UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM
Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
February 26, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.
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 2677 SD1 – RELATING TO NURSING

Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this bill, SB 2677 SD1 with amendments.

In 2010, Act 57 was enacted into law as HRS 457-2.5. This defined the practice of nursing and directed the state board of nursing to adopt certain provisions of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) Model Nursing Practice Act which provided uniform national guidelines relating to nursing practice for all state boards of nursing across the United States and territories.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene (SONDH) supports SB 2677 SD1 in the interest of continuing to uphold nurses in Hawai'i to the national standards established by the NCSBN and its delegates. Further, the SONDH supports SB 2677 SD1 because:

- Hawai'i leads in ensuring optimal regulation for nursing yet Hawai'i is one of the last 12 states to adopt state and federal criminal background check verification for all nurse licenses.
- It is in the interest of the nursing workforce to ensure safe and quality nursing services to patients, which include sick, disabled, elderly, and other vulnerable populations across the continuum of healthcare and in all regions of our State.
- Establishing criminal background checks is one means to enhancing public safety in Hawai'i by increasing the accuracy of the information the Hawai'i Board of Nursing (HBON) uses in their review of applicants and HBON activities related to HRS 457- 12 Discipline; grounds; proceedings; hearings.
- NCSBN[1] proposes this standard, for all states to adopt, to require a biometrics-based state and federal criminal background check for all applicants consistent with Public Law 92-544.
- The American Nurses Association[2] and the Council of State Governments[3] supports the use of criminal background checks as part of the nursing licensure process. Applicants for nurse

---

[1] https://www.ncsbn.org/NCSBN_Approved_Standard_CBC.pdf

licensure with criminal histories may not reveal a positive criminal history on applications and fingerprint-based background checks are an effective tool to identify past criminal behavior and ensure ongoing patient safety.

Additionally, the SONDH supports the Hawaiʻi Board of Nursing in their recommendation regarding SECTION 2 referring to HRS §457-5 (Page 3 lines 9-11) and its related content and SECTION 7 referring to HRS §846-2.7 (Page 21 lines 16-19).

Therefore, the SONDH respectfully requests the passage of SB 2677 SD1 with amendments. We appreciate your continuing support of nursing in Hawaiʻi. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

---

[2] http://www.nursingworld.org/DocumentVault/Position-Statements/Practice/Criminal-BackgroundChecks-for-Nurse-Licensure.pdf
[3] https://www.ncsbn.org/CSG_Resolution.pdf