



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

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House Committee on Health
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By

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And

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HB 1597 – RELATING TO THE HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Morikawa and members of the committee.

The University of Hawai'i supports in principle any effort to increase the physician workforce in Hawai'i, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in the University's Board of Regents Approved Executive Biennium Budget.

With the support of the Legislature, the medical school has documented and continues to monitor the significant physician shortage that exists throughout Hawai'i, but which is greatest on the neighbor islands.

The current shortages are in many physician categories, but most noticeably in primary care. We have developed several new approaches during that time to attract and retain physicians in Hawai'i and to offer training and support to those who serve in the areas of highest need.

State support for Graduate Medical Education (GME—the Residency Training of MD school graduates) is needed to help meet workforce needs across all islands. Every year we partner with nine of Hawai'i's medical centers and the Hawai'i Residency Programs, Inc. to train 229 such physicians, in some 20 different fields. We know from experience that those who complete their GME in Hawai'i are most likely to stay and practice in our State.

Innovative solutions that partner with the State, teaching hospitals, and University of Hawai'i are needed to expand the number of training positions to meet needs now and in the future.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.