



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

---

Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce  
Tuesday, April 3, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Jerris Hedges, MD  
Professor & Dean

John A. Burns School of Medicine

And

Michael Bruno, PhD  
Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
Vice Chancellor for Research  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HCR 78/HR 63 – REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO ASSESS THE ADEQUACY OF THE PHYSICIAN NETWORKS ON ALL ISLANDS OF THE STATE.

Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Ichiyama, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HCR 78 and HR 63. HCR 78/HR 63 each request the auditor to assess the adequacy of the physician network for insurance providers on all islands of the state. Hawai'i is facing a critical shortage of physicians as well as other healthcare providers. In the case of primary care physicians, the shortage of physicians in Hawai'i is now calculated at 282 physicians statewide compared to a similar demographic region on the mainland.

This shortfall is projected to worsen with the increased demand for health care from an aging population and the retirement of an aging physician population creating access issues on O'ahu and the neighbor islands. The physician workforce assessment conducted by the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) has shown that shortages exist in nearly all medical specialties. Obtaining access to appropriate health care services has become increasingly difficult in Hawai'i. The inability to access necessary health care services is even more acute on the Neighbor Islands.

Having conducted the workforce assessment for a number of years, JABSOM has the experience and knowledge in conducting the type of research requested by HCR 78 and HR 63. We at JABSOM look forward to the opportunity to work with the Auditor to design this important project.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.