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March 25, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Josh Green, M.D., Chair
House committee on Health

Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Chair
House Committee on Human Services and Housing

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: H.C.R. 187/H.R. 157 – REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF IMPLEMENTING A SMOKING CESSATION BENEFIT TO HAWAII QUEST BENEFICIARIES
Hearing: Tuesday, March 25, 2008, 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of these resolutions is to request the Department of Human Services to study the feasibility of implementing a smoking cessation benefit to Hawaii QUEST beneficiaries.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of these resolutions as the Medicaid QUEST and Medicaid Fee-For-Service programs already provide benefits for smoking dependence such as nicotine patches. In addition, at least two of the four Medicaid QUEST health plans cover smoking cessation counseling to Medicaid clients as an added benefit. The Department is amendable to conducting a feasibility study of developing and implementing a program to provide counseling treatment to all QUEST clients who wish to quit smoking.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on these resolutions.