


**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 21, 2008

OFFICIAL TESTIMONY

FROM: Rep. Rida Cabanilla 
State Representative, 42nd District
Chair, House Committee on International Affairs

TO: Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair, Finance Committee
Rep. Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair, Finance Committee
Honorable Members of the Finance Committee

SUBJECT: Testimony in support of HB2756, HB2757, HB2758, HB2759
3:30 PM / February 22 Agenda / Conference Room 308

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, Members of the Finance Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of House Bills No. 2756, 2757, 2758, and 2759. These measures, which I introduced, are critical to the success of not only the Hawaii Medical Center West (a/k/a HMC), but also for the continued well-being and health of the people of Leeward and Central Oahu.

At present, seventy percent of HMC's patients are Medicare/Medicaid and uninsured, far higher than that of other local hospitals. HMC is the lead hospital for providing services to the underserved and growing destitute patient population in Leeward and Central Oahu. HMC serves 8,000 inpatients for over 75,000 patient days per year, not including the thousands of outpatients served annually that other hospitals are not able to absorb. These four measures, House Bills No. 2756, 2757, 2758 and 2759 will all be essential in allowing HMC to continue its mission and will save lives.

Mother Teresa, one of the world's greatest humanitarians said that "To keep a lamp burning, we have to keep putting oil in it." HMC is a critical lamp of hope to the people of not only my district, but all of Ewa, Waipahu, Waikale, Royal Kunia, Makakilo, Kapolei, Kalaheo, Mililani, Kapolei, Makakilo, Honokai Hale, Nanakuli, Luahale, Maili, and many other communities, of whom HMC is the largest hospital providing care.

Dr. Livingston Wong testified with impassioned and charged words before the House Health Committee regarding these measures, saying: " *Any of these bills could help to*

secure the longterm viability of HMC. HMC is making great strides toward sustainable financial viability and medical excellence. Reasonable action by the Legislature will help ensure HMC remains an important part of Hawaii's healthcare system. HMC does not seek a hand out from the Legislature, but rather an investment. Given the important role HMC plays in the delivery of medical care to our community, it is proper for the Legislature to approve a public investment in HMC's future. The return on such an investment will benefit the entire state." Let us take his words to heart and take action by passing these measures. I wholeheartedly urge you to support this measure and pass it on to Final Reading.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.