

Castle Medical Center

— Adventist
Health

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LATE TESTIMONY

February 2, 2011

To: Chair Ryan I. Yamane
Vice Chair Dee Morikawa
Members, House Committee on Health
Re: **Support for HB 1443 with recommendations**
HLT Cmte; February 4, 2011 at 9:00 a.m.; Rm 329

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of HB 1443. My name is Cara Sadira. I work for Castle Wellness & Lifestyle Medicine Center, which provides evidence-based tobacco treatment services patients in the hospital, as well as Windward community members.

Because of smoking, we see patients with a great deal of health difficulties. Once a patient makes the decision to quit, they need to be preparing for a long journey ahead. Nicotine withdrawal, combined with the ill health effect smoking has caused (depression, difficulty breathing etc.) make the quitting process one of the most difficult things our patients will attempt to do. Those who receive support through intensive counseling and quit aides, such as we provide, have tripled their chances of succeeding. Our community members deserve to be assisted by professionals with evidence-based medicine.

Mandating that insurers cover cessation services as recommended by the US Preventive Services Task Force and mandating that these insurers educate those who are covered will increase the number of people who will seek help to quit.

I urge you to make sure two quit attempts per year are covered and there are no lifetime limits to the number of quit attempts. Quitting is a difficult process. Relapse is part of the process. We don't want lack of insurance coverage to stop someone's

I appreciate your efforts to keep our precious state and residents healthy by giving them every chance to be smoke-free.

Thank you,



Cara M. Sadira

Tobacco Treatment Specialist, Castle Wellness & Lifestyle Medicine Center



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LATE TESTIMONY

House Committee on Health

The Hon. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair

The Hon. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1443

RELATING TO HEALTH INSURANCE

Submitted by Beth Giesting, Chief Executive Officer

February 4, 2011 9:00 a.m. Agenda, Room 329

The Hawai'i Primary Care Association asks for your support for this measure, which places private insurance plans on par with Medicare by requiring insurers to provide benefits for smoking cessation services. The Affordable Care Act extended Medicare coverage to include tobacco cessation counseling **before the onset of tobacco related disease**.

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable deaths. In Hawaii, it may take 1,100 lives this year, cost us \$336 million in annual direct health care costs, and \$320 million in smoking-caused lost productivity. However, research shows that people want to quit. In 2009, 58% of smokers in Hawaii tried to quit. Providing health benefits to these smokers, such as coverage for two quit attempts per year, as recommended by the US Preventive Services Task Force, will achieve better health for our population and save us millions in health costs.

The Affordable Care Act makes significant investment in preventive health services, both clinical and emotional. Congressional lawmakers and President Obama saw the importance of shifting the health system from one that treats the sick to one that emphasizes healthy living. The health benefit covering tobacco cessation counseling and services provided to Medicare enrollees under the Affordable Care Act became effective August 25, 2010. Please provide the same opportunity for privately insured individuals to receive the help they need, and want, to successfully quit smoking.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of this measure.