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GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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In reply, please refer to:
File:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

HB2373, RELATING TO HEALTH

**Testimony of Loretta J. Fuddy, A.C.S.W., M.P.H.
Director of Health**

**February 3, 2012
9:00AM, Room 329**

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health (DOH) opposes this measure as it would adversely
2 impact the educational efforts to promote organ and tissue donation and would transfer funds out of the
3 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Special Fund which is fully utilized to support ambulance services
4 statewide resulting in adverse impact on ambulance services.

5 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure would transfer \$500,000 from the EMS Special Fund to the
6 proposed Hawaii Organ and Tissue Support and Education Special Fund. The measure would allow the
7 transfer of funds from the existing Organ and Tissue Education Special Fund, for increasing organ and
8 tissue donations, to the proposed new fund to support the establishment of an organ transplant center in
9 Hawaii. The measure will also diminish financial resources used to support organ and tissue awareness
10 efforts.

11 **Purpose and Justification:** This measure proposes to rename the existing Organ and Tissue Education
12 Special Fund to the Organ and Tissue Support and Education Special Fund to permit the use of the fund
13 to establish a nonprofit organ transplant center. The measure would retain the \$1 fee for any new or
14 renewed driver's license to be deposited into the fund and to be repealed on 12/31/15. The measure

1 would further transfer \$500,000 from the EMS special fund to the proposed Organ and Tissue Support
2 and Education Special Fund.

3 The Hawaii Organ and Tissue Education Special Fund was established to increase the number of
4 organs for transplantation by authorizing the collection of \$1 voluntary donation which began on July 1,
5 2000 for persons registering motor vehicles, or for new or renewal of drivers licenses. The funds
6 collected through county departments of motor vehicles are forwarded to the DOH and transferred to the
7 Organ Donor Center of Hawaii (Legacy of Life) to be used exclusively for public education programs
8 and activities to increase the number of organ, tissue, and eye donations. Creating a new and additional
9 purpose for the fund would significantly reduce the ability of the Organ and Tissue Center of Hawaii to
10 provide the necessary education to increase donations. Increasing organ and tissue donation is a unique
11 and vital function that an organ transplant center cannot engage in.

12 The EMS Special Fund is utilized to support ambulance services statewide. The dollars in the
13 fund are fully committed to this purpose. Transfer of dollars out of the fund would have an immediate
14 and adverse impact on ambulance services and would likely result in additional utilization of general
15 funds. Transfer of the funds will reduce the available resources to meet needs caused by the Hawaii
16 Medical Center West.

17 The Department of Health opposes this measure.

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



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The Honorable Ryan Yamane, House Health Committee Chair
The Honorable Dee Morikawa, House Health Committee Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Health

Hearing Date: February 3, 2012, 9:00am

Testimony in support of HB2373, Relating to Health.

While the Queen's Medical Center cannot support the utilization of emergency medical services special fund for reasons outside of the scope of its dedicated purpose, QMC does support the renaming and mandated fee establishment in support of organ and tissue support and education.

The bankruptcy and abrupt closure of Hawaii Medical Center on December 16, 2011, which itself was preceded by years of financial struggles under various owners, has caused significant disruption to the health care system within the state. The loss of the only functioning transplant program is especially acute. Not only have Hawaii's most vulnerable citizens, those who are Medicare and/or Medicaid beneficiaries with limited financial resources, been hurt by this, but the state's only Organ Procurement Organization (OPO), Legacy of Life Hawaii, is also being adversely impacted by this closure. It is very difficult, from a logistical perspective, to transport donated organs to the mainland for transplantation.

The Queens Medical Center is seeking to reestablish the program and has received 'Member in Good Standing' status for the liver transplant program from the Organ Procurement and Transplant Network (OPTN) contractor UNOS effective January 23, 2012. Due to Hawaii's geographic isolation and unique population, it is essential for the state to be as self-sufficient as possible when it comes to transplant services. QMC is very fortunate to have nearly all members of the HMC liver transplant program willing and able to come to QMC to start its new program. In addition, many ancillary staff from HMC who provided care to transplant patients on the inpatient floors, radiology, and operating rooms have also joined the new program at QMC.

There are approximately 420 people in Hawaii currently awaiting organ transplantation. According to Legacy of Life, 19 people died while waiting for a transplant in 2009. Of the candidates on Hawaii's waiting list, 64% are 50 years or older, 40% are women, 90% are racial/ethnic minorities, and 14% have been waiting 5 years or longer for a transplant. Minorities overall have a particularly high need for organ transplants because some diseases of the kidney, lung, pancreas, and liver are found more frequently in racial and ethnic minority populations than in the general population. Asians and Pacific Islanders are three times more likely than Whites to suffer from end-stage renal (kidney) disease. Similar blood type is essential in matching donors to recipients. Because certain blood types are more common in ethnic minority populations, matching donors and recipients within the same ethnic population can increase the frequency of transplants. The Organ Transplant Center at Queen's will be in a unique position to facilitate matching donors and recipients of the same race and ethnicity.

QMC deeply appreciates the support it has received from the Hawaii State Legislature and Governor Neil Abercrombie and his administration in assisting QMC with reestablishing the Organ Transplant Center. This

measure could be a means to continue to support these efforts, as well as significantly enhance and benefit the work of other related organ and tissue organizations. However, again, we respectfully suggest the deletion of the appropriation from the emergency medical services special fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

morikawa2 - Grant

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 02, 2012 8:59 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: Brenda.Kosky@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB2373 on 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM

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Testimony for HLT 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM HB2373

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Brenda Kosky
Organization: Individual
E-mail: Brenda.Kosky@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/2/2012

Comments: