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In reply, please refer to:
File:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE
HCR 124, REQUESTING AN INVESTIGATION OF TEETH WHITENING
VENDORS

Testimony of Chiyome Leinaala Fukino, M.D.
Director of Health

March 24, 2010

- 1 **Department's Position:** The Department opposes this request.
- 2 **Fiscal Implications:** The unbudgeted expense of this study would be considerable.
- 3 **Purpose and Justification:** This proposal requests a study and report following an investigation of
- 4 teeth whitening vendors and their impact on public health. It's understood that concerns have been
- 5 raised with the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs and Legislature by individuals, health
- 6 professional associations and the State Board of Dental Examiners over the business practices and safety
- 7 of teeth whitening vendors who are under-trained and unlicensed to practice dentistry in the State of
- 8 Hawaii. However, while the Department of Health shares many of the concerns raised, we lack the
- 9 financial and manpower resources necessary to evaluate the impact of unregulated teeth bleaching
- 10 vendors on the public.

11 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this request.

Hawaii State Legislature
State House of Representatives
Committee on Consumer Protection
and Commerce

Representative Robert N. Herkes, Chair
Representative Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Wednesday, March 24, 2010, 2:05 p.m. Room 329
House Concurrent Resolution 124 Requesting an Investigation of Teeth Whitening Vendors

Honorable Chair Robert N. Herkes, Vice Chair Glenn Wakai and
members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce,

My name is Russel Yamashita and I am the legislative representative for the Hawaii Dental Association and its 965 member dentists. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of House Concurrent Resolution 124 Requesting an Investigation of Teeth Whitening Vendors. The resolution before you today would seek to conduct an investigation in the practices of those engaged in teeth whitening without proper training or experience in protecting the public.

The only concern the HDA has with this resolution is the agency which is being tasked to perform the investigation. The HDA believes that the Department of Health would not be able to conduct such an activity, but would suggest that the Legislative Reference Bureau may be better equipped to carry out such a task.

The HDA has continued express its concerned over the activities of teeth whitening operations at kiosks and now at swap meets. The most over riding concern is the safety of the public and is troubled by the lack of any training of basic hygiene covering AIDS, Norovirus, TB, Hepatitis B and C, or any other disease that may be encountered when dealing with patients.

Additionally, since the employees of the kiosk operators have no apparent training in medical or dental procedures, there is a concern that these employees could be exposed to medical waste or disease bearing trays with out proper training or understanding the risks involved in their "simple" tasks. The employees could unwittingly take a serious medical situation home with them to their own families and easily pass it on to the next customer at the kiosk.

Therefore, the HDA and its members urge your favorable consideration of this resolution and I thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of this resolution.