



# 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 Judiciary  
Thursday, April 4, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.

By

Bonnie Irwin, Chancellor

and

Rae Matsumoto, Dean

Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy  
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

#### HB 2553 HD2 SD1 – RELATING TO PHARMACISTS

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2553 HD2 SD1. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) supports the intent of HB 2553 HD2 SD1 with suggested amendments, which are in alignment with the Hawai'i Pharmacists Association and Board of Pharmacy. This bill authorizes pharmacists to administer vaccines to persons three years of age or older; pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen; and pharmacists to order vaccines for administration to persons between the ages of three and seventeen.

HB 2553 HD2 SD1 essentially extends the vaccination services already permitted in the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which is set to expire at the end of 2024. Passage of HB 2553 HD2 SD1 will ensure that the vaccination services provided by pharmacists, along with pharmacy interns and technicians under their supervision, can continue in Hawai'i after the federal emergency authorization ends. It is important to note that even when working under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist, the pharmacy interns and technicians have been and will continue to be required to have specialized training to administer the immunizations. Moreover, as different types of vaccines become available and recommended for use in children by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, they will also be covered through this legislation.

We recommend that on page 10, lines 16-17, Section 4, subsection (a)(4) be amended as follows: "The [pharmacy intern or] pharmacy technician has a Certified Pharmacy Technician certification from either the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board or National Healthcareer Association."

The Certified Pharmacy Technician certification only applies to pharmacy technicians and not interns who have a different license approved by the Board of Pharmacy.

We also recommend that the language in the bill refers to “persons three years of age or older” throughout, in contrast to mixed usage with “persons between the ages of three and seventeen” in some sections. This will ensure that the ability to order and administer vaccinations per this bill will be held to the same standard for all age groups.

The ability of families to leverage the accessible vaccination services of pharmacists, pharmacy interns and technicians is significant. It has been reported that more than 90% of Americans live within 2 miles of a community pharmacy, and annually, Americans visit their pharmacy 35 times, as compared to 4 visits to their primary care provider. Since the pandemic, members of the public and other health care providers have come to depend on pharmacists, pharmacy interns and technicians to provide their vaccinations. This accessibility is also important because childhood vaccination rates have been decreasing, eliciting public health concerns as children and communities have become more vulnerable to outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases.

In summary, passage of HB 2553 HD2 SD1 will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians to continue to provide vaccination services for children and their families, which communities across Hawai'i need and have come to expect. Please allow us to continue to serve and protect the wellbeing of the people of Hawai'i by passing this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2553 HD2 SD1.