

LATE TESTIMONY



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Rep. Ryan Yamane., Chair

Conference Room 329
March 18, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.

Supporting SB 1538 SD 1.

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii advocates for its member organizations that span the entire spectrum of health care, including all acute care hospitals, as well as long term care facilities, home care agencies, and hospices. Our members employ more than 40,000 people statewide, delivering quality care to the people of Hawaii. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 1538 SD 1, which requires the Department of Health and Hawaii State Civil Defense to carry out the statewide dialysis emergency plan.

It has been estimated that more than 600 people are newly diagnosed with end-stage renal disease every year in Hawaii. Most of them undergo dialysis treatment, which takes hours and typically requires three treatments per week. As of the beginning of 2011, there were 19 federally-certified dialysis centers in Hawaii, excluding those within hospitals. Many are operating at close to full capacity. Power is critical to the operations of dialysis centers, along with water, supplies, and medications, but only one of the 19 centers has a backup generator.

A task force has been established to create a dialysis emergency plan for Hawaii. The task force has commissioned a study to identify risks and needs and to make recommendations to prepare for and to respond to power outages, hurricanes, earthquakes, water outages, and other large-scale emergencies. A report of the study is expected to be issued in the coming months.

Meanwhile, the Healthcare Association of Hawaii's Emergency Services Division has established a broad coalition of health care providers to prepare for natural disasters and other large-scale emergencies. The dialysis emergency plan commissioned by the task force should be aligned with the efforts of the HAH Emergency Service Coalition. As such, the Emergency Services Coalition invites the dialysis emergency plan task force to join it in order to ensure that emergency dialysis efforts are coordinated with broad emergency planning efforts.

For the foregoing reasons, the Healthcare Association supports SB 1538 SD 1.