



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

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

Hearing schedule: March 27, 2008, 10:45 A.M., Conference Room 329
Re: HCR 98 / HR 80

Testimony in strong support of HCR 98 / HR 80

Chair's Shimabukuro and Green and members of the Committee on Human Services & Housing, and the Committee on Health. My name is George Massengale and I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HCR 98 & HR 80, which would urge the Department of Human Services to collect data and report how counseling coverage could be provided to all Medicaid beneficiaries wishing to quit smoking.

Two days ago, the Coalition along with the Healthy Mothers Health Babies Coalition provided testimony on two very similar resolutions (HCR 187 & HR 147) before these two committees. After comparing the language of both sets of resolutions **we indicated a preference for HCR 187 & HR 147**, which was passed unamended.

We continue to note that studies have shown that smoking cessation rates improve when patients are afforded both counseling and pharmacological interventions, and that many pregnant women are among the 108,000 Medicaid recipients in Hawaii. Further many women who would like to quit are not able to participate in pharmacological therapy due to their pregnancy. Offering a structured counseling benefit would benefit this group as well as the Medicaid/Quest beneficiary group at large and drive down Hawaii's adult smoking rate of 17.5%

We are confident 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 related to smoking will be significant.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George S. Massengale". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

George S. Massengale, JD
Policy Director