



DATE: 28 Feb 2022

TO: Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

RE: **Testimony in Strong Support of SB 2282 SD1, RELATING TO ABORTION CARE**

HRG: 01 March 2022, 10:00 AM Conference room 229 & Videoconference

Dear Chairs Baker and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Chang and Keohokalole, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 450 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. Our mission is to promote public health in Hawai'i through leadership, collaboration, education and advocacy. Additionally, HPHA aims to call attention to issues around social justice and equity in areas that extend beyond the traditional context of health (e.g., education, digital equity, cultural sensitivity), which can have profound impacts on health equity and well-being. Therefore, as stewards of public health, HPHA is also advocating for equity in all policies.

We are providing this testimony in **strong support of SB 2282 SD1**, which takes steps to safeguard equitable abortion access for all pregnant people. Protecting access to safe abortion care ensures that individuals are able to make their own decision about the most personal and significant medical decisions that impact their life. The impact of not getting abortion care can be devastating. Data shows that persons denied a wanted abortion experience four times greater odds of living below the Federal Poverty Level; are more likely to experience life threatening complications of pregnancy such as eclampsia; and are more likely to stay in a relationship with an abusive partner.

Individuals who are most harmed by gaps in access to safe abortion care are individuals with low income or without savings. People with low socioeconomic status are more likely to be Black, Latinx, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander due to generations of systemic racism. People who face additional barriers to health care include those in rural and remote areas, young people, and LGBTQ communities. As advocates for diversity, equity and inclusivity in all policies, HPHA supports SB 2282 SD1 to ensure equal access to safe abortion care.



We support SB 2282 SD1 and respectfully ask that you pass this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important public health issue affecting members of our community.

Sincerely,

J. Leocadia Conlon, PhD, MPH, PA-C
Legislative Committee Chair
Hawai'i Public Health Association