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From: Kathy Sassi [redwinehi@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 5:38 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: SB1045Please forward to Chair Senator Ige and Senator Rosalyn Baker

From: Kathy Sassi [mailto:redwinehi@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 04, 2009 7:54 AM
To: '
Subject: APRN HB1378

Aloha Mai Kakou,

I am both a Community Health Clinical Nurse Specialist and a Family Nurse Practitioner. Currently I am an Assistant Professor of Nursing as well, teaching Community Health. I work as an FNP in Job Corps in Waimanalo, and am the first provider students see when they come there, some of them directly from Micronesia. I also volunteer with Aloha Medical Mission and so have visited some of these adolescents' home islands. I believe this bill will help APRNs provide care to rural and underserved populations in Hawaii. Compared to national rates we actually have a high physician to patient ration, however the physicians are clustered in urban areas and Honolulu and so the neighbor islands and rural areas have unmet needs, especially in general family practice, mental health, and preventive care. Nurse Practitioners and CNSs are passionate about education and primary preventive care, keeping folks out of hospitals by emphasizing prevention, early identification, accessible, affordable, acceptable management of chronic illness, including mental illness. There is a large body of evidence that APRN care is cost effective, reducing emergency room use, health disparities, and is care given where most needed. Nurses, including APRNs, are the first to volunteer in times of trouble or areas of need. This bill will allow APRNs to independently meet the need in Hawaii, as they do in other states, helping communities who need them the most in a cost effective way. Passage of this bill will help eliminate inequities in Hawaii.

Mahalo,

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Mahalo Senators,

I especially thank Rosalyn for championing nurses and under served populations. Yesterday's hearing was long but the issues were vital, covering human needs throughout the lifespan. Thank you for all of your work, for the opportunity to testify, and for your "civility and rationality" (loved President Obama's optimism when he said that people respond to civility and rational arguments)...the work you are doing is going to benefit people in Hawaii for years to come. Every issue resonated with me, though I did not testify on all. The clarification of end of life wishes was meaningful because I am a nurse, and also because I remember my mom being very definite about not wanting her ribs broken, a tube shoved down her throat or any drugs that would make death a worse experience. People have a right to have their wishes honored-people only have one death-no do overs-and it should be peaceful, dignified, and pain and fear free as possible. Access to healthcare and yes, even referral to specialists, will improve life for those in rural areas and neighbor islands who are currently not getting primary preventive care. I grew up Catholic, but cannot comprehend why a patient's legal right to prevention of pregnancy should be delayed when we know that every hour makes a difference, and to deny that to sexual assault victims makes no sense. I came away from these hearings with a new respect for your public service and for your patience. Thank you for persevering and doing the peoples' work, making a positive difference in thousands of lives over long periods of time.

Sincerely,
Kathy Sassi