



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Written Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Health  
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by

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### HB 672 – RELATING TO SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH SERVICES

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Kobayashi, and members of the House Committee on Health:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this bill, HB 672.

The 2015 Legislature, in its wisdom, recognized that students must come to school healthy and ready to learn. Through Act 139, you provided fiscal support to provide school based health services through a Department of Education (DOE) partnership with the UH Mānoa School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene (SONDH) – the state's premier provider of nursing education. We launched this program with one APRN in each of the 7 Complex Areas in underserved communities with high risk schools. Second, we partner with public and private agencies to provide evidence based school health services to ensure screening for common conditions, up to date immunizations, and community care providers to manage chronic conditions that impact readiness to learn. Further, the program partners with both state agencies and the health care delivery sector to forge innovative partnerships to build a robust system to improve health and achievement of students, schools, and communities.

By aligning the resources of two state assets, students and schools are benefitting as we build a sustainable program. Outcomes from Act 139 efforts include:

- Engaged leading community organizations to match the state funding including the Hawai'i Community, Harold K.L. Castle, and HMSA Foundations, Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i, and the Queen's Medical Center.
- Services at 10 schools in 7 Complex Areas across 3 islands
- Implementation of an electronic health room management program linked to the DOE student information system that creates a school health profile, documents screenings and immunizations, and templates reports to share information
- Expansion and coordination of school wellness programs
- Provided sports physicals as needed
- Implemented evidence based vision screenings and obtained glasses for those in need with Project Vision
- Improved attendance rates and decreased early dismissal rates

- Nationally Certified School Nurses (NCSN) in Hawai'i schools
- Access to nursing students to provide value added through education and support activities

This program created the venue for public and private engagement, and identified priority action areas: data sharing, funding for sustainability, and coordination within and across sectors. Further, oral health and the lack of capacity for cross sector policy development emerged as areas identified for action. Therefore, we are asking for your support to expand the program statewide to create an efficient and sustainable school health services program.

Aims of the expanded Hawai'i Keiki Program:

- Implement Hawai'i Keiki statewide in 15 DOE Complex Areas and pilot in 2 Charter Schools
- Build a school based oral health prevention services and sealant program
- Fund and establish school services coordinator positions in the Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Human Services (DHS) MedQUEST Division to work in collaboration with DOE and UHM SONDH
- Secure a lifetime license for EyeSpy eye assessment software for all schools in the DOE system

The Hawai'i Keiki Program commits to interprofessional and interdepartmental collaboration to ensure the spread and scale of this program is grounded in the community and reflective of the community needs. This program additionally seeks to establish Hawai'i Keiki as the mechanism to facilitate early eye screenings for school aged children through evidenced based eye assessment software. Screening and follow up referrals may be conducted by Hawai'i Keiki nurses or through community partnerships. See the attached for proposed amendment language.

Hawai'i Keiki is a safety net partnership to increase access to healthcare for a vulnerable population – pre-kindergarten to high school keiki – by providing school health nursing and primary care services, when needed, in the public schools. The goal is to build a fiscally sustainable school health program using public funding, cost recovery, and community engagement. Further, we know that academic success leads to economic achievement - the major determinant of a healthy population.

The legislature is to be applauded for your willingness to invest in the partnership of the DOE and UHM SONDH with the DHS, DOH, and other partners to improve student success through improved health screening, monitoring, and management of chronic conditions that impact learning.

Therefore, the SONDH respectfully requests that you pass HB 672 with an amendment. We appreciate your continuing support of health in Hawai'i. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

ATTACHMENT WITH SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS TO HB 672

Amendment:

Page 3, Section 1, line 10:

(1) Comprehensive screening for physical and behavioral health conditions; including but not limited to physical exams, behavioral health assessments, vision screenings, and oral health screenings;

Page 4, Section 1, Line 5

interdepartmental school health coordination, is \$4,000,000 annually and \$500,000 one time allocation for evidence based vision screening tool

Page 12, Section #:

There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$500,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 to be deposited into the Hawaii keiki: healthy and ready to learn special fund for a one time allocation for an evidence based vision screening tool, an evidence based eye assessment tool appropriate for K-12 grade level children.