



February 1, 2024

To: COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

Re: SUPPORT of SB3122 - Relating to RELATING TO PUBLIC HEALTH STANDING ORDERS

Hrg: February 2, 2024, 1:00 PM, Conference room 225

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.

Physicians Assistants (PAs) are state-licensed, nationally certified medical providers, who receive rigorous medical training modeled on medical school curriculum. PA's play a critical role on care delivery teams, and along with their physician and advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) counterparts, help ensure the delivery of high quality health care. Amidst a statewide physician shortage, PAs are successfully filling critical gaps in healthcare, and reducing health disparities by expanding access to care for communities in Hawai'i. PAs are found in every clinical setting and in every medical specialty and are authorized by the Affordable Care Act (ACA), along with physicians and APRNs, to serve as primary care providers (PCP) for their patients.

HAPA believes that preventive care is an essential component of healthcare total well-being. The well-documented physician shortage in Hawai'i has created challenges for accessing healthcare services, including preventative health screenings. Limited access to such screenings may result in poor health outcomes and increased healthcare costs when an underlying disease process is not detected in its early stage. SB3122 will promote timely access to evidence-based preventive screenings identified as A or B recommendations by the US Preventive Services Task Force.

HPHA strongly supports SB3122 and respectfully asks that you pass this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important public health issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Kessler
Executive Director