



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 Ways and Means
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By

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SB 62 SD1 – RELATING TO MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today. The John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) **supports SB 62 SD1** which reestablishes the Hawai'i Medical Education special fund to provide funding for medical education and training in Hawai'i. The measure also appropriates moneys to JABSOM to expand medical residency and training in Hawai'i with an emphasis on supporting residency training on the neighbor islands and in medically underserved communities, as well as funding to expand medical training in partnership with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

We respectfully suggest a minor technical amendment in Sections 3 and 4 to clarify the appropriation as money cannot be expended from the Hawai'i Medical Education Special Fund unless an appropriation is made from the fund. Amending language appears in red font and is attached to this testimony.

Many Hawai'i residents are unable to obtain timely and appropriate health care due to shortages of physicians and other health care providers in the State. These shortages threaten individual health. The State's neighbor islands, which have been designated by the federal government as medically underserved areas, have been disproportionately adversely affected by shortages of physicians in all areas of practice.

Based on the most recent data from the Hawai'i physician workforce assessment project, the State has a shortage of nearly 800 full-time equivalent physicians. Primary care, internal medicine, and some specialty physician shortages represent Hawai'i's disciplines of greatest need. Without these physicians, the people of Hawai'i do not have access to the health care they need. JABSOM has shown that eighty percent of graduates who complete their medical school and residency training in the State remain in Hawai'i to practice. Medical residents who perform their training on the neighbor islands are more likely to open practices and remain on the neighbor islands.

Expanding capacity for year-round medical education training will create a pipeline of new physicians who are poised to enter practice on the neighbor islands. Similarly, expanding the training capacity in partnership with the Veterans Affairs would enable JABSOM to offer residency positions to more students.

The Hawai'i Medical Education Council (HMEC) is tasked with monitoring the state's graduate medical education (GME) programs, physician residency and fellowship training, and their ability to meet the health care workforce requirements. According to HMEC's 2022 report to the legislature, GME programs, especially those in primary care, geriatrics, psychiatry (adults and children) and addiction serve a high proportion of the state's most vulnerable populations. Yet, there has been a reduction in the overall civilian GME positions offered in Hawai'i from 241 in 2009 to 230 in 2021. Nationally, Hawai'i is in the bottom quintile of GME positions per population. Decreased federal and state funding has had a significant impact on the number of available training positions.

Ongoing funding of both undergraduate medical education (medical school) and GME is vital in addressing the physician shortage in Hawai'i. Reestablishing the Hawai'i Medical Education special fund will allow optimal use of state funding to support GME and assure close monitoring by the university and legislature of the specific application of state funds for GME programs, especially those focused on enhancing neighbor island workforce needs.

The University of Hawai'i supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or impact priorities as indicated in the University's Board of Regents Approved Executive Biennium Budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

SB 62
PROPOSED LANGUAGE

Pages 5 – 7 beginning at Line 11:

SECTION 2. Chapter 304A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to part V, subpart C, to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§304A- Hawaii medical education special fund. There is established in the state treasury a Hawaii medical education special fund, into which shall be deposited all moneys received by the medical education council, including:

- (1) Moneys from the federal Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services and other federal agencies;
- (2) Appropriations made by the legislature; and
- (3) Grants, contracts, donations, and private contributions.

The fund shall be administered by the John A. Burns school of medicine. Moneys deposited in the fund shall be expended by the John A. Burns school of medicine for the purposes of the graduate medical education and training programs established under this chapter."

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the ~~[general revenues of the State of Hawaii]~~ Hawaii medical education special fund the sum of \$ _____ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for ~~[the creation of additional~~

~~medical residencies and training opportunities for medical students in counties with populations of five hundred thousand or less]~~ graduate medical education and training programs established under chapter 304A, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

The sums appropriated shall be expended by the University of Hawaii at Manoa John A. Burns school of medicine for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the ~~[general revenues of the State of Hawaii]~~ Hawaii medical education special fund the sum of \$ _____ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for ~~[the expansion of]~~ student and residency ~~[and]~~ training opportunities in partnership with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

The sums appropriated shall be expended by the University of Hawaii at Manoa John A. Burns school of medicine for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 6 . This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.