



March 11, 2020

To: Committee on Lower & Higher Education
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Chair
The Honorable Sean Quinlan, Vice Chair
The Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair

Re: Strong Support of SB2392 SD1, Relating to Health

Hrg: March 13, 2020 at 2:30 PM State Capitol, Conference Room 309

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group 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 strongly **supports** SB2392 SD1, which would appropriate funds for 'Imi Ho'ōla student stipends or for other 'Imi Ho'ōla student support programs.

Over a 45-year history, the 'Imi Ho'ōla Post-Baccalaureate Program has established itself as successful pipeline program for academically-qualified students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Each year 12 students are selected for admission to the program and are guaranteed admission to JABSOM upon successful completion. The 'Imi Ho'ōla program has produced close to 300 physicians.

Hawai'i has a physician shortage with Primary Care and rural areas experiencing the most need. Graduates from the 'Imi Ho'ōla program are more likely to remain in Hawai'i for residency, work in Primary Care, or practice in underserved communities, compared to other JABSOM graduates. Supporting these students who will serve our community as physicians is a wonderful investment in the future health of Hawai'i.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Townsend Ing, DrPH
Legislative Committee Chair
Hawaii Public Health Association