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SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator David Ige, Chair

Conference Room 221
April 13, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.

Supporting SCR 53 SD 1 / SR 27 SD 1.

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii advocates for its member organizations that span the entire spectrum of health care, including all acute care hospitals, as well as long term care facilities, home care agencies, and hospices. Our members employ more than 40,000 people throughout the state, delivering quality care to the people of Hawaii. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SCR 53 SD 1 and SR 27 SD 1, which urge agencies of the federal government to provide more financial assistance to the State of Hawaii to pay for services provided to migrants of Compact of Free Association (COFA) nations.

COFA agreements allow citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Republic of Palau to travel freely to the United States, and thousands of them now live in Hawaii.

An estimated 7,500 low-income COFA migrants living in Hawaii are covered by the State's Quest health plan, which is paid solely by the State without federal matching funds. COFA migrants also receive other State services, such as financial assistance, housing, social services, and education, which total more than an estimated \$100 million annually.

The federal government provides \$30 million in annual subsidies and grants to states and territories with COFA migrants, \$10 million of which is distributed to the State of Hawaii annually. That amount is grossly inadequate to pay for the services provided by the State to COFA migrants.

SCR 53 SD 1 and SR 27 SD 1 seek to increase federal financial assistance to Hawaii. These resolutions also seek to keep COFA citizens who need dialysis and chemotherapy in their home countries by establishing treatment centers there.

For the foregoing reasons the Healthcare Association supports SCR 53 SD 1 and SR 27 SD 1.