



March 12, 2021

To: The Senate Committee on Labor, Culture, and the Arts
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Re: **Strong Support** of HB1176 HD1, Relating to a Jobs Corps Program

Hrg: March 15, 2021 at 3:00 PM at Capitol Room 225 and Videoconference

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 400 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. Issues around social justice and equity in areas that extend beyond the traditional context of health (e.g., education, digital equity, cultural sensitivity), can have profound impacts on health equity and well-being.

HPHA strongly **supports** HB1176 HD1, which will establish a state job corps program within the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to help address the unemployment impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, this measure will support economic diversification in the state and appropriate funds for this purpose.

Reliable employment is an important determinant of health. It impacts health behaviors (i.e., health eating, physical activity), health risk factors (i.e., stress, blood pressure), and healthcare access (i.e., insurance) on individual and family levels. Sustainability addressing the unemployment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has will improve health, over time. The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated the precariousness of Hawai'i's economic dependence on the visitor industry. The proposed legislation will work to diversify the state's workforce and create a more robust economy long term.

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

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Claire Townsend Ing', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Claire Townsend Ing, DrPH
Legislative Committee Chair
Hawai'i Public Health Association