



American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
District VIII, Hawaii Section
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March 18, 2010
Thursday
1030 AM
Conference Room 329

To: House Committee on Human Services
Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair
Representative Tom Brower, Vice Chair
House Committee on Health
Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

From: Raydeen Busse, MD, President
Lori Kamemoto, MD, MPH, Legislative Committee Chair
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Hawaii Section

Re: **HR96 and HCR158: URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, TO DEVELOP A PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE BREASTFEEDING AMONG MOTHERS WHO RECEIVE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FROM MEDICAID**

Dear Chairs Mizuno and Yamane, Vice Chairs Brower and Nishimoto, and Human Services and Health Committee Members:

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), Hawaii Section, supports HR96 and HCR158 urging the development of a program to encourage breastfeeding in Medicaid recipients. ACOG strongly encourages breastfeeding for all women when medically possible and supports these resolutions.

Research performed in the United States and in other countries demonstrates that breastfeeding provides benefits to infants, women, families and society as a whole. In 1971, U.S. breastfeeding rates were only 24.7% and although the U.S. breastfeeding rate has increased since that time, it still has not reached the 75% goal set by the U.S. Public

Health Service's Healthy People 2010. Although the most recent information available from the CDC shows that Hawaii has met its Healthy People 2010 goals for breastfeeding (CDC Breastfeeding Report Card, 2006 data, http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/report_card2.htm), all women and infants can benefit from breastfeeding for at least 6 months after birth. Women and infants who can benefit the most from breastfeeding are often within population groups (geographic, economic, cultural and educational) with low rates of breastfeeding. Education and support services can improve breastfeeding rates among these and other groups. Breastfeeding education and support are also an economical investment for health plans and employers because infants who are breastfed have lower rates of illness. With a few medical exceptions, nearly all women can breastfeed and this is the preferred method for feeding newborns and infants. (ACOG Committee Opinion no. 361)

Hawaii ACOG strongly supports initiatives that promote breastfeeding and supports HR96 and HCR158.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.



March 17, 2010

TO: Rep. John M. Mizuno, Chair, Rep. Tom Brower, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee on Human Services
Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair, Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee on Health

FROM: Jackie Berry, Executive Director

RE: HR 96/HCR 158 Urging the Department of Human Services, in Consultation with the Department of Health, to develop a program to encourage breastfeeding among mothers who receive medical assistance from Medicaid.

Hearing: Thursday, March 18, 2010 at 10:30am

My name is Jackie Berry, Executive Director of Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawaii. We are in strong support of this resolution. Breastfeeding is best feeding for the first year of life, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. Women need to be supported and encourage to breastfeed although it is the natural way of feeding for babies, yet breastfeeding seems far from normal for too many Americans, including those in Hawaii.

Breastfeeding is associated with numerous health benefits for infants and mothers. Breast milk strengthen infants' immune systems resulting in fewer cases of illness among newborns. Breastfeeding is also associated with a decrease risk of pre-menopausal breast cancer.

Mahalo for your consideration of this issue.