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morikawa2 - Grant

From: Tomoso Home [jtomoso@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, January 28, 2011 6:43 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: Testimony on HB 507

HB 507

RELATING TO HEALTH

HLT, FIN

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

Aloha kakou:

I am in favor of this bill, the subject of which was of great interest when I left the position of Maui County Executive on Aging. Now, as the Executive Director of a non-profit health care organization, I am still keenly aware that "falling" and "falls", for an increasing number of kupuna, can be the "slippery slope" to increased debilitation and the impediment to continuing to "age in place", at home and with family and adjunctive caregiving as the foci of care, concern and rehabilitation. I know that in health care, prevention and education is very cost effective and empowering.

Mahalo a nui

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CC: PABEA, JACOSA.

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 – Related to Health

The St Francis Healthcare System cares for over 400 patients in their homes on a daily basis. The majority of these patients are elderly and at risk for falls causing serious consequences, up to and including death. Fortunately, those on a home care or hospice program have 24 hour access to a nurse who can respond immediately to a reported fall and triage any injuries. The St Francis staff also instructs patients and families on admission regarding falls prevention and assesses for potential dangers in the home. For the elderly and other at risk populations without professional care, the world is very different.

Falls are often devastating to the individual and family and can lead to hospitalization, rehabilitation and institutionalization. The care is costly and often long term. Independent seniors are faced with debilitating injuries and loss of function. Families are burdened with care issues and financial consequences. Nursing facility and care home expenses drain already limited resources and patients rely on government assistance, often for the rest of their lives. All from a preventable fall!

Understanding our state's fiscal crisis, the expense of a Falls Prevention Program Coordinator seems to be taxpayer money well spent. Prevention of long term care placement, not to mention acute care, will more than cover the expense of the new position.

St Francis Healthcare System supports this bill and we thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to share our thoughts.

Respectfully,

Joy Yadao, RN

Director of Advocacy

St Francis Healthcare System of Hawaii

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