

# HCR 109

**Measure  
Title:**

**REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO ASSESS  
THE SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL EFFECTS OF  
REQUIRING HEALTH INSURANCE  
COVERAGE FOR COLONOSCOPY  
COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING.**

**Report  
Title:**

**Colorectal Cancer; Mandatory  
Colonoscopy Coverage; Auditor Study**

**Testimony by:**  
**Cheri Teranishi-Hashimoto, DPT**



**HCR 109, Requesting the Auditor to Assess the Social  
And Financial Effects of Requiring Health Insurance Coverage for Colonoscopy Colorectal  
Cancer Screening**

**Sen HTH/CPN, April 23, 2009**

**Room 229, 10:00 am**

**Position: Support**

**Chair Ige and Baker, and Members of the Sen HTH/CPN Committee:**

I am Cheri Teranishi-Hashimoto, D.P.T., and a member of HAPTA's Legislative Committee. The Hawaii Chapter – American Physical Therapy Association (HAPTA) is comprised of 300 member physical therapists and physical therapist assistants employed in hospitals and health care facilities, the Department of Education and Department of Health systems, and private practice. Our members represent Hawaii at the national American Physical Therapy Association and are delegates for Pediatrics, Women's Health, Parkinson's Disease and other issue sections. We are part of the spectrum of care for Hawaii, and provide rehabilitative services for infants and children, youth, adults and the elderly. Rehabilitative services are a vital part of restoring optimum function from neuromusculoskeletal injuries and impairments.

HAPTA strongly supports HCR 109, which is a pre-requisite for mandating health insurance coverage for a specific health service. Colorectal cancer is the 3rd most common form of cancer, and it is the 2nd leading cause of cancer related death in the western world. The American Cancer Society 2008 Report states that the estimated new cancer cases and deaths in the U.S. pertaining to the colon/rectal regions were: 151,880 new cases and 50,640 estimated deaths.

The good news is that colorectal cancer is highly curable through early detection and treatment in the early stages, as with most cancers detected by screens (e.g., mammograms for breast cancer) that are covered by insurance carriers. However, only 21 states have laws mandating colonoscopy coverage, and other states usually cover colonoscopies if there are symptoms that warrant a screen.

According to the 2007 Colorectal Cancer Legislation Report Card, Hawaii was given an "F" rating, which means we do not have legislation in place that requires insurance providers to cover preventative colorectal cancer screenings.

Treatment of colorectal cancer can vary: surgery, chemotherapy, or radiation. After treatment, the individual may experience fecal incontinence (inability to control bowel movements). These individuals that experience fecal incontinence may be treated by a physical therapist trained in pelvic floor rehabilitation. When colorectal cancer is caught in the earlier stages there may be a decrease risk of damage to the anal sphincter and pelvic floor region through surgical interventions, radiation and other treatment options pursued.

I may be reached at 432-5872 if there are any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.



April 22, 2009

Committee on Health  
Senator David Ige, Chair  
Senator Josh Green, M.D., Vice Chair

Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection  
Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair  
Senator David Ige, Vice Chair

**Hearing:**

10:00 A.M. Thursday, April 23, 2009  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 229

**RE: HCR109, Requesting a State Auditor's Study**

**Testimony in Strong Support**

Chairs Ige and Baker, and members of the joint committees. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this resolution, which would direct the state auditor to study/assess the social and financial impact of required health insurance coverage for colorectal cancer screening using colonoscopy.

As the committees are aware we've provided extensive testimony in support of SB430 and the House companion measure HB823 which would have mandated health insurance coverage for colorectal cancer screening as outlined by the latest American Cancer Society colorectal screening guideline of May 2008.

The only points I would like reiterate here today are the costs associated with colorectal cancer treatment versus the cost of prevention. The cost of treating colorectal cancer varies. When detected early the cost is between \$30,000 and \$35,000. If detected late the average cost is in excess of \$150,000. The cost for providing colorectal cancer screening is extremely low when compared to the cost of treatment. **The per member per month cost of colonoscopy every 10 years is 55¢, while the per member per month cost of a fecal occult blood test with flexible sigmoidoscopy performed annually is 66¢.**

In closing we note that today 25 states offer mandated colorectal cancer screening coverage. Analysis conducted by the Society shows that colorectal cancer screening rates have risen faster and are significantly higher in states that have enacted colorectal cancer screening legislation.

We strongly encourage this committee to vote to pass this resolution. We are confident that the state auditor will conclude that providing this coverage is cost effective, and that it will save lives. **Let's put this cancer in the medical history books**, by eventually offering colonoscopy cancer screenings to everyone.

Once again, thank you for giving us the opportunity to testify on behalf of colorectal cancer screening.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Massengale".

George Massengale, JD  
Director of Government Relations

American Cancer Society Hawai'i Pacific, Inc., 2370 Nu'uauu Avenue, Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-1714  
●Phone: (808) 595-7500 ●Fax: (808) 595-7502 ●24-Hour Cancer Info: (800) 227-2345 ●<http://www.cancer.org>

# HMSA



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April 23, 2009

The Honorable David Ige, Chair  
The Honorable Rosalyn Baker, Chair

Senate Committees on Health and Commerce and Consumer Protection

**Re: HCR 109 – Requesting the Auditor to Assess the Social and Financial Effects of Requiring Health Insurance Coverage for Colonoscopy Colorectal Cancer Screening.**

Dear Chair Ige, Chair Baker and Members of the Committees:

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify on HCR 109 which requests the Auditor to assess the social and financial effects of requiring health insurance coverage for colonoscopy colorectal cancer screening.

HMSA recognizes the importance of our members receiving appropriate screenings in order to detect illnesses in their early and treatable stages. At this time HMSA's HMO and PPP plans both provide coverage for colon cancer screenings according to recognized national guidelines.

In addition, we believe that prior to passing any new legislation which would require health plans to provide benefits not currently covered in their plan offerings, the Legislature should request an Auditor's study as required under Hawaii Revised Statutes 23-51 and 23-52. This study will provide decision-makers with objective information prior to including these new benefits. With health care costs continuing to escalate it is important to consider the impact that requiring such benefits will have on the cost of health care, especially for local employers who typically bear the brunt of such cost increases.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HCR 109.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JD", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jennifer Diesman  
Assistant Vice President  
Government Relations