



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Thursday, May 14, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

By  
Jerris Hedges, MD, Dean and Professor  
John A. Burns School of Medicine  
and  
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Provost  
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GM 608 – SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE HAWAII MEDICAL EDUCATION COUNCIL, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, KATHRYN RYDER, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 06-30-2023.

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of GM 608, gubernatorial nominee Kathryn Ryder, M.D., M.S, to the Hawai'i Medical Education Council. Dr. Ryder currently serves as the Acting Director of the U.S. Veterans Affairs Pacific Islands Health Care System.

Dr. Ryder has a long and distinguished career supporting the needs of our veterans. She was appointed Chief of Staff at the VA Pacific Islands Health Care System October 2019. She received her medical degree in 1992 from the Yale School of medicine, completed an internship and residency at Boston Medical Center, and served as Chief Resident. She received board certification in Medicine from the American Board of Internal Medicine in 1996 and was recertified in 2007.

Prior to her medical degree, she earned a bachelor's degree from Yale University and then a Master's Degree in Epidemiology from the University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center in 2003. Dr. Ryder worked at the University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center as an Associate Professor and joined the VA Memphis in 2006, where she taught hospital medicine and Patient Safety and Quality Improvement.

We firmly believe that her leadership and extensive background will be a tremendous asset on the Hawai'i Medical Education Council. The VA is one of our critical Federal partners that helps to address the larger physician workforce issues in the State. Dr. Ryder services as a representative of the federal health care sector, which is required by HMEC charter.

The University of Hawai'i System (UH) and its John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) administer two (2) statutes related to graduate medical education (GME) and addressing the severe physician shortage needs in Hawai'i.

- [HRS § 304A-1702] – Graduate Medical Education (GME) Program, was established to formally encompass the administration of UH JABSOM's institutional graduate medical education (GME) program.
- [HRS §§304A-1703, 1704, 1705] – Medical Education Council, was created within UH JABSOM and called "The Hawai'i Medical Education Council" (HMEC). HMEC was given the administrative duties and powers to:
  - (1) Analyze the State healthcare workforce for the present and future, focusing in particular on the State's need for physicians;
  - (2) Assess the State's healthcare training programs, focusing on UH JABSOM's institutional GME enterprise to determine its ability to meet the workforce needs identified by HMEC;
  - (3) Recommend to the Legislature and UH Board of Regents (BOR) ways in which identified GME and other healthcare training programs can improve and change in order to effectively meet the HMEC assessment;
  - (4) Work with other entities and state agencies, and in consultation with the Legislature and BOR, develop and implement a Plan to ensure the adequate funding of healthcare training programs in the State, with an emphasis on UH JABSOM GME programs;
  - (5) Seek funding to implement the funding Plan from all public (county, state and federal government) and private sources;
  - (6) Monitor and continue to improve the funding Plan; and,
  - (7) Submit an annual report to the Legislature no later than twenty days before the convening of each regular Legislative session.

Per statute, the HMEC is comprised of eight Governor-appointed and Legislature-confirmed individuals and five ex-officio members, including the Dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine who serves as the Chair. The HMEC is administered by the Designated Institutional Official and Director of the Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs.

Solving Hawai'i's physician (and health professions) workforce shortage requires multi-sector engagement and ownership, a multi-pronged and longitudinal approach, as well as ideas and resources from the private sector (i.e., insurers, hospitals, businesses and private health care organizations committed to improving and maintaining healthy citizens and communities) the public sector (i.e., primary-, secondary-, and higher education, legislature, Departments of Health and Human Services and Federal agencies) and the larger communities of Hawai'i.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony for Dr. Ryder.