



**LATE
Testimony**

**House Committee on Health
Representative Josh Green, MD, Chair & Representative John Mizuno, Vice Chair**

**House Committee on Human Services & Housing
Representative Mile Shimabukuro, Chair & Representative Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair**

Hearing schedule: March 25, 2008, 9:00 A.M., Conference Room 329

Re: HCR 187 / HR 147

Testimony in strong support of HCR 187 / HR 147

Chair's Green and Shimabukuro and members of the Committee on Health and the Committee on Human Services & Housing.. My name is George Massengale and I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HCR 187 & HR 147, which would urge the Department of Human Services to collect data and study the feasibility on implementing a smoking cessation benefit to Hawaii Quest beneficiaries wishing to quit smoking.

As most of committee members know that Coalition, worked diligently to gain passage of Act 295, Hawaii's Smoke-Free Law which our nation's gold standard. One of the key strategies in implementing the law after passage was ensuring that cessation resources would be available to all individuals who wish to quit. Studies have shown that smoking cessation rates improve when patients are afforded both counseling and pharmacological interventions.

There are approximately 108,000 recipients of Medicaid benefits in the State of Hawaii, including pregnant woman. Unfortunately, many women continue to smoke putting their unborn child at risk. Further, many women who would like to quit are not able to participate in pharmacological therapy due to their pregnancy. Hawaii is currently one of 38 states to offer pharmacological therapy to its Medicaid Quest recipients, while only 14 states have counseling benefit. Offering a structured counseling option would benefit women who smoke during pregnancy. Further, the Medicaid/Quest beneficiary group at large would also have another resource in assisting them to conquer nicotine addiction.

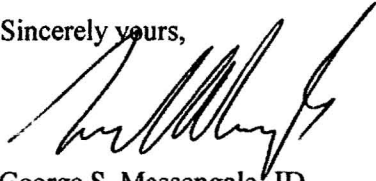
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We believe that once data has been collected and analyzed by the Department of Human Services it will demonstrate that savings in long term health care cost will be significant.

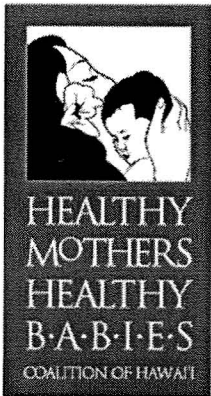
Thank you of the opportunity to testify here today on these important resolutions.

Sincerely yours,



George S. Massengale, JD
Policy Director

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HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES COALITION OF HAWAII

House Committee on Health

Representative Josh Green, MD, Chair & Representative John Mizumo, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee

House Committee on Human Services & Housing

Representative Maile Shimabukuro, Chair & Representative Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee

Hearing schedule: March 25, 2008, 9:00 am

RE: HCR 187/HR 147 **LATE TESTIMONY**

Testimony in strong support of HCR 187 / HR 147

Chair's Green and Shimabukuro and members of the Committee on Health and the Committee on Human Services & Housing.. My name is Jackie Berry, Executive Director of Healthy Mothers Health Babies Coalition of Hawaii, and I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HCR 187 & HR 147, which would urge the Department of Human Services to collect data and study the feasibility on implementing a smoking cessation benefit to Hawaii Quest beneficiaries wishing to quit smoking.

One of the key strategies in implementing Act 295 (Smoke Free Law) after passage was ensuring that cessation resources would be available to all individuals who wish to quit. Studies have shown that smoking cessation rates improve when patients are afforded both counseling and pharmacological interventions.

There are approximately 108,000 recipients of Medicaid benefits in the State of Hawaii, including pregnant woman. Unfortunately, many women continue to smoke putting their unborn child at risk. Further, many women who would like to quit are not able to participate in pharmacological therapy due to their pregnancy. Hawaii is currently one of 38 states to offer pharmacological therapy to its Medicaid Quest recipients, while only 14 states have counseling benefit. Offering a structured counseling option would benefit women who smoke during pregnancy. Further, the Medicaid/Quest beneficiary group at large would also have another resource in assisting them to conquer nicotine addiction.

We believe that once data has been collected and analyzed by the Department of Human Services it will demonstrate that savings in long term health care cost will be significant.

Thank you of the opportunity to submit late testimony today on these important resolutions.

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