

SCR 5



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
OFFICE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS

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TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Honorable Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Human Services

FROM: Serafin "Jun" Colmenares, Executive Director, Office of Language Access

RE: **Testimony in Support of SCR5 / SR8**
Hearing: March 5, 2009, 1:15 p.m., Conference Room 016

I. OVERVIEW OF CURRENT PROPOSED LEGISLATION

SCR5 and its companion measure SR8 urge the legislature to request the State Executive Office on Aging and the Center on Aging at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to continue their research and analyses of unresolved issues relating to aging and to report on their findings before the Regular Session of 2010. This includes developing a cash and counseling model; determining how best to compensate caregivers for respite services; determining best practices; enhancing funding from all sources for Medicaid and Medicare services; determining how to accommodate language barriers and overcome access to long-term care services barriers; and identifying funding sources.

II. SCR5 / SR8

The Office of Language Access supports the intent of SCR5 and its companion measure SR8.

Almost 35%, or more than 45,000 people, of the limited English proficient (LEP) population in Hawaii (130, 761) are elderly (60 years and above), according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2006 American Community Survey. The availability of language access through an interpreter or bilingual caregiver staff is a vital component for Hawai'i's aging LEP population as they seek to understand and make decisions on their health care. The OLA supports the intent of these measures to the extent that they further the goals of the state Language Access Law (enacted by the Legislature in 2006 and signed into law by Governor Lingle) to ensure meaningful access to state-funded services, programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

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Senate Committee on Human Services

**S.C.R. 5/S.R. 8 Requesting a Study of Various Unresolved Issues Relating to Aging
Testimony of Noemi Pendleton
Director of Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to Department of Health**

March 5, 2009

1:15 p.m. Conference Room 016

1 **Department's Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA) supports the intent of these
2 measures.

3 **Fiscal Implications:** None

4 **Purpose and Justification:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA) currently has a contract with
5 the University of Hawaii Center on Aging to be the statewide coordinator for the Caregiver's
6 Resource Initiative. The objectives stated in these resolutions appropriately fit within the scope of
7 work of this contract. There are funds in EOA's base budget in the Executive Biennium Budget
8 proposal to support this effort, so we will gladly work with the Center on continued research and
9 analysis.

10 However, please note that if these funds are eliminated from EOA's budget, we will be unable to
11 perform the duties as directed by these resolutions.

12 Thank you for this opportunity to testify.