



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

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by

Robert Bley-Vroman, Chancellor
and

Mary G. Boland, DrPH, RN, FAAN
Dean and Professor
School of Nursing & Dental Hygiene
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 841 SD2 HD2 – RELATING TO SCHOOL HEALTH

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and members of the House Committee on Finance, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 841 SD2 HD2.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa School of Nursing (UH Mānoa Nursing) is in support of SB 841 SD2 HD2, with amendments, which establishes an interagency working group to create a comprehensive school health program.

Earlier this school year, UH Mānoa Nursing engaged with the Department of Education (DOE) in the Hawai'i Keiki Program: Healthy and Ready to Learn to place a school nurse in five complex areas across the State. Over the past eight months since its inception, Hawai'i Keiki nurses in the five complex areas have created school and student health policies, integrated school wellness planning, participated in Hawai'i Smiles, developed health content for newsletters and blogs, and enhanced regular communication with Public Health Nursing (PHN) and the Department of Health (DOH). This effort 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 when required, primary care services in the public schools.

School health nurses are the coordinators of health in the schools. With the Hawai'i Keiki Program, UH Mānoa Nursing looks forward to contributing to the school health dialogue from the school nurse perspective and academic partner perspective. This bill adds depth and breadth to the school based health conversation and a cross-agency venue to discuss and develop system-wide strategies and school or complex area strategies, alike.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 841 SD2 HD 2.