony on behalf of the Department.

7 The Department strongly supports this measure which appropriates funds to support
8 and expand the Windward Community College (WCC) mental health technician (MHT)
9 certificate program through the hiring of a mental health technician certificate program
10 coordinator, establishment of a scholarship program, and any other necessary administrative
11 costs.

12 The Department recognizes that education and training and important parts of building
13 the mental health care workforce. We understand that education and training should not stop
14 when someone is hired for employment. Ongoing opportunities to provide training and

1 professional development can help to address staff retention concerns while also supporting
2 employees who want to learn additional skills through convenient learning modes that provide
3 work-life balance (e.g., online distance learning).

4 The WCC MHT certificate program began in Spring 2022. This program provides
5 introductory training to those entering the mental health service field. Courses in psychology,
6 communication, and conflict resolution and mediation offer a range of academic study and skill-
7 based activities to strengthen knowledge about working through difficult situations in the
8 workplace. Of these 25 graduates thus far, 11 are employed at the Hawaii State Hospital.

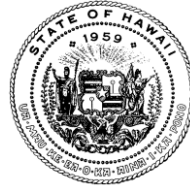
9 We are pleased with the interest that this program has received thus far and look
10 forward to partnering with WCC to welcome prospective students as well as to congratulate
11 future MHT certificate program graduates, including those who are currently employed or
12 aspiring to be employed by the Hawaii State Hospital.

13 We believe appropriating funds to establish a program coordinator position will allow
14 this program to expand and be offered at other community colleges, and thereby helping to
15 address the need for health care workforce training throughout our state. We respectfully ask
16 for the Legislature's support of this measure.

17 **Offered Amendments:** None.

18 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA
MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I



RICHARD RIES, Psy.D., M.Ed.
COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON
LUNA HO'OMALU O KA PAPA

STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378, Room 256
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

WRITTEN
TESTIMONY ONLY

STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH
Testimony to the
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
and Senate Committee on Higher Education
in SUPPORT of H.B. 1148 H.D. 1
RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH

Tuesday, March 21, 2023 at 3:30 p.m.

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Chairs San Buenaventura and Kim, Vice-Chairs Aquino and Kidani, and Members of the Committees:

Hawaii law, HRS §334-10, establishes the State Council on Mental Health (SCMH) as a 21-member body to advise on the allocation of resources, statewide needs, and programs affecting more than one county as well as to advocate for adults with serious mental illness, children with serious emotional disturbances, individuals with mental illness or emotional problems, including those with co-occurring substance abuse disorders. Members are residents from diverse backgrounds representing mental health service providers and recipients, students and youth, parents, and family members. Members include representatives of state agencies on mental health, criminal justice, housing, Medicaid, social services, vocational rehabilitation, and education. Members include representatives from the Hawaii advisory commission on drug abuse and controlled substances and county service area boards on mental health and substance abuse.

The SCMH supports this measure to expand the mental health technician certificate of competence program. The program was locally and collaboratively designed to meet Hawaii's needs. This program is vital as a stepping stone for many individuals to build careers in behavioral science.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please contact us at DOH.SCMHChairperson@doh.hawaii.gov.

VISION : A Hawaii where people of all ages with mental health challenges can enjoy recovery in the community of their choice.

MISSION: To advocate for a Hawaii where all persons affected by mental illness can access necessary treatment and support to live full lives in the community of their choice.



The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i

Testimony to the Thirty-Second Legislature, 2023 Regular Session

Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 21, 2023 at 3:30 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

by:

Brandon M. Kimura

Deputy Administrative Director of the Courts

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 1148, H.D. 1, Relating to Mental Health

Description: Appropriates funds to support and expand the mental health technician certificate of competence program through the hiring of a mental health technician certificate program coordinator, establishment of a scholarship program, granting of scholarships, and funding of other necessary administrative costs. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD1)

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary supports the intent of this measure—to enhance the workforce across the state in the field of behavioral health care. This is a type of work critical to the efficiency and effectiveness of the justice system and to the larger community.

The Judiciary supports appropriate efforts to assist those suffering from mental health challenges before interaction with and/or outside the justice system.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, March 21, 2023 at 3:30 p.m.

By

Della Teraoka, Interim Associate Vice President for Community Colleges
University of Hawai'i System

HB 1148 HD1 – RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH

Chairs San Buenaventura and Kim, Vice Chairs Aquino and Kidani, and Members of the Committees:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 1148 HD1, which supports and expands the Mental Health Technician (MHT) certificate of competence at Windward Community College (WCC) through the hiring of a mental health technician certificate coordinator, establishment of a scholarship program, and any other necessary administrative costs.

WCC developed the MHT certificate in collaboration with the Hawai'i State Hospital (HSH) in order to provide a foundation of knowledge and increase skills for those serving the mentally ill on our islands. The program consists of three focused courses, available in person and online. Students learn fundamentals of psychology and psychological functioning, as well as conflict resolution and communications. This allows them to understand situations that arise at work, to more effectively deal with patients, and to prevent escalation of conflict in tense situations. This leads to a safer workplace and a more supportive therapeutic environment.

This addresses the severe shortage of mental health workers during a time when our state has dire needs for mental health support due to the impacts of the pandemic, socio-economic stressors, high job turnover, and a lack of workforce skilled in this area. It serves not only HSH, the second largest employer in Windward O'ahu, but also other mental health related employers such as Windward District Health, Hina Mauka, and others. Our online asynchronous offerings allow current workers to grow their skills through course offerings maximally adaptable to their schedules and further allow for this program to be expanded statewide.

The program was first implemented in Spring 2022, which resulted in 2 graduates in the first semester; both continued their employment at the HSH with their improved skills and knowledge. In Fall of 2022, 23 more students graduated with the MHT certificate. Nine of these graduates were employed at HSH. Already in its first year, this program

has had a large impact on the capacity of Windward O'ahu to care for those suffering from mental health issues and to increase workplace satisfaction and safety in the workplace.

The MHT certificate creates a pathway to further training and higher education. A one year certificate currently under development will build on the certificate by adding clinical skills and knowledge necessary to perform higher job requirements in more advanced clinical settings. These certificates are specifically designed to advance students to increasingly higher qualifications, such as degrees in psychology, social work and mental health counseling. This grows the overall capacity of our state to address mental health challenges and needs.

The proposed inclusion of the (1.00 FTE) MHT certificate Program Coordinator position allows this program to be made available statewide through our sister community college and partnerships with mental health related agencies and workplaces. The Program Coordinator position can further oversee the implementation of a scholarship program, ensuring access for unemployed, underemployed and low wage earners, creating a pathway out of poverty.

This bill supports the MHT certificate program at WCC to address an immediate, critical workforce need for preparing potential employees and upskilling existing employees. It builds the capacity of our state to implement effective, supportive care for those suffering from mental illness.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 1148 HD1, on the condition its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1148 HD1.

HB-1148-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/20/2023 12:10:10 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/21/2023 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kahoku Baker Calventas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 1148 which will address mental health needs across our state.