



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Health  
and

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Friday, March 20, 2015 at 1:45 pm

By

Robert Bley-Vroman, Chancellor

And

Jerris Hedges, MD, Dean

And

Naleen Andrade, MD, Designated Institutional Official for Graduate Medical Education  
John A. Burns School of Medicine  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### HB 285 HD1 – RELATING TO THE JOHN A. BURNS SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Chairs Green and Taniguchi, Vice Chairs Wakai and Inouye, and members of the committees:

The University of Hawai'i supports HB 285 HD1 which creates a scholarship program for the medical school. The measure establishes a scholarship for a full course of study at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) in exchange for which the recipient must practice in the state for five (5) years following the completion of the recipient's residency.

There is no doubt that Hawai'i is facing a significant shortage of physicians. This has been effectively documented by the Physician Workforce Assessment and research efforts of Dr. Kelley Withy at JABSOM's Area Health Education Center. According to the study, there is currently an estimated shortage of 655 physicians. Moreover, the huge amount of debt medical students face upon completion of their medical studies discourages many from remaining in Hawai'i or practicing in rural areas where the need for physicians is greatest. We believe HB 285 HD1 would be helpful in attracting the most qualified students to the field of medicine.

We respectfully request an amendment to the bill to include additional separate funding for JABSOM's graduate medical education program (GME). The amendment is attached to this testimony.

Establishing additional, separate funding on an annual basis for JABSOM's GME program, with the funds directed to the Hawai'i Medical-Council Special Fund, is an investment that would ensure Hawai'i grows new doctors who will practice here. These funds will be used toward the residency and fellowship programs within the JABSOM institutional graduate medical education program. As the 2015 Annual Report on the

Hawai'i Medical Council indicates, historically GME funding has come from the federal government and Hawaii's private teaching hospitals/clinics. However, the changing healthcare financial environment, including implementation of the Affordable Care Act, has limited the capacity of the teaching hospitals/clinics to fund GME training. The GME program is a core component of our ability to train new doctors for Hawai'i.

We respectfully offer the following additional suggestions to enhance the effectiveness of the scholarship program:

The five year post-residency practice should be performed in areas in the state that are underserved. This would direct medical care to regions where the need is urgent; and

Scholarships should be awarded to students who have expressed interest in areas of practice or specialties for which physician-shortages exist in order to effectively grow the doctors Hawai'i needs.

We appreciate the Committees' consideration of our requests.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$5,000,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2015-2016 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2016-2017 for increases in faculty and infrastructure of the existing family medicine residency program and development of new accredited family health centers in association with teaching hospitals.

The sums appropriated shall be expended by the University of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 2. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2015.