To: Chair John M. Mizuno

 Vice Chair Bertrand Kobayashi

 Member of the Committee on Health

 Chair Takashi Ohno

 Vice Chair Dale T. Kobayashi

 Members of the Committee on Intrastate Commerce

From: xxx PA-C

 xxx Clinic/Hospital

Re: HB935, Relating to Health, PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

 February 5, 2019 at 8:30 am, Conference Room 329

Position: STRONG SUPPORT

My name is \_\_\_\_ I am a physician assistant at \_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_ and I strongly support HB935, this bill will modernize physician assistant practice laws.

Hawaii has a physician shortage of 797 physicians. Specialties most affected statewide include Primary Care, Infectious Disease, Colorectal Surgery, Neurosurgery, Rheumatology, and Endocrinology. 17.8% of Hawaii’s residents are 65 years old and older and their healthcare needs will increase with age.

Physician Assistants (PAs) are highly trained and skilled medical providers that provide quality and affordable healthcare. PAs work in many medical specialties including all of the aforementioned.  However, it is difficult to be or to use a PA in Hawaii.

PAs do not have their own statute in Hawaii. PAs were first added to HRS 453 in the 1970s. As it pertains to PAs, HRS 453 Medicine and Surgery in its current status is antiquated, restrictive, and creates an administrative burden for physicians and medical facilities to utilize PAs. Often, physicians or hospitals will not hire qualified PAs simply due to the State laws and administrative rules.

Since its creation in 1967, the PA profession has grown and matured by leaps and bounds to now the #3 job overall in the US and #1 in Healthcare according to 2019 U.S. News 100 Best Jobs. <https://money.usnews.com/careers/best-jobs/rankings/the-100-best-jobs> PAs can be an affordable option for the 797 physician that

HB935 modernizes HRS 453 to clarify the scope and practice of PAs to what is comparable on a national level. It continues to allow PAs to collaborate with, consult with, and refer to physicians and other members of healthcare team as indicated by patient’s condition and standard of care. It will allow the manner of collaboration between physician assistant and physician to be determined at the practice level with a practice agreement rather than State level. This will relieve the administrative burden and allow further utilization of PAs and increase access to care. PAs are not seeking independent practice – we seek to strengthen our collaborative relationships and individualize it at the practice level.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB935.