



**Testimony to the  
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH  
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair  
February 24, 2017 at 9:30 A.M.  
Conference Room 229, State Capitol  
RE: SB513 Relating to Contraceptive Supplies**

**The Hawaii Public Health Association (HPHA) SUPPORTS SB513 Relating to Contraceptive Supplies.**

HPHA is an association of over 600 community members, public health professionals and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. HPHA also serves as a voice for public health professionals and as a repository for information about public health in the Pacific.

HPHA **supports the passage of SB513** which authorizes pharmacists to prescribe and dispense contraceptive supplies.

In 2010, 56% of all 16,000 pregnancies in Hawaii were unplanned. The unintended pregnancy rate was reported 61 per 1,000 women ages 15–44. Publicly supported family planning centers aided 19,800 female contraceptive clients in 2013. These locations met 28% of women's need for contraceptive services and helped avert 4,800 unintended pregnancies in 2013. This program was projected to have prevented 2,400 unplanned births and 1,600 abortions. However, many women do not seek care for unintended pregnancy, due to scheduling issues, costs of care, or not wanting to go through an embarrassing GYN examination to obtain a doctor's prescription.

Over-The-Counter (OTC) contraceptives would expedite the process for women to receive a fitting birth control method and prevent pregnancy. Birth control methods including pills, patches, and rings will still require prescriptions after taking a brief health questionnaire, but will be more easily accessible as OTC. Pharmacists who complete a specific training program can give prescriptions directly, and can determine which hormonal methods might be appropriate and safe. Women will still be highly encouraged to attend annual exams to test for cervical cancer, sexually transmitted infections, and other critical health concerns. This legislation will support more women through safe birth control methods and will reduce rates of unintended pregnancy, as well as pregnancy termination. Ensuring that these OTC prescriptions are covered by health insurance is an important aspect of the access to care process.

HPHA supports the encouragement of safe and accessible birth control methods for women in Hawaii. OTC contraceptives are an attainable way to prevent unintended or unwanted pregnancies. This bill will deter the overuse of emergency contraception, pregnancy termination, and other methods of pregnancy prevention that can be considered unsafe if over-used or used improperly.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on important health issues affecting people in Hawai'i.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Holly Kessler'.

Holly Kessler, Executive Director  
Hawai'i Public Health Association