



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII

1360 S. Beretania St., Suite 301, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

Testimony by:

Avis Sakata, OTR

HCR 155/HR93, Requesting the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives to Authorize the Joint Legislative Committee on Aging in Place to Continue to Meet and Carry Out the Work of the Committee

House HLT/HUS Hearing – Thursday, March 18, 2010

Room 329 – 10:30 am

Position: Support

Chair Yamane and Mizuno, and Members of the House HLT/HUS Committees:

I am Avis Sakata, OTR and president of the Occupational Therapy Association of Hawaii, (OTAH), which represents 507 occupational therapists (OTs) licensed in Hawaii. OT's work in many settings throughout the State, including hospitals, schools, prisons, skilled nursing to private facilities and community-based programs.

Occupational Therapy is a science driven, evidenced-based profession that enables people of all ages, from infants to the elderly, to live life to its fullest by helping them promote health and prevent or live better with illness, injury or disability. Occupational Therapists are recognized members of the Healthcare Rehabilitation team which is comprised also of physicians, nurses, physical therapists, speech therapists, social workers and others. As a healthcare provider, OTs provide, but are not limited to: 1) assessment and evaluation of our patients/clients needs and development of an appropriate treatment plan, 2) interventions focused on daily living skills (including self-care), work readiness, play or educational performance skills, 3) and interventions that include sensorimotor, neuromuscular functioning, cognitive or psychosocial components.

OTAH supports the authorization of the continued meeting of the Joint Legislative Committee on Aging in Place, and the extended reporting deadline. The public and private sector collaboration in this effort is an important foundation for meeting the needs of our elders and their desire to live at home for as long as possible. In fact, the informational briefing held recently that featured community providers and organizations provided new information and resources, which we were able to share with our patient consumers. We would encourage broader dissemination of this kind of information to the community-at-large.

OTAH's national organization, the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) has ventured into a partnership with AARP and the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) to collaborate to provide solutions to address this growing societal need of aging in place. Over the past few years, AOTA along with AARP and NAHB have jointly presented seminars at many conferences across the U.S. Three percent of NAHB's designations for Certified Aging in Place Specialists (CAPS) are filled by occupational therapy practitioners.

Occupational Therapy practitioners evaluate the skills of the patient/client and the environmental factors that support or limit performance of skills at home. Based on patient/client assessment, occupational therapists recommend modifications that will improve the environment to support independence and safety within the home.

In addition to supporting this measure, we offer our expertise to the Joint Legislative Committee on Aging in Place. I can be reached at 522-4602 if further information is needed. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Testimony by:
Lucy Lessard, PT



**HCR155/HR93, Requesting the President of the Senate
and the Speaker of the House of Representatives to Authorize the Joint Legislative
Committee on Aging In Place to Continue to Meet and Carry Out the Work of the
Committee**

**Hse HLT/HUS Hearing – Thursday, March 18, 2010
Room 329 – 10:30 am**

Position: Support

Chair Yamane and Mizuno, and Members of the Hse HLT/HUS Committees:

I am Lucy Lessard, P.T., and Chair of the HAPTA Legislative Committee and member of the Hawaii Chapter – American Physical Therapy Association (HAPTA). The Hawaii Chapter – American Physical Therapy Association (HAPTA) is comprised of 300 member physical therapists and physical therapist assistants employed in hospitals and health care facilities, the Department of Education and Department of Health systems, and private practice. Our members represent Hawaii at the national American Physical Therapy Association and are delegates for Pediatrics, Women’s Health, Parkinson’s Disease and other issue sections. We are part of the spectrum of care for Hawaii, and provide rehabilitative services for infants and children, youth, adults and the elderly. Rehabilitative services are a vital part of restoring optimum function from neuromusculoskeletal injuries and impairments.

We express support for the continuation of the Joint Legislative Committee on Aging in Place. As PTs throughout the State, we see Hawaii’s older generation living longer and staying at home more often than in other states. We see that there is a chronic lack of long term care, and it is in our collective best interest to keep these citizens in their homes as long as possible.

We also see many elders living in unsafe situations due a combination of their impairments and disabilities and the design of their lodging. Elders have unique impairments that require special design elements above and beyond adaptations in order to keep them safe and prevent injuries. Physical therapists, through training and education, have unique skills in dealing with elders who are healthy, impaired and disabled to keep them supported in their homes.

Taking care of our elders and ensuring that they can remain in their homes as long as possible requires a multi-disciplinary and broad community network approach. The Joint Legislative Committee on Aging in Place provides the coordination and focus of this critical work.

I can be reached at (808) 735-6507 if there are any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.