

From: Noda Lojkar - Consul General [mailto:rmi.consulate@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2010 10:26 AM
Subject: RE: HR #25

In support 100%

From: brower1-Traci [mailto:brower1@capitol.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2010 10:15 AM
To: 'Noda Lojkar'
Subject: RE: HR #25

Aloha Mr. Lojkar,

Is your testimony in support or against the measure?

Thank you,
Traci

Traci Toguchi
Committee Clerk, Human Services Committee
Rep. Tom Brower's Office
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 315
Honolulu, HI 96813
(808) 586-8574 Direct
(808) 586-8524 Fax

From: Noda Lojkar [mailto:rmi.consulate@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2010 9:56 AM
To: HUSTestimony
Subject: HR #25

I would like to testify on behalf of the Marshall Islands Government concerning HR 25

Noda Lojkar
Consul General
Republic of the Marshall Islands

House Resolution #25
Human Services and Health Committee
Thursday, March 18 at 10:30 am Room#329

Mr. Noda Lojkar
Consul General
Republic of the Marshall Islands

Tele: (808) 545-7767
Fax : (808) 5457211

Testimony to the Hawaii State Legislature, 2010

Testimony of Kelley Withy, President of Hawaii State Rural Health Association

3/2010

The Hawaii State Rural Health Association would like to express our strongest support for HR25 regarding health care.

We have conducted published research on the rural health care needs across the State and found that while all communities are unique, there are some themes that are common throughout the state. Needs that are commonly identified in our rural and underserved communities include:

1. **Financial assistance (insurance coverage, medication, free services)**
2. Expanding services that are available to rural communities (including telehealth, CHCs, community services)
3. **Improving access to available services** (Long term care, primary care, specialty care, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, health care training and other services)
4. Decreasing drug use
5. Increasing health education and training opportunities for community members
5. Increasing the number of health care providers working in rural areas
6. Increasing cultural sensitivity of providers

Without insurance coverage, our Micronesian brothers and sisters will suffer greatly, overload our emergency care system and live poorer, less healthy lives without the services that they need. This will hurt all of us and must be avoided.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Kelley Withy, MD, PhD
President, Hawaii State Rural Health Association

HAWAII DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER

900 Fort Street Mall, Suite 1040, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone/TTY: (808) 949-2922 Toll Free: 1-800-882-1057 Fax: (808) 949-2928

E-mail: info@hawaiidisabilityrights.org Website: www.hawaiidisabilityrights.org

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2010

**Committee on Human Services
Committee on Health**

**Testimony in Support of HR 25/HCR 65
Thursday, March 18, 2010, 10:30 A.M.
Conference Room 309**

Chair Mizuno, Chair Yamane and Members of the Committees:

I am Louis Erteschik, Staff Attorney at the Hawaii Disability Rights Center, and am testifying in support of these Resolutions.

We have been very supportive of the residents of the COFA nations and their struggle to obtain vital medical services. We have supported the efforts of the state legislature in this regard as well as the litigation in the federal and state courts. Having stated that, we certainly agree with all who have taken the position that this really is a national and international problem that needs to be addressed. The problems that led to the creation of the Compact were not caused by the state of Hawaii. For those reasons, these issues should be addressed by the US Congress, not the state of Hawaii. Additionally, as the Resolution states, it would be most appropriate to provide dialysis and chemotherapy centers in these nations so that some of those residents would not need to travel to the United States to obtain medical care.

While we support these Resolutions, we hope this will not be the extent of the involvement of the legislature this session on this issue. We note that bills were heard in both chambers providing state assistance to these individuals. While these bills advanced from the subject matter committees, they do not seem to have emerged from the financial committees. We have concern as to whether the federal government will "step up" and provide the need assistance. For those reasons, we hope the state legislature will act to provide some relief in the meantime.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this Concurrent Resolution.

To: The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair of the House Committee on Human Services
The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair of the House Committee on Health

From: Edwina Minglana, Director of Employment Services
Laura Robertson, President/CEO
Goodwill Industries of Hawaii, Inc.

Date: March 17, 2010

Re: Testimony in Support of H.R. 25 – Compact of Free Association Nations Migrants; Urge Increased Federal Aid

Goodwill Industries is among the largest human service non-profit organizations in Hawaii. Our mission is to help people find and succeed in employment. Last year, we placed 1,866 people into jobs in our community. Goodwill has fifty (50) years of experience assisting people who have employment barriers find jobs and gain self-sufficiency. Among the people we serve are migrants from the Compact of Free Association (“COFA”) nations. This population experiences a great barrier to employment and requires extra assistance and support to successfully transition to life in Hawaii.

Goodwill supports HR25 which urges increased federal aid to the State of Hawaii for the provision of various state services to migrants from COFA nations; deem migrants eligible to receive federally funded financial and medical assistance; and provide dialysis and chemotherapy centers in Micronesia and all areas within the COFA nations. Goodwill has witnessed the overwhelming need in the community from this target population and has worked to meet the increasing demand of participant referrals and walk-ins. The immigrant population often has multiple barriers including lack of acculturation, lack of experience, and insufficient life and social skills. COFA migrant participants are unable to achieve self-sufficiency without the proper supports.

The immigrant population living in Hawaii communities experience a high poverty rate and face barriers to obtaining employment, housing, medical care and educational supports, and available resources are insufficient to meet the overwhelming demand for these needed services. It is estimated that over 11,000 Micronesian and non-U.S. citizen immigrants are living in Hawaii; the immigrant population increases by an estimated 5,000 people each year; from 1997 to 2003 there was a 70% increase in the number immigrants; 38% are between the ages of 0 – 17; 59% are between the ages of 18 – 64; and 39.6% experience poverty and health-related issues.

Last fiscal year, Goodwill provided job training and placement services to over 1,350 COFA migrants. With a net increase of 5,675 immigrants to Hawaii annually and 13% immigrant poverty rate overall, and 39.6% specifically for Micronesians, this is a growing crisis. It is evident that current services are insufficient to meet the overwhelming demand, as evidenced by the continued high poverty rate for COFA migrants. HR25 addresses the current deficiencies in the State’s support services for the COFA migrants.

I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony on this important bill.