



**Testimony to the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection,
Health, and Human Services
Wednesday, February 15, 2012
9:30 a.m.
State Capitol - Conference Room 229**

**RE: SENATE BILL NO. 2434 RELATING TO THE HAWAII HEALTH INSURANCE
EXCHANGE**

Chairs Baker, Green and Chun Oakland, Vice Chairs Taniguchi, Nishihara and Ihara, and members of the committees:

The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii ("The Chamber") supports SB 2434 relating to the Hawaii Health Insurance Exchange.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing more than 1,000 businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of its members, which employ more than 200,000 individuals, to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

Quality healthcare is vital to the welfare of Hawaii's citizens and its economy. It provides essential and critical care for our families and serves to attract and retain Hawaii's professional workforce, new companies, and even tourists to our state. As such, the health care industry also plays a crucial role in the economic development and sustainability of our state and all of Hawaii's businesses. Therefore, it is critical that we continue to support improvements to the healthcare system and ensure access to medical care. As such, the Chamber supports the State's effort in building a Health Insurance Exchange as mandated by the Affordable Care Act.

The Chamber has been an active participant on the task force and most recently, on the Interim Board, which was established by the Legislature in 2011. We embrace the vision and mission of the HIE. Therefore, we support this measure that proposes to make necessary clarifications to the law.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.