



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection & Health  
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by

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### SB 3047 – RELATING TO HEALTH

Chair Baker, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support of SB 3047 with recommended amendments** as it relates to advanced practice registered nurses (APRN) participation in medical aid in dying in accordance with their scope of practice and prescriptive authority.

The Hawai'i Legislature recognizes that access to care is a significant problem statewide and in particular in rural island settings. The Hawai'i Legislature also recognizes the incredible opportunity for APRNs to contribute to the solution. You have enacted over 25 bills since 2009 enabling APRNs in Hawai'i to practice to the full extent of their education. Since then, the number of APRNs in the state has increased across all the islands including rural settings. Of APRNs in Hawai'i, Maui and Kauai counties, all work in HRSA defined medically underserved populations/areas, over 90% hold prescriptive authority and over 88% care for Medicare or Medicaid patients in a typical week.<sup>1,2</sup>

APRNs provide high quality safe care for people across the lifespan, in accordance with their education, training, national certification, and licensure. The patient-centered nature of the APRN role require a commitment to meeting the evolving needs of society and advances in health care science and a responsibility to the public and adaptable to the dynamic changes in health care.<sup>3</sup> In Hawai'i, 41% of APRNs work in ambulatory

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<sup>1</sup> Hawai'i State Center for Nursing, (2017). 2017 Nursing Workforce Supply Survey Special Report: Employment Location of APRNs.

<sup>2</sup> Hawai'i State Center for Nursing, 2019 Nursing Workforce Report. Data provided through the voluntary nurse relicensure survey of nurses.

<sup>3</sup> American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, (2019). Nurse Practitioner Scope of Practice.

settings, nearly 33% report working in family practice or adult-gerontology. Another 8.5% work in palliative care/hospice, nephrology, cardiology, and oncology; specialties where they care for people with terminal illnesses.<sup>4</sup> In addition, 7.4% of APRNs work in the psychiatric/mental health specialty with greater rates of APRNs in these specialties in neighbor islands than on Oahu.<sup>4</sup>

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and Hilo Doctor of Nursing (DNP) Programs educate family and adult gerontology primary care nurse practitioners, the most common type of APRN in our state. Our graduates meet both the national and Hawai'i Board of Nursing requirements for advanced pharmacological education, as well as education related to the assessment, diagnosis, and care planning that prepares them to care for patients across the continuum of life. Thus, their scope of practice and education prepares them to serve as both attending provider and consulting provider for persons suffering from a terminal disease. APRNs are recognized in Hawai'i and the nation for their high quality care, safe prescribing practices, and are trusted by the people and families under their care.

The University of Hawai'i prefers the language referring to APRNs found in SB 2582 which adds APRNs to the definitions of both attending and consulting provider. However, should the Committee move this measure forward, the University of Hawai'i asks the Committee to consider amending the following definitions:

- Page 3, lines 13-21
  - "Attending provider" means a physician licensed pursuant to chapter 453 or an advanced practice registered nurse pursuant to chapter 457 who has responsibility for the care of the patient and treatment of the patient's terminal disease."
- Add to this measure the definition of consulting provider:
  - "Consulting provider" means a physician licensed pursuant to chapter 453 or an advanced practice registered nurse pursuant to chapter 457 who is qualified by specialty or experience to make a professional diagnosis and prognosis regarding the patient's disease.
- Add to this measure the definition of counseling:
  - "Counseling" means one or more consultations, which may be provided through telehealth, as necessary between a psychiatrist licensed under chapter 453, an advanced practice registered nurse pursuant to chapter 457, psychologist licensed under chapter 465, or clinical social worker licensed pursuant to chapter

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<sup>4</sup> Hawai'i State Center for Nursing, 2019 Nursing Workforce Report. Data provided through the voluntary nurse re-licensure survey of nurses.

467E and a patient for the purpose of determining that the patient is capable, and that the patient does not appear to be suffering from undertreatment or nontreatment of depression or other conditions which may interfere with the patient's ability to make an informed decision pursuant to this chapter.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support of SB 3047 with amendments.**