



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Wednesday, March 13, 2024 at 3:00 p.m.

By

Bonnie Irwin, Chancellor

and

Rae Matsumoto, Dean

Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy

University of Hawai'i at Hilo

and

Michael Bruno, Provost

and

Lee Buenconsejo-Lum, Interim Dean

John A. Burns School of Medicine

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

#### HB 1836 HD2 – RELATING TO HEALTH

Chairs Wakai and San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Elefante and Aquino, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 1836 HD2. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) supports HB 1836 HD2, which allows pharmacists, during declared states of emergency, to refill prescriptions of up to 30 day supplies if the prescriber is unavailable or cannot be contacted to authorize the refill and if, in the pharmacist's professional judgment, failure to refill the prescription might interrupt the patient's ongoing care and have a significant adverse effect on the patient's wellbeing.

This bill essentially allows pharmacy provisions that happened during the emergency proclamations following the Lahaina fires to be codified so that quick action can be taken should another emergency occur. Community pharmacies and pharmacists play a vital role in our health care system with established relationships with patients and local, state, and federal departments of health as well as accessible distribution networks that remain critical during a state of emergency. Post-disaster lack of access to routine health care is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality. Hawai'i's healthcare system experienced the impact of delayed care for chronic conditions, which included patients going without medications until they could see their physician. In some instances, this resulted in hospitalization or worsening of their condition. When contact with prescribers cannot be made, pharmacists play a key role in determining the need for emergency

refill prescriptions for patients with chronic illnesses. Twenty-three states already have laws or regulations in place that allow prescription refills during an emergency.

The clear guidance provided for pharmacists through HB 1836 HD2 will allow the essential medication needs of people in Hawai'i to be addressed in a timely and responsible manner during a state of emergency. In summary, passage of HB 1836 HD2 will enable pharmacists, during states of emergency, to act in the best interest of patients and protect the wellbeing of the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1836 HD2.