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The Twenty-Seventh Legislature, State of Hawaii
The Senate
Committee on Health

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
February 13, 2013

S.B. 1306 – RELATING TO
THE HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO strongly opposes the purpose and intent of S.B. 1306, which proposes changes to Chapter 323-F, Hawaii Revised Statutes to permit the regional systems of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation and their health facilities to transition to non-public status.

The Hawaii Health Systems Corporation operates a system of community hospitals primarily on the neighbor islands. That network provides a safety net of health care, with a Hawaii State Constitutional mandate to ensure access to health care for all citizens. In many instances, care is provided without payment, a cost that our state taxpayers bear to ensure care for all.

To preserve the safety net for the neighbor islands the system must remain intact. If one or more regions were to withdraw from the system, it will create instability through the whole system, both financially and in the types of and mix of services available to local communities. A fragmented health care system is a disservice to Hawaii's people and threatens the long-term viability of the entire health care delivery system. Further, the effort to divest our state from involvement in our health care, and put that responsibility on an Arizona-based provider is short-sighted and not in the best interest of our communities. It is unthinkable that our state will be better off with health care decisions for neighbor islanders being made out of state.

For these reasons, we strongly oppose S.B. 1306. Thank you for the opportunity to express our opposition.

Respectfully submitted,



Joan Takano
Field Services Officer