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Subject: SB 932 SD1

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Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

SB 932 SD1. Relating to Infectious Disease Testing

Thursday, February 26, 2009. 9:00 am.

Room 016

Chair Person: Senator Taniguchi

My name is Al Katz. I am a public health faculty member at the John A. Burns School of Medicine, but I do not represent the School of Medicine or the University of Hawaii. I speak for myself as a concerned and informed public health professional. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 932 SD1. This bill will allow for expanded HIV testing by health care professionals but will also protect the confidentiality of the patient. This bill has been drafted in consultation with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and a wide array of health care and public health professionals in Hawaii. Of utmost importance, this bill does not reduce the protections available under Hawaii law.

Protections in place include all of the following:

- *Health care providers must inform patients about the HIV test and afford the opportunity for the patient to decline the test
- *HIV testing will remain voluntary, confidential and afford the patient the right to learn their HIV status
- *HIV confidentiality and constitutional privacy rights are strictly protected by HRS 325-101
- * Medical records and any disclosure of medical information requires written patient consent
- * Routine testing will help reduce the stigma of testing based only on risk behavior

By reducing the barriers that currently surround HIV testing, we will be able to allow physicians and other clinicians the ability to offer HIV testing on a more routine basis and will allow Hawaii the opportunity to be more in step with CDC's HIV testing recommendations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 932.

Sincerely,

Alan R. Katz, MD, MPH

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