



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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February 13, 2008

LATE
Testimony

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND HOUSING

House Bill 2197 - Relating to Taxation

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports the intent of House Bill 2197 relating to a tax credit to taxpayer caregivers who care for qualified care recipients with a recommended change.

DCAB supports the efforts of the Joint Legislative Committee on Family Caregiving and its efforts to provide policy support to families who provide very much needed care for elders who require long term care. Within our community we do not have the resources to either provide or pay for more expensive care in nursing homes or long term care facilities. We simply do not have the beds or the financial resources to pay for all the beds, even if they were available. We also know that most individuals prefer to stay in their home or familiar family-like environments for their long term care needs.

While we recognize that this bill arose from the Committee researching the long term caregiver needs of elderly persons over the age of 60, we believe that the long term caregiver needs of individuals with disabilities under the age of 60 deserve equal attention. Individuals over the age of 18 with physical or mental disabilities require intensive family support, particularly if the individual has 'aged out' of the school system. Families must often choose between work and caregiving in order to avoid more costly institutionalization or out of home placement in adult residential care homes or other similar facilities, all of which costs money to the State. We view this measure, although a tax credit, as a cost saving measure to the State in the long run.

We support its passage with an amendment relating to the age eligibility. However, we defer to the Department of Taxation regarding cost implications to the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

PATRICIA M. NIELSEN
Chairperson
Legislative Committee

FRANCINE WAI
Executive Director

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May Mizuno

From: Lyn Moku [lmoku2006@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 13, 2008 6:57 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 2197 - February 13, 2008 Hearing @ 8:00 a.m. House Committee on Health & Committee on Human Services & Housing 5 copies requested by Committee

To: Representative Josh Green, MD, Chair
 Representative John Mizuno, Vice Chair
 COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Representative Maile SL Shimabukuro, Chair
 Representative Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
 COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOUSING

From: Lyn Moku, Division Manager Phone: 532-0806

Date: Wednesday, February 13, 2008

Subject: **SUPPORT OF HB 2197 RELATING TO TAXATION**

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society supports HB2197 related to taxation which provides a tax credit to taxpayer caregivers who care for qualified care recipients.

Comprehensive long-term care support and services for people with multiple sclerosis usually costs more than \$30,000 per year. Families and friends often shoulder the responsibility by directly providing care or paying for it out-of-pocket, but even families of moderate means can exhaust their incomes and assets trying to cover those needs. Medicare does not cover long-term care support and services, leaving many people perplexed when faced with the needs and demands of paying for long-term care. This situation is not unique to people with MS and their families. The elderly and others with chronic diseases and disabilities, and their families, are in the same situation.

The National MS Society supports legislation to establish tax credits, deductions or additional personal exemptions to help offset long-term care costs.

The proposed Bill recognizes the contributions of family caregivers. The tax credit is minimal in relation to the service provided by family members and friends. No one could purchase these services for \$1,000 a year – the cost to the State and the people of Hawaii would be much greater without the “free” help provided by family caregivers.

Please support HB2197. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of this Bill.

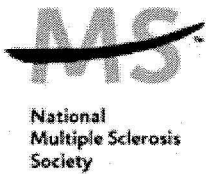
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