



LATE
Testimony

January 30, 2008

To: Rep. Josh Green, M.D., Chair
Rep. John Mizuno, Vice Chair
House Health Committee

From: Cynthia J. Goto, M.D., President
Linda Rasmussen, M.D., Legislative Co-Chair
Philip Hellreich, M.D., Legislative Co-Chair
Paula Arcena, Executive Director
Dick Botti, Government Affairs Liaison

PLEASE DELIVER

to rm 329 for:
HTH Committee

Wed
1/30/08
8:00am

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Re: ²²⁹¹ HB2294 Relating to Health Insurance
(establishes the state health authority to propose a plan to provide medical assistance for all citizens of Hawaii.)

The Hawaii Medical Association opposes HB2294.

The HMA strongly believes that every member of our society needs and deserves a core group of medical and surgical benefits, including Psychiatry and addiction medicine. Over and above these benefits, the HMA generally favors free market solutions and opposes mandated benefits.

Demand for health care is infinite and placing health care decisions in the hands of our government and insurers will not increase the effectiveness of healthcare. Instead, it will result in the rationing of health care services, long delays for needed surgery, denial of necessary but expensive high tech therapies and diagnostic procedures, and inhibit the development of new therapies and diagnostic procedures.

In Canada, thousands of wealthier Canadians head south to the U.S. for many needed services unavailable in Canada. In England and Canada, patient over the age of 65 are denied open heart surgery, kidney transplants and other critical medical treatment. Those who cannot afford to travel to buy their medical treatment elsewhere, simply go without. In England, 40% of the population now purchases private health insurance, over and above the high taxes they pay for government health care, because necessary therapies are denied or delayed.

If we adopt a government run system, we will have constant battles in the legislature about what benefits should be available, what reimbursements should be made, etc. and the whole health care delivery system will be politicized.

Rather than create a government controlled healthcare system, we suggest the legislature direct its focus to medical liability reform, a major cause of our patient access to care crisis. Medical liability reform has been proven to reduce costs and increase access to healthcare.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

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LATE
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TESTIMONY

HB 2291

ROOM 329

1/30/2008

8:00 A.M.

House Committee on Health

1/29/08

Chair Green and Members of the Committee:

I wish to testify in opposition to HB 2291. There are many problems with the bill. The title itself that refers to citizens of Hawaii as the target. What about the non-citizen legal residents? The bill references health, yet gives special status to the medical community, as if health and medicine are synonymous.

I urge you to not pass this bill out.


Jory Watland, Member