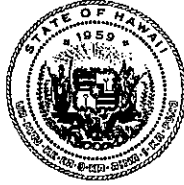


WRITTEN  
ONLY

S

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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:

**House Committee on Health**

**HB 507, RELATING TO HEALTH**

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

**January 28, 2011**

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  
INTERIM DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
STATE OF HAWAII  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
ON  
HOUSE BILL NO. 507

January 28, 2011

RELATING TO HEALTH

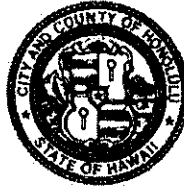
House Bill No. 507 amends Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to establish a statewide fall prevention and early detection coordinator position within the Department of Health, and requires the position to develop a statewide approach to falls among the elderly through seven specific actions, and makes 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.

S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

715 SOUTH KING STREET, SUITE 311 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813 • AREA CODE 808 • PHONE: 768-7762 • FAX: 768-7792



PETER B. CARLISLE  
MAYOR

SAMUEL E. H. MOKU  
ACTING DIRECTOR

BRIDGET HOLTHUS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

January 27, 2011

The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
The Honorable Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair  
and Members of the Committee on Health  
The House of Representatives  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members:

**Subject: In Support of HB 507, Relating to Health**

The City and County of Honolulu's Elderly Affairs Division is Honolulu's designated Area Agency on Aging and operates in accordance with the Older Americans Act of 1965 to coordinate, advocate, and improve services to assist older persons in leading independent, meaningful, and dignified lives in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. **We are in support of HB 507, Relating to Health.**

This Bill calls for an amendment to Chapter 321 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes to establish a fall prevention and early detection coordinator to develop a statewide approach to reducing falls among older adults. This will be done by: investigating and examining the immediate and long-term dangers of fall injuries for our senior population; examining the fiscal impact of falls by the elderly on our medical system and health care costs; recommending appropriate interventions and prevention programs to reduce falls by the elderly and health care costs associated with these falls; investigating and implementing the most effective means to enhance public awareness that falls are preventable; reviewing and developing the potential for increasing for the elderly and their caregivers, on a statewide basis, the availability and accessibility of fall prevention programs that effectively use community resources; recommending measures that will promote early detection of falls; and investigating and recommending the best way to expand the role of medical and health care professionals in screening, educating, and referring the elderly to fall prevention and early detection services and programs.

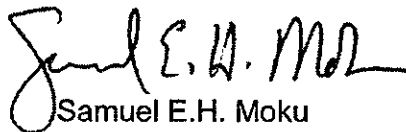
S

The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
The Honorable Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair  
and Members of the Committee on Health  
January 27, 2011  
Page 2

We recognize the devastating impact that falls can create in the lives of senior citizens. We also recognize that falls are preventable, and are not an inevitable result of aging. There are many types of interventions, including balance screenings, medication reviews and vision examinations, that can help determine those seniors at risk of falling. We strongly support the passage of HB 507, Relating to Health and the creation of a fall prevention and early detection coordinator for Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Sincerely,

  
Samuel E.H. Moku  
Acting Director

SEHM:ab



S

January 28, 2011, 9:30 a.m.

The Honorable Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
The Honorable Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice-Chair  
House Committee on Health

Dear Chairman Yamane and Members of the House Committee on Health,

Subject: **Support for HB 507**

The Injury Prevention Advisory Committee strongly supports HB 507 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 HB 507.

Thank you for allowing us to testify.

Sincerely,

Bruce McEwan, Chair  
Injury Prevention Advisory Committee

To: The House Health Committee  
The Honorable Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
The Honorable Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice-Chair

Date: Friday, January 28, 2011, 9:30 a.m.

Place: State Capitol Room 329

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

Subject: Testimony Supporting HB 507, Relating to Health

We strongly support HB 507 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.

S

Testimony for: Emailed to [HLTtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:HLTtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

**COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

**DATE: Friday, January 28, 2011**

**TIME: 9:30am**

**PLACE: Conference Room 329**

**State Capitol**

**415 South Beretania Street**

**IN SUPPORT OF HB507 – Referring to Health**

My name is Michael Ebesu and I am currently a physical therapist at the Rehabilitation Hospital of the Pacific. I am writing today testifying in full support of HB 507, calling for the creation of a fall prevention and early detection coordinator.

Each year, it we get many patients admitted to us with a variety of injuries from falls. These injuries vary from fractures to severe brain injuries. Fortunately, many are able to return home, but there are a significant unfortunate number of people who are never able to return back to their normal level of function. I believe this position would be able to prevent come of these falls. On the financial side, it would save taxpayers money from the cost of medical care. More importantly, however, I believe that if this position could prevent even 1 or 2 falls, it would be worth any cost spent on it in the form of preserving someone's quality of life.

Thank you for your consideration.



**Testimony for House Bill 507**

**Testifier's Name, Title, and Organization**

David T. Nakamaejo  
President  
Comforting Hands Senior Care

**Committee:** House Committee on Health

**Date and Time of Hearing:** Friday, January 28, 2011 at 9:30am

**Measure Number:** HB 507

I am in favor of House Bill 507. The statistics are very scary yet paints a realistic picture of what is happening with our kupuna. If we can in anyway reduce the number of falls among our seniors, we will not only save in emergency room, hospitalization, rehabilitation, and long-term costs but reduce the emotional impact on families of elders who have fallen. Statistics have shown that one in four (25%) of those seniors who fracture their hip because of a fall, will die within a year.

There will be elders, not matter what, that will fall, however the number of falls can be reduced. For example, many families of seniors do not realize that taking four or more medication increases the risk of falling and many of our seniors take more than four medications. The senior visits more than one physician, for example, a senior will have the primary care physician, then possible a rheumatologist, a cardiologist, and ophthalmologist each one prescribing medications. Therefore, annual or better yet semi-annual visit to the pharmacist for a medication review to insure that the medications prescribed by the different doctors are not in conflict each other and could possibly lead to a fall.

Another example of what can be done is to have regular eye exams for early detection of glaucoma and macular degeneration, therefore alert families and appropriate actions can be taken to reduce the risk of falling.

Simple, yet surprisingly not done is putting night lights in hallways, bathrooms and in the bedroom. Or putting grab bars in the shower and by the toilet.

These types of tips/education need to be passed on to families who are caring for seniors.

A fall prevention and early detection coordinator can effectively bring together different community agencies, medical as well as health care professionals so that the elderly can be screened, educated, and referred to fall prevention and early detection services and programs. A point person will be able to coordinate with the appropriate stakeholders to insure that this happens.

S

**morikawa2 - Grant**

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 27, 2011 2:28 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Cc:** jyadao@stfrancishawaii.org  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB507 on 1/28/2011 9:30:00 AM

Testimony for HLT 1/28/2011 9:30:00 AM HB507

Conference room: 329  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Joy Yadao  
Organization: St Francis Healthcare System of Hawaii  
Address: 2226 Liliha St, suite 227 Honolulu, HI  
Phone: 808-547-8156  
E-mail: [jyadao@stfrancishawaii.org](mailto:jyadao@stfrancishawaii.org)  
Submitted on: 1/27/2011

**Comments:**

Falls are devastating, preventable and expensive. Any effort to prevent injury to our kupuna is important.

91-1841 Fort Weaver Road  
 Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706  
 Phone 808.681.3500  
 Fax 808.681.5280  
 Email [cls@cfs-hawaii.org](mailto:cls@cfs-hawaii.org)  
[www.childandfamily.service.org](http://www.childandfamily.service.org)



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert Fujioka  
 CHAIR

Shelley B. Thompson  
 FIRST VICE CHAIR

Kathy Inouye  
 SECOND VICE CHAIR

General (Ret.) Dwight Kealoha  
 SECRETARY

Mark Yamakawa  
 TREASURER

Howard S. Garval  
 PRESIDENT & CEO

Stephanie Ackerman

Kathryn Acorda

Carol Ai May

John L. Arizumi

Christine Camp

Kyle Check

David Haverly

Stanley Hong

Tim Johns

Anton Krucky

Robert K. Lindsey, Jr.

Lori Lum

Stephen MacMillan

Gayle Marumoto

Steve Metter

Terri Motoste

Maurice Myers

Gina Pohlalabel

Djuan Rivers

Tim Schoob

Joanie Shibuya

Jonathan Steiner

Earl Stoner

Rann Warumull

Colleen Wong

Neal Yokota

Hoyt Zia

ACCREDITATION

Council on Accreditation

AFFILIATIONS

Alliance for Children  
 and Families

Hawaii Island  
 United Way

Maui United Way

Kauni United Way

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Bill No: <b>HB507</b>   | Title: <b>RELATING TO HEALTH</b>   |
| Committee:<br><b>COMMITTEE ON HEALTH</b><br>Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair<br>Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair | Hearing Date/Time:<br>DATE: Friday, January 28, 2011<br>TIME: 9:30am<br>PLACE: Conference Room 329<br>State Capitol<br>415 South Beretania St. |
| Submitted by:<br>Name: Howard Garval<br>Title: CEO  | Contact Information:<br>Phone: 681-3500<br>Fax: 681-1449   |
| Testimony in: (X) SUPPORT ( ) OPPOSITION of proposed bill.  |  |

Child and Family Service supports HB507 calling for the creation of a fall prevention and early detection coordinator.

The mission of Child and Family Service is **strengthening families and fostering the healthy development of children**. We do this by providing services from our youngest Keiki to our oldest Kupuna. Hawaii's strength comes from its 'Ohana which includes our elders. We believe that fall prevention will prevent premature institutionalization which would increase the state dollars needed to pay for long-term care for our Kupuna.

We have served the Kupuna of our community in the area of fall prevention for 30 years. Our exercise groups, using evidence based programs, have a proven record of improving seniors' balance thereby preventing falls. We have also been a member of the Falls Consortium. This group has helped bring together a diverse group of people from different professions focused on fall prevention. Instead of each of us working alone and in our own direction, we have come together, pooling our resources and coordinating our efforts in the area of fall prevention. This has resulted in fall screening at the Senior Fair, information being disseminated across the islands and a better understanding of the issues. There is a need to have one person to help coordinate all these efforts and give the group leadership so that we can continue our great work.

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. Any dollars spent towards prevention of falls, per the Center for Disease Control (CDC), 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 per day on senior fall injuries, that is over \$140 million per year, and a large portion of that is paid by the state.

The effect of a fall on a senior is devastating. Can you imagine having both your arms in a cast? Even worse is the risk for Traumatic Brain Injury. Many people never recover. For others the burden of care is overwhelming.

Please pass HB507 to enable us to move forward in a coordinated effort to reduce falls in Hawaii.



Aloha United Way

**TESTIMONY**  
**HOUSE BILL 507**  
**Hearing January 28, 2011 - 9:30 am**

*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 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

Emailed to [HLTtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:HLTtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

**COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**  
**Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair**  
**Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair**

**DATE: Friday, January 28, 2011**  
**TIME: 9:30am**  
**PLACE: Conference Room 329**  
**State Capitol**  
**415 South Beretania Street**

**IN SUPPORT OF HB507 – Referring to Health**

Aloha,

I would like to submit my testimony of full support for HB 507. 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

Testimony Emailed to [HLTtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:HLTtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

**COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

**DATE:** Friday, January 28, 2011

**TIME:** 9:30am

**PLACE:** Conference Room 329

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

**IN SUPPORT OF HB507 – Referring to Health**

My name is Stan Michaels and I am testifying in full support of HB 507, 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. Any dollars spent towards prevention of falls, per the Center For Disease Control (CDC), 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, and a large portion of that is paid by the state.

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.

Please pass out HB507 and give our seniors and their families a fighting chance to prevent falls.

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

Testimony Emailed to [HLTtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:HLTtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

**COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

**Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair**

**Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair**

**DATE: Friday, January 28, 2011**

**TIME: 9:30am**

**PLACE: Conference Room 329**

**State Capitol**

**415 South Beretania Street**

**IN SUPPORT OF HB507 – Referring to Health**

My name is Chris Ridley and I am testifying in full support of HB 507, 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 HB507 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

# Rafael del Castillo

Attorney at Law

## TESTIMONY ON BEHALF OF H.B. 507

From: Rafael del Castillo  
Attorney at Law  
Personal testimony, not on behalf of any client or organization

To: House Committee on Health,  
Hon. Ryan I. Yamane Chair, Hon. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

Hearing: January 28, 2011, 9:30 a.m., Conference Room 329  
2 paper copies requested

Emailed to: [HLTtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:HLTtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

Email time: 3:49 p.m., 1/27/2011

I am very pleased to see this proposal being considered by our legislators during this session and to submit my **strong support for the enactment of H.B. 507 into law.** Unquestionably senior falls are having major impacts on our society, not only in terms of health care costs, but lost quality of life and productivity. I support the bill provisions calling for an assessment of the problem, with the hope of having data enabling us to measure its effectiveness. I suggest that the language “[e]xamining the fiscal impact of falls...” be amended to ensure that the scope of the assessment is not limited to the impact “on our medical system and health care costs” as the problem impacts upon the elderly and their families and caregivers. The additional information will not only give us a more complete assessment of the program quality, but should also be useful in assisting health care providers in improving post-fall interventions.

Our budgetary constraints should not stand in the way of appropriations for this program. Through my practice over the past three years, I have accumulated extensive knowledge and experience with healthcare for medically needy aged, blind, and disabled, and that experience demonstrated to me that stepping up effective prevention efforts will aid significantly in gaining better control over increasing healthcare costs. With proper outreach, the statewide fall prevention and early detection coordinator should find the target population very receptive to prevention strategies.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment upon this essential measure.

Very truly yours,



Rafael del Castillo

289 Kawaihae Street  
No. 222  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96825  
Phone: (808) 782-1262/(808) 660-1033  
Fax: (866) 528-8371  
Email Rafael: [rafa@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:rafa@hawaii.rr.com)