



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
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In reply, please refer to:  
File:

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

HCR154, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO DEVELOP A  
STATE ACTION PLAN TO COMBAT CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE  
PULMONARY DISEASE IN THE STATE

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

March 27, 2012  
9:00AM, Room 329

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health (DOH) supports the intent to create a common and  
2 unified Hawaii plan to address Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

3 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

4 **Purpose and Justification:** The Department of Health acknowledges the importance of Chronic  
5 Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) as a serious progressive lung disease that makes breathing  
6 difficult. COPD has become the third leading cause of death, illness, and disability in the United States.  
7 Tobacco use is a key factor in the development and progression of COPD, but asthma, exposure to air  
8 pollutants in the home and workplace, genetic factors, and respiratory infections also play contributing  
9 roles. In the US, more than 12 million adults have been diagnosed with the disease. However, data  
10 from national health surveys suggest that many more Americans are affected.

11 DOH has actively pursued supportive measures to include COPD in its chronic disease initiatives  
12 through the purchase and addition of surveillance measures in the Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance  
13 System, creating a COPD Burden Report; supporting the COPD Coalition's community efforts through

1 the Tobacco Prevention and Education and Asthma Control Programs; and providing funding for the  
2 development of a COPD Strategic Plan. Further, the COPD Coalition participated and provided input to  
3 both the statewide tobacco control and asthma strategic plans. We strongly encourage the COPD  
4 Coalition to become a part of the DOH initiative to develop an overarching coordinated chronic disease  
5 plan which will support the continued growth of the COPD issue in the context of an evidence and  
6 population based public health effort.

7 At this time, DOH will continue to support the efforts of the COPD Coalition through  
8 surveillance, policy, training and technical assistance.

9 Thank you for this opportunity to testify.