



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
February 7, 2017 at 2:01 p.m.

By

Jerris Hedges, MD, Dean

and

Kelley Withy, MD, Professor, Department of Complementary and Integrative Medicine
Hawaii/Pacific Basin Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Director

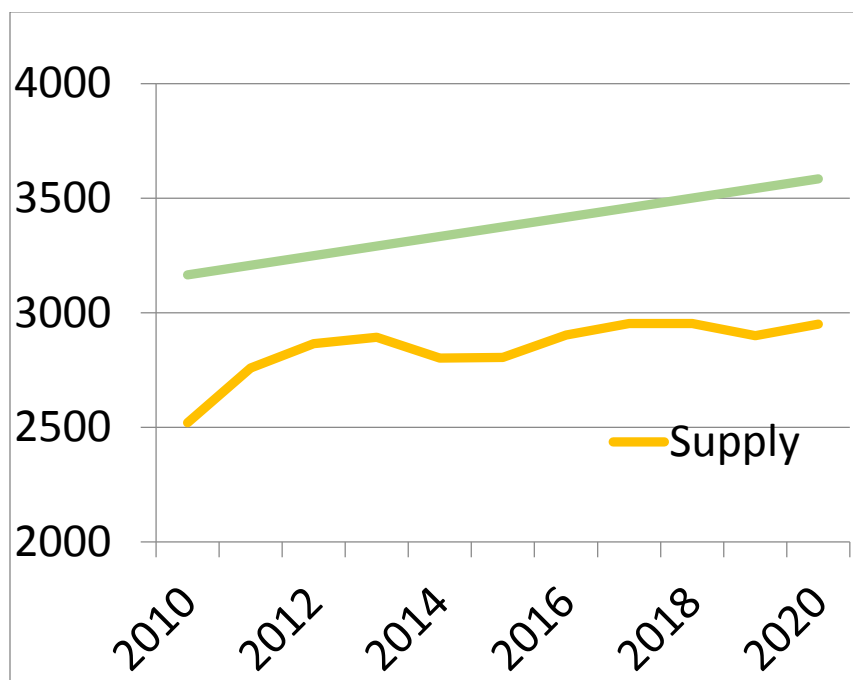
John A. Burns School of Medicine
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 428 – RELATING TO PHYSICIAN WORKFORCE ASSESSMENT

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem and members of the committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of HB 428, which permits continuation of the Hawai'i Physician Workforce Assessment program that supports research of the supply and demand of physicians in Hawai'i, as well as interventions to recruit physicians and increase career satisfaction of practicing physicians. Currently the program is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2017.

Hawai'i has a shortage of over 500 doctors, which has improved from a shortage of 600 in 2015. The pattern of physician supply and demand is outlined in the graph below.



Activities that have been undertaken with the funds paid by the physicians upon relicensure include:

Continuing Medical Education for over 4,000 person-hours a year in the form of

1. An annual Hawai'i Health Workforce Summit for 500 providers to learn about changes in healthcare, avoidance of burn out, new advances in rural health, geriatrics and electronic health records;
2. Project ECHO, weekly telehealth sessions addressing endocrinology/diabetes, behavioral health, and geriatrics (monthly).

Recruitment of new physicians to Hawai'i - physicians have found employment in Hawai'i based on job advertisements at www.ahec.hawaii.edu where all open positions in the state are advertised and collaboration with Hawai'i Physician Recruiters group.

Support for activities to recruit students into health careers such as those at www.ahec.hawaii.edu.

Support for state efforts to get expanded federal designations of Health Professions Shortage Areas.

Support for 13 physicians to receive loan repayment for working in underserved areas.

Support for the Hawai'i Ho'okipa Program, a welcoming program for newly arriving providers to get them integrated into the community where they work.

Support training for medical students in rural areas.

Creation of a Rural Health Coordinator at University of Hawai'i that will work with all health students working in rural areas to increase opportunities and track impact of the rural training programs.

Medical malpractice reform (2013).

Continuation of the Physician Workforce Assessment program will cost the physicians of Hawai'i \$60 every other year and will allow for continuation of the above activities as well as capacity to act rapidly when new ideas for solving the physician shortage are identified.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.