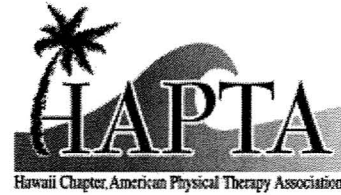


Testimony by:  
Lucy Lessard, PT



**HCR12/HR16, Requesting the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Governor to Create a Home for Life Task Force to Reduce Barriers to Aging in Place and to Facilitate Multigenerational Living**  
**Hse HLT/HUS Hearing – Tues. March 17, 2009**  
**Room 329 – 10:45 am**

**Position: Support**

Chair Yamane and Mizuno, and Members of the Hse HLT/HUS Committees:

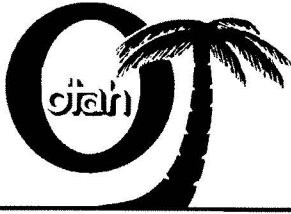
I am Lucy Lessard, P.T., and Chair of the HAPTA Legislative Committee and member of the Hawaii Chapter – American Physical Therapy Association (HAPTA). The Hawaii Chapter – American Physical Therapy Association (HAPTA) is comprised of 300 member physical therapists and physical therapist assistants employed 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.

We support this creation of a life task force to reduce barriers to aging in place and to facilitate multigenerational living. As PTs throughout the State, we see Hawaii’s older generation living longer and staying at home more often than in other states. We see that there is a chronic lack of long term care, and it is in our collective best interest to keep these citizens in their homes as long as possible.

However, we also see many elders living in unsafe situations due a combination of their impairments and disabilities and the design of their lodging. Elders have unique impairments that require special design elements above and beyond adaptations in order to keep them safe and prevent injuries. Physical therapists, through training and education, have unique skills in dealing with elders who are healthy, impaired and disabled to keep them supported in their homes.

We are very interested in participating in the Task Force and look forward to working with all stakeholders on this important issue. I can be reached at (808) 547-6292 if there are any questions.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.



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**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII**

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

**Testimony by:**

**Virginia Tully, OTR, MBA**

**HCR 12/HR16, Requesting the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Governor to Create a Home for Life Task Force to Reduce Barriers to Aging in Place and to Facilitate Multigenerational Living**  
**House HLT/HUS Hearing – Tues. March 17, 2009**

**Room 329 – 10:45 am**

**Position: Support Intent, with Amendments**

Chair Yamane and Mizuno, and Members of the House HLT/HUS Committees:

I am Virginia Tully, OTR, and past-president of the Occupational Therapy Association of Hawaii, (OTAH), which 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.

Occupational therapy practitioners assist patients/clients with planning and improving their home environment to promote independence within the home. We support the intent of the resolution.

**Suggested Amendment:** We suggest including the Occupational Therapy Association of Hawaii, which is an affiliate of the American Occupational Therapy Association.

**Rationale:** Occupational therapy (OT) promotes participation in the home and community by restoring, maintaining skills needed for activities of daily living (ADL). ADL skills include self-care skills, meal preparation, etc.

OTs evaluate the skills of the patient/client and the environmental features that support or limit performance of skills at home. Based on patient/client assessment, OT recommends modification that will improve the environment to support independence and safety within the home.

OTs supports environmental design that removes barriers to allow the individual to be independent and safe at home. Occupational therapists assist patients/clients in identifying these barriers and recommend modifications as appropriate.

The OTAH offers its expertise and participation in the proposed Task Force. I can be reached at 544-3336 if further information is needed.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Joint House Committee on Health and Human Services  
Tuesday, March 17, 2009 at 10:45 am  
by  
Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor  
and  
Dr. Kathryn Braun, Interim Director  
University of Hawai'i Center on Aging

**RE: H.C.R. No. 12/H.R. No. 16, REQUESTING THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND THE GOVERNOR TO CREATE A HOME FOR LIFE TASK FORCE TO REDUCE BARRIERS TO AGING IN PLACE AND TO FACILITATE MULTIGENERATIONAL LIVING.**

Chairs Yamane and Mizuno, and Members of the Joint Committee,

My name is Dr. Kathryn Braun, Interim Director of the University of Hawai'i Center on Aging, and I am testifying in support of the intent this measure.

These resolutions request the establishment of a Home for Life Task Force to coordinate research and action to reduce barriers to aging in place and to facilitate multigenerational living. These resolutions also requests the University of Hawai'i Center on Aging to convene the first meeting of the Home for Life Task Force and provide any possible assistance to the work of the Task Force.

The UH Center on Aging currently has a contract with the Executive Office on Aging (EOA) to be the statewide coordinator for the Caregiver's Resource Initiative. The objectives stated in these resolutions appropriately fits within the scope of work of this contract. Therefore, we will gladly work with the Home for Life Task Force to meet their objectives.

However, please note that if this contract is discontinued, we will be unable to perform the duties as directed by these resolutions as we will not have the resources to do so.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

# Hawai'i Alliance for Retired Americans

An affiliate of the Alliance for Retired Americans  
c/o AFSCME · 888 Mililani Street, Suite 101 · Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

*AFT Retirees  
HGEA Retirees  
HSTA – Retired  
ILWU Retirees  
Kokua Council  
Machinists Union Retirees  
UPW Retirees  
ADA/Hawaii  
Hawaii Family Caregivers Coalition*

(Submitted by email to: [HLTtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:HLTtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov) March 15, 2009)

Comments of Al Hamai, President, Supporting HCR 12 and HR 16 Relating to  
creating a Home for Life Task Force

Hearing by House Committees on Health and on Human Resources  
March 17, 2009, 10:45 a.m. Conference Room 329

Chair Ryan I. Yamada and Members, Committee on Health and  
Chair John Mizuno, and Members, Committee on Human Resources

HARA strongly supports HCR 12 and HR 16. HARA has nine  
affiliates, listed on this letterhead, representing 21,000 members.

The purpose of these two resolutions is to establish a Home for Life  
Task Force to reduce barriers for aging in place and to facilitate  
multigenerational living.

The HARA concurs with the purpose. We know that living and aging  
in the same familiar and comfortable home is the goal for a great  
many seniors. Seniors want to remain in their own homes for long as  
possible, even as they may need some help. Adoption of these  
resolutions will be a strong policy statement by this legislature that it  
believes that helping people age in place and promoting  
multigenerational living is a significant and forward looking public as  
well as social policy.

HARA urges the two committees to approve HCR 12 and HR 16.  
Mahalo.

*HARA is a strong voice for Hawaii's retirees and seniors; a diverse community-based  
organization with national roots; a grassroots organizer, educator, and communicator; and a  
trusted source of information for decision-makers.*

**nishimoto2-Bryce**

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**From:** manis [manis@lava.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 11:00 AM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony HCR 12  
**Attachments:** HCR 12 home for life

Hawaii's Voice for a Better Future  
597-8838

Testifier: Laura Manis, tel.

HCR 12 Relating to creating a Home for Life Task Force

Hearing by House Committees on Health and on Human Resources  
March 17, 2009, 10:45 a.m. Conference Room 329

Chair Ryan I. Yamada and Members, Committee on Health Chair John Mizuno, and Members,  
Committee on Human Resources

HCR 12 REQUESTING THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
AND THE GOVERNOR TO CREATE A HOME FOR LIFE TASK FORCE TO REDUCE BARRIERS TO AGING IN PLACE  
AND TO FACILITATE MULTIGENERATIONAL LIVING.

STRONGLY SUPPORT

The purpose of this resolution is to establish a Home for Life Task Force to reduce barriers  
for aging in place and to facilitate multigenerational living.

Kokua Council concurs with the purpose. This resolution fits our mission to shape the well-  
being of our community and advocate for seniors.

We know that living and aging in the same familiar and comfortable home is the goal for a  
great many seniors. Seniors want to remain in their own homes for long as possible, even as  
they may need some help.

Removing barriers to multigenerational living fits our culture at the same time assuring care  
for family members of all ages who need help or supervision a win/win situation for families  
and the state.

Laura Manis, Legislative Chair  
Kokua Council, 597-8838

## nishimoto2-Bryce

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2009 1:51 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Cc:** Tlenzer@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HCR12 on 3/17/2009 10:45:00 AM

Testimony for HLT/HUS 3/17/2009 10:45:00 AM HCR12

Conference room: 329  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Anthony Lenzer  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 222 Kuukama St. Kailua, HI  
Phone: 261-2095  
E-mail: [Tlenzer@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:Tlenzer@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 3/15/2009

### Comments:

My name is Anthony Lenzer. I am a Professor Emeritus of public health and former Director of the Center on Aging at the University of Hawaii I am also a member of the ad hoc working group which drafted the proposal for the home for life task force. I am testifying in strong support of HCR 12 and HR 16.

These resolutions would create a legislatively-endorsed task force to deal with three issues: (1) reducing physical barriers to enable persons with disabilities and frail elders to remain in their own homes as long as possible; (2) encouraging adoption of Universal design principles in new and retrofitted housing; and (3) facilitating multi-generational housing.

Why are these issues important? Consider the first issue, reducing physical barriers in the home. Hawaii's population is aging rapidly, and medical science is enabling many persons with severe disabilities to live longer, often in to their later years. With regard to housing, the majority of these older people own their own homes. They are typically single-family dwellings built many years ago. Many local and national studies indicate that older people want to remain in their own homes as long as possible. Yet a combination of factors makes this increasingly difficult. On the one hand, as people age, they develop impairments and physical limitation's. On the other, homes constructed in the 1950s and 60s are often not physically suitable for persons who are frail or disabled. Evidence for this is found in the State Department of Health's injury prevention and control program report of September 2009: "every five hours in Hawaii, a senior suffers a fall injury so serious that they must be hospitalized. Among seniors in Hawaii, falls are the leading cause of fatal injuries, injury related hospitalizations, and hospitalizations for traumatic brain injury. they are a major threat to the independence and quality of life of seniors." And, needless to say, avoiding hospitalization and placement in long-term care facilities is also critically important as a way to preserve the State's limited funding for health care services. Retrofitting older homes to make them more comfortable and safe is, therefore, a critical task. And it is worth noting that, due to the state's economic difficulties, a large proportion of the workforce in the construction trades is currently unemployed. While this is an unfortunate circumstance, it is also an opportunity, perhaps, to find more reasonably priced resources to modify older homes.

Universal design is a way to create products and environments which can be used by everyone, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptations or specialized design. Some

of the more common features of Universal design houses are: no-step entry; one story living; wide doorways and hallways; non-slip floors; good lighting; and lever door handles. Universal design homes provide more comfortable living for people with and without disabilities. Many of these features can be retrofitted into existing homes, and all can be included in new construction. Thus, Universal design facilitates aging in place.

Recent studies indicate that Hawaii has a higher proportion of multi-generational households than the national average. This is understandable, given the extremely high cost of both home ownership and rental housing in Hawaii. In fact, for the past three years, Hawaii has had the highest average rents in the nation (Census Bureau data reported in the Honolulu Advertiser, September 23, 2008). Thus, many younger people move in with their parents for a period of time until they are able to find housing which they can afford. Adult children also live with their parents to facilitate caregiving. A 2007 Hawaii study found that one fourth of the state's 118,000 adults who were caregivers for elderly parents lived in the same household as their parents (State of Hawaii family caregiver needs assessment. Prepared for the Joint Legislative Committee on Family Caregiving. December 2007). Some multi-generational households have been created using Hawaii's Ohana zoning regulations. However, our initial review indicates that these regulations contain many restrictions which create serious barriers to the generations living together in a way which maintains the independence and privacy of all members of the household.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the committee to support these resolutions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.