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From: Curt Kiriu [curtk@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 6:44 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: HCR 24 - Extending the deadline for the Home For Life Task Force to report its findings and recommendations

To: Committee on Health: Rep. Ryan Yamane, Chair and Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair, and
To: Committee on Human Services: Rep. John Mizuno, Chair and Rep. Jo Jordan, Vice Chair

Date: Friday, April 01, 2011 - Conference Room 329 (State Capitol) – 10:30 a.m.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify why I am in strong support of HCR 24; which would extend the date to June 30th 2012.

My name is Curt Kiriu and I am the owner and president of CK Independent Living Builders. I am a local-born licensed General Contractor and a NAHB (National Association of Home Builders) Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist or as I sometimes describe as an Independent Living Specialist. Besides doing typical remodeling of homes, we specialize in home modification for seniors and physically challenged so they can live independently and not move into an industrial long term care facility. As far as I know, I am the only licensed General Contractor who specializes in this specific field of construction. I have a passion for this subject because I was the caregiver for my father (after my mother passed) for 17 years until his passing in 2010; and I also have relatives with Muscular Dystrophy.

Besides running my company, I developed a PowerPoint presentation that I offer free to seniors groups and clubs, caregivers, design student, orthopedic therapist and the public throughout Oahu. My presentation comprises of several topics such as, what is Aging-in-Place, Universal Design, Falling in the senior population the risks, causes and prevention, the costs associated with living in an institutional care facility and other pertinent topics. I also offer free initial Home Evaluations to seniors and their caregivers on how to make their homes accessible, safe, and comfortable to live in independently for their lifetime.

In late 2010 I was asked by Joan Riggs (HFLTF Co-chair) if I would attend one of the State's Homes For Life Task Force monthly meetings. I attended the meeting and was surprised to see that the State was interested in keeping our senior population in their homes rather than being placed in a nursing/care homes. I was then asked if I would give input on one of their working groups (Home Modification for Accessible Living) from a contractor's point of view. I then was asked and nominated to become a member of the task force and agreed; because I know firsthand that there is an immense amount of work to be done and that requires an abundance of time and effort from various sources.

Speaking from experience through my presentations, home evaluations, meeting with families, meeting senior groups, caregivers and the public I know there needs to be much more information on aging in place and independent living disseminated not only to the senior population but their children and Hawaii's future caregivers.

I can give you an abundant amount of statistics, but I will give you just two for now.

1. According to the 2010 Census Bureau, "the population of Hawaii that reaches age 60 will be 25% of Hawaii's overall population by 2020"; and it will continue to escalate. So unless immediate action is taken to address the swelling (or sometimes called the "Silver Tsunami") population and the lack of

information of caregiving options the result of inaction will have a devastating negative impact on all aspects of Hawaii's (including those of the City and County agencies) already fragile economy; which could cripple the State and leave the public with no one and nowhere to turn to when something happens.

2. The State needs to address the overview and regulation of long and short term institutional care facilities. There are many examples of how nursing facilities are abusing the Medicaid and Medicare system. But for now I speak about the States list of CNA (Certified Nursing Aide) that the State is responsible for generating and updating. The list contains CNAs that have been deemed unfit to work in any long/short term care facility due to the fact that they have stolen from, neglected, abused or abandoned their clients. This list has not been updated by the State since 2007 and I have been informed by someone from that department that "the list was not a priority"; so for the past 4 years there have been CNAs who should not be working in long/short term care facilities; yet continue to because facilities have no way to perform a complete background check due to this insufficient list generated by the state agency responsible. This inadequate list could cost the State millions in lawsuits if a CNA whose name should be on this list but is not due to the states agency shoddy work; then it could be the start of a domino effect of litigations and develop into a catastrophic economic situation.

These are just a couple of reasons why I want to again confirm my strong support for the passage of HCR 24 and urge the Chair and Senate committees to extend the Homes For Life Task Force date to June 30th 2012.

In closing, I want to thank Melissa Vomvoris from Senator Les Ihara's office for all of her time and effort in communicating information and logistics for the task force.

And lastly, I ask you to please remember that "Independent Living is not doing things by yourself, but it is being in control of how things are done!"

Thank you again for the opportunity to give my testimony.

Curt Kiri CAPS, CGP, CR, CF

President

CK Independent Living Builders


"Opening the Door to Your Independent Living"

CAPS (Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist)

CGP (Certified Green Professional)

CR, CF (EPA Certified Renovator and Certified Firm)



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