



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
March 11, 2010 at 1:15 p.m.

by

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SCR 44/SR 29 – EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT HILO COLLEGE OF PHARMACY'S EFFORTS TO OBTAIN FEDERAL FUNDING TO ESTABLISH THE BIG ISLAND OF HAWAII AS A BEACON COMMUNITY

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Sakamoto and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UHH) College of Pharmacy, thank you for the opportunity to support SCR44/SR29. The Beacon Community Cooperative Agreement Program is funded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. This program will provide funding to communities to build and strengthen their health information technology (IT) infrastructure and exchange capabilities to demonstrate the vision of the future where hospitals, clinicians, and patients are meaningful users of health IT and together the community achieves measurable improvements in health care quality, safety, efficiency, and population health.

The UHH College of Pharmacy is the lead applicant organization for the Hawai'i County Beacon Community Consortium (HCBCC) application that was submitted on January 29. In addition to the College of Pharmacy, the stakeholders in this consortium application include the Hawai'i County acute care hospitals, federally qualified health centers, Hui Malama Ola Na Oiwi, East Hawai'i IPA, Mayor's Office, HMSA, the Hawai'i Health Information Exchange (HHIE), and many other stakeholders committed to demonstrating the Beacon vision in Hawai'i County. If awarded, this grant would fund approximately \$9,000,000 in health information technology for Hawai'i County and create and fund approximately 15 new jobs in Hawai'i County for a three-year period. Most importantly, this would infuse the capacity and capital needed to produce island-wide improvements in health and healthcare and would serve as a model for the use of health IT in rural communities throughout the United States.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

# HMSA



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March 11, 2010

The Honorable Jill Tokuda, Chair  
The Honorable Norman Sakamoto, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Higher Education

**Re: SCR 44/SR 29 – Expressing Support for the University of Hawaii at Hilo College of Pharmacy’s efforts to obtain federal funding to establish the Big Island of Hawaii as a Beacon Community**

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Sakamoto, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in strong support of SCR 44 and SR 29 which would support the efforts currently underway to obtain federal monies to establish a Beacon Community on the Big Island.

UH-Hilo’s College of Pharmacy and the Hawaii County Beacon Community Consortium (HCBCC) are committed to strengthening the use of health information technology in order to improve health care quality while reducing costs, and HMSA is proud to support them in these efforts. The Beacon Community Grant will help provide the funds needed to further integrate technology with the delivery of health care – from implementing meaningful and useful electronic health records, to improving access to appropriate levels of care, to early detection and management of disease.

The support of the Hawaii State Legislature would be greatly appreciated as UH-Hilo’s College of Pharmacy and the HCBCC embark on this ambitious endeavor. HMSA, along with many other community partners and stakeholders, looks forward to achieving the goals set forth in the grant application and improving the overall health and wellbeing of Big Island residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JDiesman", written over a white background.

Jennifer Diesman  
Vice President  
Government Relations