



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

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by

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SB 2490 – RELATING TO CONTINUING COMPETENCY FOR NURSES

Chair Green, Vice Chair Baker, and members of the Senate Committee on Health, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this bill, SB 2490.

Addressing the needs and interests of the people of Hawai'i includes ensuring that quality health care is easily accessible to consumers throughout the State. Nurses are critical to the successful implementation of health care reform. Continuing education plays a significant role in nursing professionals' ongoing development and for the betterment of the patients they serve. The individual nurse must embrace lifelong learning as an essential key to delivering safe high quality patient care.

However, continuing education must be reframed to focus on the desired outcome – a nurse competent to deliver quality health care. Continuing education must include a personal self-assessment tool to guide the continuing competency activity to ensure that nurses engage in lifelong learning as recommended by Institute of Medicine which is included in SB 2490.

The UH Mānoa Nursing supports the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing's Continuing Education Joint Advisory Committee determination that a Continuing Competency Program (self-assessment + CE) is preferable to a simple CE program. Continuing competence is the ongoing application of knowledge and the decision-making, psychomotor, and interpersonal skills expected of the licensed nurse within a specific practice setting resulting in nursing care that contributes to the health and welfare of clients served.

This program would not change the nurse license renewal process and will allow nurses to renew their licenses as usual. An attestation statement would be added to the license renewal form that the individual licensee has completed the self-assessment/CE process. The proposed process does not apply to RNs who are APRNs who meet continuing competency requirements to maintain their national

certification. Further, after the renewal deadline (after July 1) a small percentage of the licensees would be audited.

Therefore, the UH Mānoa Nursing respectfully requests that this Committee pass SB 2490, unamended. We appreciate your continuing support of nursing in Hawai'i. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.