



## MedImmune

April 3, 2009

Chair Ryan Yamane  
Vice Chair Scott Nishimoto  
House Committee on Health  
Friday, April 3, 10:30 a.m.

Testimony in Strong Support of HCR 290 and HR 262

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Amy Hamerton, Government Affairs Manager for MedImmune. We urge your support of House Concurrent Resolution 290 and House Resolution 262. MedImmune, a leading biotechnology company, is dedicated to advancing science and medicine to help people live better lives. Our company has historically been committed to developing novel drug compounds within the areas of infectious diseases, with a focus on pediatric conditions, inflammatory disease and oncology.

The most effective strategy for preventing influenza is annual vaccination. Both the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommend annual influenza vaccination of all children aged six months to 18 years beginning with the 2008-09 influenza season. According to the ACIP recommendations, annual vaccination of all children aged six months through 18 years of age should begin as soon as vaccine is available for the 2008-09 influenza season, and should be initiated no later than the 2009-10 season.

It is important for state health departments and public health agencies to focus on building awareness of annual influenza vaccination for children in order to foster acceptance and improve vaccination rates. According to the ACIP, strategies that focus on providing routine vaccination to persons at higher risk for influenza complications have long been recommended, but rates of influenza vaccination among the majority of these groups remains low.<sup>1</sup>

During the 2007-2008 influenza season, there were 87 reported pediatric deaths caused by influenza in the United States.<sup>2</sup> Influenza is the most frequent cause of death for a vaccine-preventable disease in the United States and is responsible for an average of 200,000 hospitalizations each year and an estimated 36,000 deaths, primarily in the elderly.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> CDC-ACIP (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices). Prevention and Control of Influenza. Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). *MMWR* 2008 Aug 8; (RR-7) Final Release:1-60.

<sup>2</sup> 2007-08 CDC. Flu Activity. Available at <http://cdc.gov/flu/weekly/reference>. Accessed October 21, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Thompson WW, Shay DK, Weintraub E, et al. Influenza-associated hospitalizations in the united states. *JAMA* 2003;282:1333-1340.

According to the AAP, the ACIP's expanded recommendations target all school-aged children, which is the population that bears the greatest burden of disease and is at higher risk of needing influenza-related medical care compared with healthy adults. Moreover, the AAP states that reducing influenza transmission among school-aged children will in turn reduce transmission of influenza to household contacts and community members.<sup>4</sup>

Influenza vaccine should be offered to all children as soon as vaccine becomes available and continue throughout the season into March and sometimes beyond as there may be more than one peak in influenza illness during the same season. The AAP states that vaccination should occur through May 1<sup>st</sup> to provide protection and widen the window of opportunity for children who need two doses of vaccine.<sup>4</sup>

School-based vaccination is an efficient venue for the mass vaccination of school-age children against influenza. Moreover, school-based vaccination programs benefit the communities in which they are conducted by helping reduce transmission of influenza to other members of the community.<sup>5</sup> The potential threat of an influenza pandemic underscores the benefit of building local infrastructure and strengthening community partnerships as a preventive measure to address both seasonal influenza and the event of pandemic.

Please pass HCR 290 and HR 262 and help us continue important community immunization efforts in Hawaii. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

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<sup>4</sup> AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics). Policy Statement. Prevention of influenza: Recommendations for influenza immunization of children, 2008-2009. *Pediatrics* 2008;122:1-7.

<sup>5</sup> Piedra PA, Gaglani MJ, Kozinetz CA, et al. Herd immunity in adults against influenza-related illnesses with use of the trivalent-live attenuated influenza vaccine (CAIV-T) in children. *Vaccine*. 2005;23:1540-1548.

## nishimoto2-Bryce

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**From:** jsj@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 02, 2009 10:02 AM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** COMMENDING THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON IMMUNIZATION PRACTICES FOR ITS RECOMMENDATION TO IMMUNIZE ALL CHILDREN AGES SIX MONTHS THROUGH AGE EIGHTEEN BEGINNING JULY 1, 2009.

Attention Chair Ryan Yamane and Vice Chair Scott Nishimoto and the House Committee on Health

This testimony is for the House Health Committee on Friday, April 3, 10:30 a.m. - for HCR 290 and HR 262. Attention Clerk: Please make three copies and deliver appropriately. Thank you

U.S. Influenza activity is has been on the rise. In the week of March 1 to 7, CDC received reported four additional deaths of U.S. children from flu complications. The total of reported pediatric influenza deaths this season in the United States currently is at 26.

Thirty-five states have reported widespread influenza activity - up from 31 reported during the week of February 22 to 28.

Yearly vaccination is the first and most important step in protecting against influenza and its complications. HCR 290 and HR 262 appropriately highlights and acknowledges the importance of the flu vaccination in Hawaii and the need to continue funding for school-based programs.

Subject: Testimony in Strong Support of HCR 290 and HR 262 - Commending the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices for its recommendation to immunize all children ages six months through age eighteen beginning July 1, 2009.

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and members of the committee,

My name is Judy Strait-Jones. I am the President of the Hawaii Immunization Coalition, a non profit agency that works to insure that all persons across the lifespan are appropriately vaccinated against influenza and other deathly vaccine-preventable diseases. The Hawaii Immunization Coalition would like to provide its support for HCR 290 and HR 262. The mission of the Hawaii Immunization Coalition is to promote effective strategies to ensure that all of Hawaii's families are appropriately vaccinated against vaccine-preventable diseases. Other information about the coalition's work can be located at [www.immunizehawaii.com](http://www.immunizehawaii.com).

Each year, more than 200,000 persons are hospitalized from complications from the flu in the United States and more than 36,000 persons die, including many children, many who are otherwise healthy.

Vaccinating every year against the flu is one of the most critical preventive actions a family can take. It protects our children and the grandmas and grandpas who often live in extended family environments. HCR 290 and HR 262 highlights and acknowledges the importance of annual influenza vaccinations encourages funding to ensure that our the STOP FLU in SCHOOLS program continues. School-based clinics are an important part of protecting Hawaii's families.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify.

Should there be any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [jsj@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:jsj@hawaii.rr.com).

Signed:  
Judy Strait-Jones

President  
Hawaii Immunization Coalition