

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

and

The Honorable David Y. Ige, Chair

Senate Committee on Health

Twenty-Fourth Legislature

State Capitol

State of Hawaii

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE:SB2541 RELATING TO DENTAL CARE

Dear Senator David Ige and Committee Members,

My Name is Howard Marks,

I am writing to you on behalf of both the East and West Hawaii Developmental Disabilities Committees, advisory committees to the Developmental Disabilities Council, comprised of self-advocates, family members, private and public service providers, and County agencies. I am also a member of the Hawaii Oral Health Task Force, which has prioritized supporting and developing the implementation of Hospital dentistry now for over three years. I respectfully ask for your support of SB 2541 Related to Dental Care.

Hawaii County residents who have Medicaid/Quest Insurance or are Low-Income Uninsured continue to have inadequate access to Dental Care. These include children (22,000), medically fragile, developmentally disabled, mentally ill and frail elderly. Hawaii County has the Federal Designation of a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) - based on the number of available and accessible professionals in an area that serve our low-income population.

The tragic and costly consequences of oral neglect are enormous. There are no state dental clinics to support acute dental services in the County of Hawaii. Currently the Big Island has no Pedodontists accepting Medicaid

People with developmental disabilities in the County of Hawaii requiring acute dental care in a hospital face great challenges accessing care in an appropriate and timely manner. Hospital Dentistry offers access to anesthesia. There is nowhere in the County

of Hawaii that can provide anesthesia and dental care for someone with developmental disabilities receiving Medicaid. This need has been identified as a major health priority by the Hawaii County Oral Health Task Force. Currently there is a three month waiting list at Queens Hospital, our only point of access for acute care for people who require hospital dentistry services. The many who are waiting are suffering. .

Hospital dentistry is critical in order to avoid the tragic and costly consequences of oral neglect. This bill will provide a cost effective means to assure that hospital dentistry services for acute care are available to our County's most vulnerable citizens.

According to data reported in the 2004 Hawaii Oral Health Profile, authored by the Dental Health Division, includes data reported by Community Case Management Corporation to the Med -Quest Division, Hawaii State Department of Human Services, from the years 2002-2004:

As reported in the year 2004, the number of "unique individuals" from Hawaii County receiving Medicaid projected to be transported off Island to receive dental services include 438 children. It was also projected in 2004, due to multiple trips needed for off island dental care, approximately 1,427 off island trips a were to be made by children to access dental care. This data does not include the number of inter-island trips requiring an attendant to assist the recipient. For example in 2003 86% of all trips included and accompanying attendant.

From 2002-2004 the data reports approximately 2,400 children traveled inter island for dental care. Over and 20% of these children required more than one round trip.

The current health disparity is a disservice to children and adults with developmental disabilities as well as wasteful disservice to the tax payers in our state.

We appreciate the Legislatures initiative through SB 2541 in addressing the dental needs of the DD population on the Big Island. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in strong support of SB 2541.

Sincerely,

Howard Marks

Program Specialist

References:

2004 Hawaii Oral health Profile Mark H. K. Greer, DMD., M.P.H, Dental Health Division, Hawaii State Department of Health, October, 2004 page 18

From: Jbrhawaii1@aol.com [mailto:Jbrhawaii1@aol.com]

Sent: Monday, January 28, 2008 9:26 PM

To: testimony

Subject: Testimony in Strong support of SB 2541

Bill No. **SB2541**

Bill Title: **Relating to Dental Care**

Report Title: **Medical Assistance; Adult Dental Care (\$)**

Committees: **Committee on Human Services and Public Housing**

Chair: **Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland**

Co-Chair: **Senator Les Ihara**

Committee on Health

Chair: **Senator David Y. Ige**

Co-Chair: **Senator Carol Fukunaga**

Hearing Date: January 30, 2008 (2:15pm)

Hearing Location: Conference Room 016

Testimony from: **Joseph Rattner OD, CSAC**

91-211 Makaina Place

Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706

808-685-6702

Representing: **Myself; Patients Living with AIDS and Disable in
Hawaii**

West Oahu Hope For A Cure Foundation

Aloha Senator Chun Oakland, Senator Ihara, Senator Ige, Senator Fukunaga and Committee Members,

My name is Joseph Rattner and I am honored to submit testimony in strong support of this essential Bill. I was personally affected due to the lack of Funding for Dental Care as a Patient on Medicaid or Quest.

I moved to Hawaii in 2002, already infected with HIV and with a severe Dental problem due to the medications, which I **must** take. This March 15th I will be diagnosed with the HIV infection for fifteen years.

I am a Licensed Optician and a Certified Substance Abuse Counselor. I needed to retire from my field of Optics when I moved to Hawaii from New Jersey 6 years ago. My dream of helping those at risk for and/or infected with the HIV Virus, as well as helping the Addicts at large learn new ways to live, has come true with the development of West Oahu Hope For A Cure Foundation. I now serve the Community as the Founder and Executive Director.

In leaving behind a job in which I was fully insured with Standard of Care services for my condition and secondary ailments related or not related to my condition, I found myself helpless to Hawaii's Medicaid and Quest program. I needed 17 teeth removed and a prosthesis made so I may speak, EAT, drink and nourish myself. This was so important, because I know how imperative it is to eat, speak, and live as a normal part of society.

You all did not see it that way. I needed to jump through hoops to get an award from The Ryan White Care Act Fund, in which they laid out over \$7,400.00 in 2002. I was still responsible to pay about \$3,100.00. Luckily, I had family to help pick up the extra funds.

By expanding the coverage on Hawaii's Medicaid and QUEST Programs, our lower income and disabled citizens can better their lives.

There comes a time when the State needs to step up to the plate with the Funding.

NOW IS THAT TIME!

I am also in support of the task force and Pilot Program to be implemented on the Big Island so that we know how to track the Dental Care and the Funds needed and the Funds saved by completing patients dental work.

Many conditions create dental issues. Some more than others. Living with HIV and the medications needed for me to survive, took a toll on my teeth. The disabled should not worry if they can go to a Dentist or not.

FOR THESE REASONS, I AM IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2541.

In conclusion, I humbly thank all of you for letting me share my views.

With much Aloha,

Joseph B. Rattner, OD, CSAC

Executive Director-WOHFAC

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Testimony in writing: A high recommendation to support and approve SB 2541 - Regarding Additional Dental Care Funding

To: The Committee On Health
State Sen. David Y. Ige, Chairman
State Sen. Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chairperson

To: The Committee on Human Services and Public Housing:
State Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chairperson
State Sen. Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chairman

From:
Andrew J. Tabar
2415 Ala Wai Blvd., Apt. 1801
Honolulu, HI 96815

For The Hearing scheduled for 1/30/2008, 1315 hrs, State Capitol

My written testimony: For your consideration, I highly recommend, support and approve SB 2541 regarding Dental Care

Honorable Senators,

As a health and safety advocate for HIV/AIDS direct services and HIV prevention for over 15 years, a past President of PWA Coalition Hawaii, Inc., former board member of The Life Foundation, and currently a volunteer with The FoodBasket, I write to you with a high recommendation in support of SB 2541. I hope to testify in person as well.

Within the last year, on O'ahu, it came to my attention that several persons living with HIV and AIDS were being delayed and/or denied comprehensive dental care. After I completed a benefits training workshop, I became aware of a program, PADD, Prevent Adult Dental Decay, the state made available to MEDICAID and Quest enrollees in 1996.

In November, I distributed a flyer to many within the community who are disabled and living with HIV/AIDS and who receive MEDICAID letting individuals know that monies are available for x-rays, cleanings, and some restorative work, including dentures, as per the existing individual funding caps. The flyer was and still is being well recieved.

SB 2541, as proposed, will make it possible to increase preventative and maintenance dental work for elible low income residents. As you know, proper oral health is an important component of general good health and well being. It is especially needed for those who are disabled and immune compromised.

I also believe the pilot program for the County of Hawai'i, as proposed in this legislation, is necessary for those who are need and for which there is no provider.

Should you need more information regarding my and many others who recently advocated for more monies through ACCT (AIDS Community Care Team), a lead agency for contract services under the Department of Health and for those who successfully petitioned the federal, state, and appropriate Life Foundation individuals for additional work regarding extensive dental care treatments to those in need since May of 2007 to the present, please contact me.

Thank you in advance, for your consideration,

Andrew J. Tabar, Health and Safety Advocate, Neighborhood Community and Condominium Board Association activist and volunteer

Telephone: 923 - 2639

LATE TESTIMONY

January 27, 2008

The Honorable David Y. Ige, Chairman,
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chairman
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING
Twenty-Fourth Legislature 2008
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: SB 2541 RELATING TO DENTAL CARE

Dear Senators Ige and Chun Oakland:

I am pleased to know that **SB 2541** has been scheduled for hearing by the Joint Senate Health and Human Services and Public Housing Committees.

The appropriation for hospital-based dentistry services for the County of Hawai'i is critical in helping to alleviate the on-going health care issues facing Medicaid and QUEST recipients. The current dental services do not meet the needs of those in our community who suffer from acute and emergency dental care.

The lack of hospital dentistry for Hawai'i island continues to be a major contributor to the needless suffering and neglect of our island residents who are unable to access dental services in an appropriate and timely manner. The practice of sending residents to O'ahu for emergency treatment only to be put on a wait list is unacceptable. No one should have to experience excruciating pain and suffering for any length of time before receiving dental attention. Needless to say, this is a serious health concern. Untreated dental diseases may lead to other major health issues including death.

The health and welfare of our people are at risk. I urge your support for **SB 2541**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hannah H. Pau", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Hannah H. Pau

LATE TESTIMONY

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY: IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2541 RELATING TO
DENTAL CARE**

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Senator David Y. Ige, Chair

Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Scott Orton

1130 Hassinger St. #3A

Honolulu, HI 96822

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Wednesday, January 30, 2008

TIME: 1:15 PM

PLACE: Conference Room 016

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY: IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2541 RELATING TO
DENTAL CARE**

Aloha Senator David Y. Ige, Chair, Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair,

**Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair, Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair, and Committee
Members,**

**I'm pleased and privileged to be hear to testify for this important measure. I am an
HIV/AIDS Awareness Advocate here in Honolulu, retired disabled due to HIV. And
as such, I have become very aware of the need for extra help, for disabled people
living with HIV, to get timely and appropriate dental care.**

**Bill SB 2541 Expands coverage under the State's medicaid and QUEST programs to
include comprehensive dental care for adults and appropriates funds to provide the
additional coverage. This will expand the current program and will help many more
people living with HIV to get services.**

In addition this bill establishes a pilot program in the county of Hawaii relating to hospital dentistry for the developmentally disabled community at large, and appropriates funds.

These provisions will help many of the HIV positive population here in Hawaii to partially pay for the high cost of tooth decay, and help with expensive medical costs associated with delaying needed dental work due to the clients inability to pay for services.

Medical Assistance and Adult Dental Care is extremely important with an immunity compromise brought on by HIV, and the drugs needed to take for this condition. Therefore it is very helpful to the community at large to support this much needed legislation.

IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2541

Love and Aloha,

Scott Orton, HIV/AIDS Awareness Advocate

Ph: 808-383-2016

Bcc: DaCoconutWireless Members and Others