

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



LILLIAN B. KOLLER, ESQ.
DIRECTOR

HENRY OLIVA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 27, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Marcus R. Oshiro Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 7 – RELATING TO THE I-SAVERX PRESCRIPTION DRUG
PROGRAM**

Hearing: Wednesday, February 27, 2008, 12:15PM.
Conference Room 308, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to direct the Governor to establish the State of Hawaii's participation in the I-Save Rx prescription drug program to provide residents with increased access to affordable drugs.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services appreciates the intent of the Legislature to lower the cost of prescription drugs for the citizens of Hawaii but we must oppose this bill because it will require substantial State funds that will clearly adversely impact the priorities in the Executive Supplemental Budget.

The Department needs to point out that the State of Hawaii would be prohibited from utilizing Federal Medicaid matching funds to purchase prescription drugs from the I-SaveRx Prescription Drug Program because these drugs are purchased from Canada and Europe. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) considers imported

prescription drugs as unapproved new drugs, and Federal Medicaid rules clearly indicate that only FDA approved drugs can be prescribed. Therefore, this bill will require a substantial appropriation of State general funds to pay for the drugs purchased from the I-SaveRx Prescription Drug program and the State will not receive Federal Medicaid matching funds.

Inasmuch as these options will require additional substantial State appropriations, the Department opposes this bill and respectfully requests that such funding not adversely impact nor replace the priorities in the Executive Supplemental Budget.

The Department defers to the Department of the Attorney General as to the legality of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill.



TESTIMONY OF THE STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE, 2008

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 7, RELATING TO THE I-SAVERX PRESCRIPTION DRUG PROGRAM.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

DATE: Wednesday, February 27, 2008 **TIME:** 12:15 PM

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 308
Deliver to: Committee Clerk, Room 306, 2 Copies

TESTIFIER(S): Mark J. Bennett, Attorney General
or Cori K. Woo, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Oshiro and Members of the Committee:

The Attorney General has serious concerns regarding this bill, specifically, the ability of the State to execute its provisions within federal restrictions.

The purpose of the bill is to direct the Governor to establish Hawaii's participation in the I-SaveRx prescription drug program to provide residents with increased access to affordable drugs. Hawaii residents would have access to the I-SaveRx program through an Internet website and a toll-free twenty-four-hour telephone number run by Illinois' pharmacy benefit manager, Pegasus Health Services Limited, which has existing relationships with licensed pharmacies in Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand.

We have identified several legal problems with this bill concerning FDA requirements and approval.

First, importing a drug into the United States that is unapproved or does not comply with the labeling requirements in the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act ("FFDCA") is prohibited under 21 U.S.C. section 331(a), (c), and (d). Under the same section of the FFDCA, the interstate shipment of any prescription drug that lacks required FDA approval is also illegal. Interstate shipment

includes importation such as bringing drugs from a foreign country, like Canada, into the United States.

Second, the drug distribution network for legal prescription drugs in the United States is a "closed" system that involves several players who move drug products from the point of manufacture to the end user, and provides the American public with multiple levels of protection against receiving unsafe, ineffective, or poor quality medications. Even if the drug was manufactured in the United States and approved by the FDA, then shipped to a purchaser in a foreign country and brought back in through Illinois, once it leaves the United States it loses its FDA approval. Therefore, pursuant to 21 U.S.C. section 381(d)(1), it is illegal for any person other than the original manufacturer of a drug to import into the United States a drug that is originally manufactured in the United States and sent to another country. Failure to comply with the applicable federal law would expose any individual involved with this program to both civil and criminal liability pursuant to 21 U.S.C. sections 331, 332, 333, and 381(d)(1) and 18 U.S.C. sections 2 and 371.

The Attorney General would like this Committee to be informed on these issues. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

The Twenty-Fourth Legislature
Regular Session of 2008

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Committee on Finance
Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
Rep. Marilyn B. Lee, Vice Chair

State Capitol, Conference Room 308
Wednesday, February 27, 2008; 12:15 p.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON H.B. 7
RELATING TO THE I-SAVERX PRESCRIPTION DRUG PROGRAM**

The ILWU Local 142 supports H.B. 7, which directs the Governor to establish the State of Hawaii's participation in the I-SaveRx Prescription drug program to provide residents with increased access to affordable drugs.

Many uninsured individuals in Hawaii had expected the Hawaii Rx Plus program to address the rising cost of prescription drugs with pharmaceutical company rebates negotiated by the State. However, such rebates have not been negotiated and, as a result, those without drug coverage have to bear exorbitant costs for brand-name drugs.

H.B. 7 would be another vehicle to address the problem of the high cost of prescription drugs. We urge passage of this bill and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

POLICY ADVISORY BOARD FOR ELDER AFFAIRS (PABEA)
NO.1 CAPITOL DISTRICT
150 SOUTH HOTEL STREET, SUITE 406
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

TO: HOUSE-SGT-AT- ARMS

February 25,2008

Fax 586-6001

FROM: Bruce McCullough
Legislative Committee, PABEA

FOR: Committee on Finance
Rep Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
Rep Marilyn B. Lee, Vice Chair

RE: HB 7 Relating to the I-SaveRX Prescription Drug Program

DATE: Wednesday, February 27, 2008

TIME: 12:15 PM (Agenda #3)

PLACE: RM 308 (I will be testifying in person).

I am offering testimony on behalf of PABEA, which is a State appointed Board tasked with advising the Executive Office on Aging (EOA). My testimony does not represent the views of the EOA, but of the board.

PABEA is in strong support of this proposed legislation.

I-SaveRx is a prescription drug reimportation program developed by the State of Illinois that allows Illinois consumers to refill prescriptions for the most common brand-name prescription drugs used to treat chronic illness at affordable prices from pharmacies in Canada and the United Kingdom.

This bill amends Chapter 346 of the Hawaii Revised Statues by inserting a new section to enable Hawaii to participate in the I-Save Rx program that is

currently in effect in the State of Illinois as well as several other states that are participating in the program.

Since Illinois implemented the I-Save Rx prescription drug program,, Wisconsin, Missouri, Kansas, and Vermont have joined the program as participating states.

HAWAII ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS (HARA)
AN AFFILIATE OF THE ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS
C/O AFSCME, 888 MILILANI STREET, SUITE 101
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

TO: HOUSE-SGT-AT- ARMS

February 25,2008
Fax 586-4001

FROM: Bruce McCullough
HARA Legislative Committee, Chair

FOR: Committee on Finance
Rep Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
Rep Marilyn B Lee Vice Chair

RE: HB 7 Relating to the I-SaveRx Prescription Drug Program

DATE: Wednesday, February 27, 2008

TIME: 12:15 PM

PLACE: RM 308 (I will b e testifying in person).

I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Hawaii Alliance for Retired Americans (HARA). HARA represents over 17,000 retirees, members of numerous organizations and individuals. HARA is a chapter of the Alliance of Retired Americans (ARA), a national advocate for seniors and retirees with over three (3) million members.

HARA is in strong support of this proposed legislation.

I-SaveRx is a prescription drug reimportation program developed by the State of Illinois that allows Illinois consumers to refill prescriptions for the most common brand-name prescription drugs used to treat chronic illness at affordable prices from pharmacies in Canada and the United Kingdom.

This bill amends Chapter 346 of the Hawaii Revised Statues by inserting a new section to enable Hawaii to participate in the I-Save Rx program that is

currently in effect in the State of Illinois as well as several other states that are participating in the program.

Since Illinois implemented the I-Save Rx prescription drug program,, Wisconsin, Missouri, Kansas, and Vermont have joined the program as participating states.

Statement



In Opposition to House Bill 7

February 26, 2008

Position: The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) respectfully opposes House Bill 7 (HB 7) because it would likely jeopardize the health and well-being of patients and compromise the integrity of the prescription drug supply in the United States.

HB 7 would allow the State of Hawaii and its residents to join an illegal importation website called "I-SaveRx" which is currently utilized by a limited number of states as a way to facilitate the distribution of potentially unsafe and illegal drugs to state residents from foreign pharmacies.

PhRMA and its member companies realize the importance of providing patients with access to life-sustaining and cost-effective pharmaceuticals. However, PhRMA urges Hawaii legislators to consider the safety and liability concerns associated with importing and facilitating the importation of pharmaceuticals from abroad.

Patient Safety Is Jeopardized

On January 11th, 2007, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) released a press statement entitled, *2006 Unprecedented Year of Increased Fake Drug Production, Introduction into U.S. Drug Supply*. In its press release, the NABP states that "one of Canada's largest internet pharmacies is selling counterfeit versions of Lipitor, Crestor, Celebrex and seven other drugs." Additionally, the NABP discussed the 2005 case in the United Kingdom where 10,000 packs of Lipitor were found to have been mixed with counterfeit packs and at least 2,500 of these used by patients before it was determined that they were counterfeit.

Internet pharmacies that claim to be Canadian, Irish, or British may have no ties at all to Canada, Ireland, or the United Kingdom. Many internet pharmacies actually based in these countries obtain their drugs from third-world sources such as India, Thailand, and the Philippines. Furthermore, the Canadian equivalent of the US FDA is not designed to provide oversight on products that merely pass through Canada destined for patients in the US. Patient health is further jeopardized when licensed pharmacists are replaced by questionable internet sites.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) estimates that approximately 1% or less of drugs in the United States are tainted or counterfeit.¹ Assuming that is accurate, that means approximately 3,500,000 U.S. prescriptions may be potentially affected by counterfeit drugs each year.² Recent discoveries in counterfeit drugs in the United States have included AIDS/HIV therapy, over-the-counter pain medications, antibiotics, insulin, cholesterol drugs, hormone replacement therapy, cardiac drugs, antihistamines, and many more.³ The use of counterfeit drugs can cause harm in variety of ways including ingesting the wrong drug which means the patient is not being treated for their condition; getting the wrong concentration or dose which can result in death; taking a drug with no active ingredients which means the patient's condition is not being treated; and ingesting dangerous materials used to make the fake drugs.⁴

In a May 20, 2005, letter to Governor Kenny Guinn of Nevada, the FDA stated that importation of foreign drugs is illegal and outlined numerous safety concerns. In this letter, FDA Associate Commissioner for Policy and

¹ Bryan A. Liang, *Over the Virtual and Geographic Borders: Understanding Importation and Counterfeit Drugs*, 36 Cal. W. Int'l L.J., 11 (2005), citing Paul M. Rudolph & Ilisa B.G. Bernstein, *Counterfeit Drugs*, 350 New Eng. J. Med. 1384 (2004).

² Id. at 11.

³ Id.

⁴ Id. at 11-12.

Planning Randall W. Lutter indicated, "We cannot provide adequate assurance to the American public that the drug products delivered to consumers in the United States from foreign countries are the same products approved by the FDA."⁵

Legal Concerns and Potential Liability for Public Entities

In addition to safety concerns, the FDA indicates that states and/or other entities that encourage, act, or even cause illegal importation run afoul of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act ("FDCA")⁶. FDCA violations have already triggered Department of Justice enforcement actions. As a practical matter, FDA believes that, "it is extremely unlikely that any program in [a state or municipality] could ensure that all of the applicable legal requirements are met." The administration and costs to a state associated with attempting to create and maintain a program that could oversee the distribution of foreign drugs to its residents, often on an individual basis, would likely be so substantial that a state would be unable to adequately protect against all possible civil and criminal violations.

If a state provides Canadian and other foreign drugs directly or facilitates their distribution, such as through contracting with foreign pharmacies, importing directly or participating in a website (such as I-Save-Rx) that will provide imported drugs to state residents, state tort liability acts would apply. Hawaii attempts to shield itself from liability to any resident who may be injured by an imported prescription drug by giving itself immunity under Section 346-L on page 10 of the bill.

Importation Savings are Negligible and FDA Approved Drugs are Available at Low Cost or No Cost

On September 19th, 2006, the Illinois Auditor General released his state-sponsored audit of I-SaveRx after 19 months in operation. Rather than saving the state of Illinois a windfall from importing prescription drugs, the Auditor General found that I-SaveRx instead cost Illinois taxpayers over \$1 million and reached only 4,000 people. While importation was hailed by some as a means to save money, analysis of actual data continues to show that this is not the case.

PhRMA and the biopharmaceutical industry are committed to working with the FDA and other agencies to keep America's drug supply safe. We are equally committed to ensuring that every American has access to quality medicines. In April 2005, PhRMA established the Partnership for Prescription Assistance (www.pparx.com) which offers a single point of access to more than 475 public and private patient assistance programs, including more than 180 programs offered by pharmaceutical companies. PPARx brings together America's pharmaceutical companies, doctors, other health care providers, patient advocacy organizations, and community groups to help qualifying patients who lack prescription coverage get the medicines they need through the public or private program that is right for them. Many will get them free or nearly free. Since its inception, PPARx has matched over 4 million Americans nationally to patient assistance program. In Hawaii alone, nearly 9,000 residents have been matched to at least one patient assistance program.

In addition, PhRMA sponsors www.BuySafeDrugs.info which provides information on safe, legal way that patients can save on prescription medications, educates patients on the risks of importing medicines, and explains why legalizing importation is bad public policy.

It is for all these reasons, PhRMA respectfully opposes passage of HB 7.

The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) represents the country's leading pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies, which are devoted to inventing medicines that allow patients to live longer, healthier, and more productive lives. PhRMA companies are leading the way in the search for new cures. PhRMA members alone invested an estimated \$39.4 billion in 2005 in discovering and developing new medicines. Industry wide research and investment reached a record \$51.3 billion in 2005.

⁵ Randall W. Lutter, FDA Associate Commissioner, Letter to Nevada Governor Kenny Guinn, May 20, 2005.

⁶ William K. Hubbard, FDA Associate Commissioner for Policy and Planning, Letter to CA Deputy Attorney General, August 25, 2003.



Hawaii's Voice for a Better Future

HB7
FIN
Wednesday, February 27, 2008
12:15 p.m.
Room 308
30 copies

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair

Rep. Marilyn B. Lee, Vice Chair

February 27, 2008

Re: HB7 — Relating to the I-SaveRX Prescription Drug Program

In Support

According to a CBS News report:

It may come as no surprise that the pharmaceutical industry is the most profitable business in the country. American drug prices are the highest in the world, so more than a million Americans now buy their medications in Canada.

Personal import of prescription drugs is growing rapidly. Since the federal government won't take any action that opposes the interests of US drug manufacturers, it has fallen to the states to take action on behalf of their citizens.

Several states (Illinois, Kansas, Wisconsin, Missouri and Vermont) have joined forces in a purchasing program that imports prescription medications from overseas. Recently, Illinois Governor Rod R. Blagojevich announced that the State of Illinois will expand its innovative I-SaveRx drug importation program to state employees and dependents. The saving for employees and retirees alone is estimated at \$94.9 to \$112.9 million a year

The program is voluntary, not mandatory. Those who can find an even cheaper way to purchase a particular medication can do that. Those who have no choice will benefit—particularly seniors, those with disabilities, the uninsured and the underinsured.

Through its expansion of the program Illinois expects to reduce its annual prescription drug costs and reduce, and sometimes even eliminate, co-payments for state employees and dependents.

Hawaii residents can reap the same benefits. Please pass this bill so that Hawaii can join other states in the I-SaveRx program.

Larry Geller, President

Kokua Council

Kokua Council c/o Harris United Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard Blvd., Honolulu HI 96813, tel. 839-1545