



Laura Manis Testifier

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COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 26, 1:15 pm. Room 016

SCR 25 CONVENING A TASK FORCE ON AGING TO STUDY THE NEED FOR AND FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A DEPARTMENT OF AGING.

SUPPORT with comments

Kokua Council whose mission includes advocating for the health of the elderly and those vulnerable populations who can not advocate for themselves supports this bill.

An exploration of the need for a cabinet level Department of Aging is well described in the resolution.

The scope and magnitude of issues facing the elderly requires cabinet level attention as are done in some other states.

Therefore, we do suggest an addition to the resolution to require the examination of the laws in other states, such as Maryland, which have recently developed a Department of Aging.

We also question whether the work of the taskforce can be done without funding.

We ask that you will support this bill.

Laura G. Manis, Legislative Chair, Kokua Council
tel. 597-8838

Hawai'i Alliance for Retired Americans

AFT Hawaii Retirees

HGEA Retirees

HSTA – Retired

ILWU Retirees

Kokua Council

Machinists Union Retirees

UPW Retirees

ADA/Hawaii

An affiliate of the Alliance for Retired Americans
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(Submitted via email, February 22, 2008, to testimony@capitol.hawaii.gov.)

Hearing by Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

February 26, 2008, 1:15 p.m. Conference Room 016

Joint statement of Al Hamai, President, and Carol Nitta, Legislative Committee Member, Supporting S.C.R. No. 25, Relating to the Task Force on Department of Aging

Chair Suzanne Chun Oakland and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

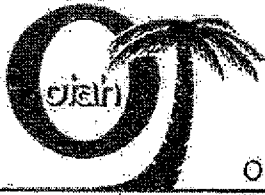
We are submitting testimony on behalf of the Hawaii Alliance for Retired Americans (HARA). HARA represents 17,000 retirees, members of the above organizations and individuals. We are a chapter of the Alliance for Retired Americans (ARA), a national advocacy organization for retirees.

On January 29 we submitted testimony in support SB 2152, which proposed a Task Force to consider establishing a Department of Aging. Now S.C.R. No. 25 proposes "Convening a Task Force on Aging to Study the Need for the Feasibility of Establishing a Department of Aging." HARA concurs with this S.C.R. and believes that this procedure will expedite the feasibility study.

One of the speakers of the HARA Convention on January 12, 2008 discussed her experiences while serving as one of several voluntary commissioners, appointed by the Maryland Governor, on the Maryland Department of Aging and how the Department was able to coordinate all aging activities in the state. Judith Cato, Executive Vice President of the Alliance of Retired Americans also pointed out that the Department had sufficient staff and funding to look at the aging issues and take appropriate action and/or recommend appropriate action by the state Legislature.

HARA supports S.C.R. No. 25 and urges your Committee to approve it. Mahalo.

Ke hana like nei na kupuna i 'oi loa a'e 'o Hawai'i
Senior citizens working together for a better Hawai'i



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII

1360 S. Beretania St., Suite 301, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

Written Testimony by:
Virginia Tully, OTR, MBA

**SCR25, Convening a Task Force on Aging to Study the Need for and Feasibility of Establishing a Department of Aging
Senate HSP Committee
Tuesday, Feb. 26, 2008
Room 016, 1:15 pm**

Position: Support Intent

Chair Sakamoto and Members of the Senate EDU Committee:

I am Virginia Tully, OTR, and President of OTAH. The Occupational Therapy Association of Hawaii (OTAH) represents 507 occupational therapists (OTs) licensed in Hawaii. OT's work in many settings throughout the State, including hospitals, schools, and prisons, to private facilities and community programs. We work with very young children, ages 0-3, as well as school aged children, adults, and the elderly, seeking to restore or develop social-emotional, physical, cognitive, communication and adaptive behavior challenges.

Through understanding of the effect of the consumer's disability, illness and impairment, the occupational therapist develops a program that will promote development and establish needed skills to be independent in daily living activities. Daily living skills include self-care such as bathing, dressing, and skills required for learning, work or social interaction. Often times, OTs must design/fabricate special devices or suggest modification to the home environment.

We note that there has been much legislation relating to programs for the aging population and consumers. It appears that many of the proposed programs are not part of a strategic plan but to meet specific identified needs. Thus, the proposed programs would reside or be managed by different departments within the State.

For these reasons, OTAH supports the intent of a Task Force and a coordinated approach via the exploration for the need of Department of Aging. We wholeheartedly support the wide representation of legislative and community leaders on the task force. In addition we offer the following suggestions:

1. The proposed Department of Aging is best placed under the Executive Office of Aging as this office should be aware of all state sponsored programs for the aged.
2. The services/programs that the task force identifies should be limited to those services/programs that the department will be able to fulfill in an expedient manner. Many aged individuals though relatively healthy, can't wait a few days or longer for a response. Many are fragile and their needs are immediate.
3. The task force should consider the development of a strategic plan to address the needs of the elderly. It will assist in prioritizing the needs of the elderly and the establishment of new programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I can be reached at 544-3336 if further information is needed.

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Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

**SCR25, CONVENING A TASK FORCE ON AGING TO STUDY THE NEED FOR AND
FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A DEPARTMENT OF AGING.**

**Testimony of Noemi Pendleton
Director of Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to Department of Health**

Tuesday, February 26, 2008

1:15 p.m.

- 1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health and the Executive Office on Aging appreciate
2 the intent of this senate concurrent resolution but have serious concerns and respectfully oppose it.
- 3 **Fiscal Implications:** Unknown
- 4 **Purpose and Justification:** The purpose of SCR25 is to convene a Task Force on Aging to
5 study the need for, feasibility of, and preliminary plans for a the consolidations of publicly-funded
6 programs and services that would appropriately fall within the jurisdiction of a new Department of
7 Aging. The concurrent resolution states that "the Executive Office on Aging currently coordinates
8 some of the programs and services available to Hawaii's older population; however, the scope and
9 magnitude of issues facing the elderly necessitates department level attention. A departmental
10 agency could better focus resources and personnel to address the multi-faceted needs of Hawaii's
11 older population." It requests that the Task Force on Aging, with the assistance of the Executive
12 Office on Aging, submit its findings and recommendations, including proposed legislation, to the
13 legislature no later than 20 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2009.

1 In order to accomplish what this concurrent resolution requests, any such task force would
2 need to gather extensive information and data, do an analysis of all programs for the elderly
3 offered by the State by all departments to determine what might be consolidated under the
4 proposed new department, study staff reassignments that would be necessary, determine what
5 programs would be possible to transfer to a newly-organized department, study how other states
6 have structured jurisdiction of elderly programs, study and propose staffing, operational budget,
7 organizational structure and all other items attending to creating a new executive department. It is
8 not possible for EOA to assist in the completion of the required report within the time period
9 proposed by this measure.

10 It is a priority of the Administration to effectively support Hawaii's elder population,
11 which is aging at 2.5 times the national rate. However, creating a new executive department is not
12 necessarily the most appropriate approach.

13 Thank you for this opportunity to testify.