



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

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

Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Health  
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By  
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### HB714 – RELATING TO HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB714, which provides essential funding to expand Hawaii's health care workforce through public high school health care certificate programs and the Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) to Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) glidepath program.

The CNA to LPN Bridge Program is a collaborative program with Healthcare Association of Hawai'i, Hale Makua Health Services, Ohana Pacific Health (OPH), Hawai'i State Center for Nursing, and University of Hawai'i Maui College (UHMC). This program was designed to provide Practical Nursing training opportunities for working CNAs on Maui, O'ahu, Kaua'i, and Hawai'i Island. The hybrid Bridge Program runs for 12-months and includes online lectures, in-person labs and clinicals provided at selected employer's site. Participants will be scheduled to work and maintain part-time CNA hours until they become a Licensed Practical Nurse.

In addition, UH Maui College has expanded the CNA program into the high schools. The high school courses allow students to become eligible to be certified while completing their high school degree. The CNA to LPN bridge program then provides working CNAs the opportunity to continue their education while working towards an LPN.

Act 74 funding, which was received in Fall 2023, increased student access to nursing pathways. With the support of Act 74 funding, 238 students across the state were provided tuition support to high-demand pre-requisite courses and entrance exam preparation required for eligibility to apply to the LPN program. After the funding was received, the number of students who earned the CNA almost doubled on average and the number of students who earned the LPN degree more than tripled.

Under Act 89, SLH 2024, \$700,000 was provided to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) to support the glidepath program for

CNAs. We support continuing the funding through DBEDT due to the increased flexibility of working with multiple training providers for the two programs. It also allows for the continued use of the student stipends to offset employer costs for coordination and support.

For the UHMC students, funding support would be used to fund student stipends so students can continue to be paid while working towards their degree. The funding will also cover the cost of the instructor so the courses can be offered tuition free to students.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB714, on the condition its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB714.