

SB 3185

February 4, 2008



Committee on Health
The Honorable David Ige, Chair
The Honorable Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

LATE TESTIMONY

1:15 PM, Monday, February 4th
State Capitol, Room 016

RE: SB3185-Relating to Cancer

Dear Chair Ige and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jackie Young and I am the Chief Staff Officer, Mission, for the American Cancer Society Hawaii Pacific Inc. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB3185.

The American Cancer Society Hawaii Pacific Inc. strongly supports SB 3185 to appropriate funds for breast and cervical cancer screening through the Hawaii Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program.

In the state of Hawaii, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women regardless of race or ethnicity. When breast cancer is diagnosed at its earliest stage, survival rates are excellent. However, the survival rate falls to 78 percent when the cancer is detected at a regional stage and 23 percent when the cancer is detected at a late stage. Similarly, pap tests detect pre-cancerous lesions that can be treated before they progress to cervical cancer, resulting in a nearly 100 percent survival rate. As these statistics show, early detection of breast and cervical cancer is critical to saving lives.

The Hawaii Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program is a necessary and effective safety net program that provides free breast and cervical cancer screenings to women who are not otherwise able to afford or access these life-saving screenings because of insurance status or other barriers. Available through providers at nine sites throughout the state, this program is helping to improve health outcomes for some of our state's most vulnerable women. The American Cancer Society actively promotes this program to women in need who contact us about the availability of free breast or cervical cancer screening programs in their community.

State funding for this program is critical to ensure that eligible women who qualify for this program are able to receive screenings and follow-up services. In Hawaii, uninsured and underinsured women ages 50-64 who meet income criteria are eligible for screenings through this program. Through additional funding, other states are finding a way to screen women beginning at age 40, in accordance with Society screening guidelines. The American Cancer Society would be pleased to serve as a resource as opportunities to improve and expand the reach of this excellent program are explored. We urge you to pass this bill in order to increase the number of women who can access life-saving screenings through this program.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jackie Young
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