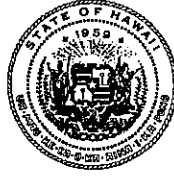


NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**WRITTEN
ONLY**

LORETTA FUDDY, ACSW, MPH
ACTING DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:

File:

Senate Committee on Health

SB 939, RELATING TO HEALTH

**Testimony of Loretta Fuddy, ACSW, MPH
Acting Director of Health**

February 16, 2011, 3:30pm

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health supports the intent of this measure to create and
2 support a Fall Prevention and Early Detection Coordinator in the Department to develop a coordinated
3 approach to reducing falls among adults, but defer on the fiscal implications until the Executive Budget
4 has been finalized.

5 **Fiscal Implications:** Appropriates \$55,000 of general funds for fiscal year 2012-2013.

6 **Purpose and Justification:** Falls and fall related injuries among older adults impose an enormous
7 burden on individuals, society, and Hawaii's health care system. Among older adults 65 years and
8 older, falls are by far the leading cause of injury-related deaths and hospitalizations, and by far the
9 leading cause of EMS attended injuries among older adults. In comparison to other injuries for residents
10 of all ages, falls among older adults are also a leading contributor to injury-related deaths,
11 hospitalizations, Emergency Department and EMS visits. Direct medical charges for fall and fall –
12 related injuries amount to \$82.8 million, an amount that could be doubled if you were to include the
13 costs of rehabilitation and long term care. Falls among the older adults impact the quality of life and
14 independence of seniors. Over half of those hospitalized from a fall go to a care home or rehab center
15 and many never regain full independence.

1 The Department is committed to addressing this critical public health issue and has already taken
2 some steps to address fall injuries among the elderly in Hawaii including organizing a 65-member Fall
3 Prevention Consortium, with representatives from key agencies and organizations that initiates
4 collaborative efforts to address fall prevention.

5 Considering the magnitude of falls among older adults and the anticipated increase in this age
6 group in the next 20 years to over 22% of Hawaii's population, the current level of dedicated resources
7 for preventing falls are insufficient. The position proposed in this bill will enable the Department of
8 Health to develop a coordinated state-wide approach that is needed to prevent and reduce falls among
9 older adults. The Department is prepared to carry out the duties as described in the bill in collaboration
10 with community partners.

11 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY BY KALBERT K. YOUNG
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 939

February 16, 2011

RELATING TO HEALTH

Senate Bill No.939 amends Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to establish a statewide fall prevention and early detection coordinator position within the Department of Health, and requires the position to develop a statewide approach to falls among the elderly through seven specific actions, and makes an undetermined general fund appropriation to the Department of Health in the fiscal biennium for these purposes.

We oppose this bill. While we support programs which provide a safety net to protect the frail and elderly, the proposed amendments duplicate some of the efforts already taken by the Department of Health, and will also limit the flexibility of the Executive Branch to review program funding requirements and allocate funding to programs based on statewide priorities within available resources.



THE QUEEN'S MEDICAL CENTER

1301 Punchbowl Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 • Phone (808) 538-9011 • Fax: (808) 547-4646

Senator Josh Green, M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Wednesday Feb 16, 2011 – 3:30 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In Support of SB 939, Relating to Fall Prevention

Chair Green, Vice Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sally Jones and I am the Trauma Program Manager at The Queen's Medical Center, testifying in support of SB 939 which establishes a position of statewide fall prevention and early detection coordinator. For the last 5 years, I have watched falls as a mechanism of injury increase. Our extensive trauma data base houses detailed information on all trauma cases brought to the trauma center. Three years ago, the number of cases involving falls exceeded the number involving motor vehicles and in 2009, the number of falls was almost double that of motor vehicle crashes. Unfortunately, the number of deaths related to these two mechanisms is even more shocking. Our trauma registry showed there were more than 4 times as many deaths due to falls than those due to motor vehicle crashes (among admitted patients).

Today's vehicles are built safer and we all know that seatbelts and air bags save lives and can reduce the degree of injury. We've spent a fair amount of time and money promoting the use of seat belts to save lives – our “click it or ticket” campaigns have been successful indeed. It is definitely time to devote this kind of energy and focus on something that's causing even more harm: falls. Many of these injuries and deaths are with the elderly population – a group of citizens not infrequently on medications that thin the blood thus contributing to even more devastating injuries when they fall and hit their head.

I feel it is imperative that we turn our attention to falls and how to prevent or reduce them. In these difficult economic times, it is not easy to ask for money for an individual to lead this effort, but I am suggesting exactly that and am testifying strongly in support of SB 939.

Thank you for this opportunity.



February 16, 2011, 3:30 p.m.

The Honorable Senator Josh Green, Chair
The Honorable Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Health

Dear Chairman Green and Members of the Senate Committee on Health,

Subject: **Support for SB 939**

The Injury Prevention Advisory Committee strongly supports SB 939 which establishes a statewide fall prevention and early detection coordinator position. Creating a position to serve as the focal point for fall prevention across the state is essential to reducing fall related injuries and deaths.

Established in 1990, the Injury Prevention Advisory Committee (IPAC) is an advocacy group committed to preventing and reducing injury in Hawai'i. IPAC members include public and private agencies, physicians, and professionals working together to address the eight leading areas of injury, including falls.

As you may know, every five hours in Hawai'i, an older adult is injured so severely by a fall that they must be hospitalized, often never returning home. The emotional and financial costs of falls are enormous, for individuals, our communities and our state.

Falls are not inevitable, they can be prevented. Strength and balance exercises, medication reviews, vision checks and home safety modification can reduce the risk of falling for older adults. Increasing the availability and accessibility of fall prevention programs in Hawai'i is essential to reducing fall related injuries, and establishing a position will support, strengthen and coordinate fall prevention efforts statewide. We strongly support the passage of SB 939.

Thank you for allowing us to testify.

Sincerely,

Bruce McEwan, Chair
Injury Prevention Advisory Committee

February 14, 2011

SB939: Relating to Health (Committee on Health)
Date of Hearing: February 16, 2011
Time of Hearing: 3:30 PM

I have been working in Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in Hawaii since 1980 starting in the ER than in the field as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) than a Mobile Intensive Care Technician (MICT). Over the years, the State DOH EMS Systems Branch incorporated Injury Prevention which gave the department the new name EMS Services & Injury Prevention System Branch. As there is already an EMS Chief in Dr. Linda Rosen, it would seem appropriate to have a position for a coordinator that oversees fall prevention and early detection.

From my experience in the field as an MICT I can attest to the fact that elderly patients who access 9-1-1 due to injuries caused by falls almost always result in serious injuries to include fractures, especially fractures to the hips. A dedicated coordinator to track data and fall prevention efforts statewide may result in minimizing these injuries. Education, especially targeted to our kupunas, is key. A simple task of removing rugs or folded carpets may save injury. How about moving slippers & shoes from the doorways or stairways. May even want to install some handrails to grasp on to.

Last week my mother who is (83) yrs. old slipped and fell on the Big Island. Her culprit was a throw rug on the slippery bathroom floor. She sustained injuries to her ribs, leg and arm on her left side. She has difficulty getting up from any sitting position but fortunately sustained no fractures. I still believe she had a fractured rib at least.

I urge you to please see the value in approving this bill that ultimately will save serious injury from 'falls' in our community. We need someone dedicated to coordinate and be passionate about this throughout the State of Hawaii. Thank you!

green1 - Karen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2011 6:36 PM
To: HTHTestimony
Cc: andi@andreahamblin.com
Subject: Testimony for SB939 on 2/16/2011 3:30:00 PM

Testimony for HTH 2/16/2011 3:30:00 PM SB939

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Andrea Hamblin
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: andi@andreahamblin.com
Submitted on: 2/11/2011

Comments:

green1 - Karen

From: Chris Ridley [ridley0428@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 14, 2011 9:05 PM
To: HTHTestimony
Subject: SB 939

Testimony Emailed to HTHTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Sen. Josh Green, MD., Chair

Sen. Clarence K. Nishihara Vice Chair

DATE: Wednesday, February 16, 2011

TIME: 3:30pm

PLACE: Conference Room 229

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

IN SUPPORT OF SB939 – Referring to Health

My name is Chris Ridley and I am testifying in full support of SB939, calling for the creation of a fall prevention and early detection coordinator.

I work at Life Care Center of Hilo (nursing facility) and also for the Alzheimer's Association. In both my jobs I witness the heartbreaking situations of falls that could have been prevented. The public needs to be made aware of the factors that cause falls. The victims of falls suffer physically, financially, spiritually, emotionally and socially. Their family members suffer along with the victim.

The cost alone is astronomical! In Hawaii alone, emergency room, hospitalization, rehabilitation and care home charges total over \$143.8 million per year. That is equal to \$393,000 every single day! Our health care system cannot handle the load, and our taxpayers cannot carry the burden of the costs associated with this horrible problem.

Please pass out SB939 and give our Elders and their families a fighting chance to prevent falls.

Chris Ridley, LCSW, DCSW

1787 Hale O Kea Street, Hilo, HI 96720

808-443-7360

Testimony for: Emailed to HTHTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Senator Josh Green, MD., Chair

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair

DATE: Wednesday, February 16, 2011

TIME: 3:30pm

PLACE: Conference Room 229

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

IN SUPPORT OF SB 939 – Referring to Health

My name is Stan Michaels and I am testifying in full support of SB 939, calling for the creation of a fall prevention and early detection coordinator. I realize how difficult all budget items are and this bills asks for some dollars to be spent to support a new position in the Department of Health. For the record, per the Center For Disease Control (CDC), any dollars spent towards prevention of falls, will reduce the cost each state pays for emergency rooms, hospitalizations, rehabilitation, and long term care. Latest figures show dollar savings equal to 2 or 3 times the amount invested in prevention. On average Hawaii spends \$393,000 dollars per day on senior fall injuries, that is over \$140 million per year, and a large portion of that is paid by the state through Medicaid and other entitlements.

And that is just the money side. For seniors and their families...the cost in human suffering is enormous. Almost every single adult in Hawaii knows someone impacted by a fall. Early detection is important, because many seniors that live alone and fall...lie undetected and in agony for hours and sometimes days. Many of these fall injured do not survive.

For seniors, falls are the number one cause of injury death, the number one cause of traumatic brain injury, and the number one cause of loss of independence. Falls are preventable, as the CDC has confirmed. There are many types of interventions and many types of screening to find and prevent this enormous burden on our state and its kupuna.

We need someone to create and plan. We need someone to assist and coordinate. We need a common message and an easy way for seniors and their families to find information. I know bucks are tight...but in this instance...failure to act is deadly for our kupuna.

Please pass out SB 939 and give our seniors and their families a fighting chance to prevent falls.

Sincerely, Stan Michaels 225 Kaiulani Ave #602, Honolulu HI 96815

TESTIMONY
SENATE BILL 939
Hearing February 16, 2011 - 3:30 pm

RELATING TO HEALTH - Establishes a position of statewide fall prevention and early detection coordinator under the department of health and makes an appropriation for the position.

My name is Dexter Suzuki. I am submitting testimony in support of this bill.

I am a baby boomer and was a full-time caregiver for a year and a half before my mother passed away last January. My mother suffered from Alzheimer's and a broken hip. She was 85 when she passed away at Nuuanu Hale after months of constant pain and immobility. In the year and a half of trying to find answers to help my mother, I came to realize that I was really trying to help myself to cope with the stresses of the daily routines, financial hardships, and constant 24/7 worrying if my mother was okay.

The first fall occurred in our front driveway and was found by other senior walkers, so she was lucky. She required emergency service...the final billing added up to over \$80,000 to fix her hip. The second fall occurred at night when she was trying to pull out the night-light and stumbled over. I found her in the morning in tremendous pain. After two months of recovery in a hospital she developed a heel sore that resulted in three specialists and finally deciding to amputate her leg to relieve the constant pain. From there it was downhill for her. She told me "nuff already, I'm too old, I want to die."

This bill funds one position to help the thousands of caregivers who are trying to help their parents live a quality life. There needs to be focused and coordinated effort in this State to find and determine options to prevent falls and to help alert caregivers (automatically) when a fall or accident occurs. I know these options are not the answer for all incidents but currently there is no promotional campaign or information available to caregivers until the fall occurs and it's usually done by a caseworker visiting the home upon the patient's release.

Please assist the thousands of caregivers and elderly in our State with better information and options to keep Hawaii safe for our elderly. It's such a small price to pay to save the pain and lives of our elderly.

Mahalo

Testimony Emailed to HTHTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Sen. Josh Green, MD., Chair
Sen. Clarence K. Nishihara Vice Chair

DATE: Wednesday, February 16, 2011
TIME: 3:30pm
PLACE: Conference Room 229
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

IN SUPPORT OF SB939 – Referring to Health

Aloha,

I would like to submit my testimony of full support for SB 939. My name is Billie Tang and I have been a physical therapist for 34 years and have personally and professionally seen the effects that a fall can have on a person, but more so when it happens in an elderly individual. I work with many of these people in my practice at Straub Clinic and Hospital.

I have found the Seniors that have fallen tend to minimize the fall and don't quite grasp the significance of the downward spiral in their health and function that one fall can initiate. Their families don't always know or understand how to reach the resources that are in the community or the health care system.

We do have people and agencies in our State already working in the area of fall prevention, but the efforts have not been concentrated, coordinated, focused, or far reaching enough to make headway in this area of public health. I feel that funding for such a person that would be responsible for doing this for our State would be a valuable way to getting this accomplished.

Thank you for your consideration in this vital area of public health.

Mahalo,

Billie Tang, MPH, PT, ATC

To: The Senate Health Committee
The Honorable Senator Josh Green, M.D., Chair
The Honorable Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice-Chair

Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2011, 3:30 pm

Place: State Capitol Room 229

From: Rose Nakamura, Administrator, Project Dana
Mike Hirano, Home Safety Specialist, Project Dana

Subject: Testimony Supporting SB 939, Relating to Health

We strongly support SB 939 Relating to Health which specifically addresses falls and fall-related injuries among the older adults which pose a severe threat and enormous burden on individuals, society and Hawaii's health care system. It is imminent that the House Health Committee support the creation of a Statewide Fall Prevention and Early Detection Coordinator within the Department of Health. FALLS AND FALL-RELATED INJURIES ARE PREVENTABLE. Hawaii's statistics reveal the ALARMING concerns on falls and fall-related injuries:

1. 1 out of 3 adults 65 years of age and over fall each year.
2. In Hawaii, every 5 hours a senior is so severely injured by a fall that they must be hospitalized.
3. In Hawaii, emergency room, hospitalization, rehabilitation and care home charges total \$143.8 million per year. That is equal to \$193,000 per day!
4. With the elder population increasing to make up 25% of Hawaii's population, it is important to address preventable measure immediately.

The establishment of a coordinator is very much needed to develop a statewide approach to reducing and detecting falls.

Thank you very much.

To: Committee on Health Services
Senator Josh Green, M D, Chair
Senator Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2011
Time: 3:30 p.m.
Place: Conference room 229

Testifier: Eudice Schick, Chair Policy Advisory Board For Elder Affairs
“PABEA”

Bill: SB 939
In Complete Support

I am Eudice Schick, current Chair of PABEA. The following testimony is being given by myself as an individual and in no way represents the views of the Executive Office on Aging.

The statistics shown in SB Bill 939 speak for themselves as to why the State of Hawaii Department of Health must have the position of a statewide fall prevention and early detection coordinator. The money saved by having this position would more than pay a substantial salary for a coordinator. This coordinator would be able to educate the population in how to prevent the many falls that our seniors suffer from. Education could also help prevent the many deaths suffered by falls. This is an investment in the lives of our KUPUNA. Please support SB939.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,

Eudice Schick

green1 - Karen

From: Holthus, Bridget P [bholthus@honolulu.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, February 15, 2011 11:47 AM
To: HTHTestimony
Subject: SB 939, Health
Attachments: SB0939_HTH_2011.02.16 Health.pdf

Bridget Palmer Holthus
Deputy Director
Department of Community Services
City and County of Honolulu
715 South King Street, Suite 311
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
(808) 768-7762
www.honolulu.gov/dcs