

SB239



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
and
Senate Committee on Health
Friday, February 4, 2011 at 2:45 p.m.
by
Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor
and
Jerris Hedges, MD, MS, MMM, Dean
John A. Burns School of Medicine
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 239 RELATING TO THE HAWAII TOBACCO SETTLEMENT FUND

Aloha Chairs Tokuda and Green, Vice-Chairs Kidani and Nishihara and members of the Committees. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of SB 239, which would extend the sunset date on tobacco master settlement agreement monies for continued use by the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) from June 30, 2011 to June 30, 2015. The amendment is requested to conform with the sunset date on the allocation for debt services.

Monies from the tobacco settlement allow JABSOM to support residency program development by Neighbor Island medical centers and the continuing development of neighbor island training opportunities for medical students. Third-year medical students now have the option of training in Hilo, West Hawai'i, Maui and Kaua'i. First-year and fourth-year medical students have the opportunity for elective rotations on the islands of Hawai'i, Maui, Kaua'i and Moloka'i. And, for the first time – starting January 2011 – first-year medical students have been placed in Hilo for a required three-month training block.

Monies from the tobacco settlement fund also enable JABSOM to continue programs to train speech pathologists, medical technicians, and public health specialists. JABSOM is the only avenue of training in these fields in Hawai'i. In addition, much of the workforce needed to treat the effects of tobacco use and to develop and implement programs for tobacco cessation are from JABSOM and its Office of Public Health Studies.

The John A. Burns School of Medicine's faculty, students and staff work diligently *on the front lines* of community centers trying to mitigate smoking's deadly impact. ***Half of all physicians practicing in Hawai'i and treating Hawai'i's people right now are either JABSOM faculty members or graduates of JABSOM or its post-graduate residency training programs.***

Research studies, including one study released last month, continue to show the health risks associated with tobacco use, including some of the most troubling harm to tobacco's innocent victims: our youngest keiki. It is estimated that 60 percent of American children ages 4–11 years are exposed to secondhand smoke at home. Research has shown that children (especially infants) of parents who smoke have more lung illnesses, such as bronchitis and

pneumonia, and can develop asthma. Most recently, scientists reported that keiki even suffer higher blood pressure from exposure to second-hand smoke.

For the children, our Pediatrics Department supports a tobacco cessation program. JABSOM supports the Principal Investigator and 95% of the Director's time to oversee the *Healthy Quit Smoking Program* at the Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women and Children. This service, which has trained and coordinated the services of 170 certified tobacco cessation specialists, nurses, and other health officials, seeks to reduce smoke exposure in the home (and car) affecting our children. This past year, the program received 2,210 referrals. Many of those were women, from low incomes, and about half were of Native Hawaiian ancestry.

The program works. After six months of counseling, the number of women smoking in the home was reduced from 18% (nearly one in five participants) to only 5%. At the start, just over half of the participants smoked in their car. That percentage was slashed by almost 40%. Funding comes from the Tobacco Prevention & Control Trust Fund and the Hawai'i Community Foundation, but also from the JABSOM's significant contribution of the time and salary of the Principal Investigator (100%) and the Director (95%).

Further, our Perinatal Addictions Treatment Clinic (PATH) Clinic, initiated with help from the Legislature, provides OB/GYN treatment and counseling for pregnant women and new mothers who are struggling with addictions, including smoking. Founded by one of our JABSOM faculty and staffed by the medical school's practice plan, this year the clinic began offering education in early childhood development, which includes the particular harms that addicting substances can cause for children.

Our medical students continue to voluntarily treat Hawaii's homeless families (primarily children) at four state-sponsored shelters twice per week. Such efforts include an emphasis on healthy life-styles, including tobacco cessation.

Also, our faculty and students are actively involved in a variety of programs that benefit Kindergarten through 12th grade. Medical students visit 4th and 5th graders at schools throughout O'ahu, to provide interactive educational sessions about the risks, dangers and societal costs of tobacco smoking. The counseling is especially effective at securing the attention of pupils, because our medical students are closer to their own ages than many traditional role models.

Our medical school provides services at community health centers, including those in Kalihi-Pālana, Waimānalo, on the North Shore of O'ahu, and Waikīkī, where patients are treated for tobacco-related illness and offered advice and help about reducing or stopping tobacco intake. Five to six first-year medical students are deployed to regional centers to work with patients each year.

Tobacco cessation and tobacco dependence treatment for the people of Hawai'i are prominent throughout the medical school's curriculum. Our faculty, residents, medical students and related health care professionals provide care daily in offices, clinics and hospitals throughout Hawai'i. These healthcare providers routinely offer smokers help to quit smoking through interventional counseling.

The medical school's Cardiovascular Research Center has begun a partnership with The Queen's Medical Center to train two fellows (specialists) per year in cardiovascular disease, to help redress the lack of cardiologists in Hawai'i and to serve victims of cardiovascular disease. Smoking is a significant contributor to such cardiovascular disease, including strokes and heart attacks. Research in the Center for Cardiovascular

Research will also focus on the impact that the abuse of methamphetamine and other drugs have on the heart.

Please note that the direct application of tobacco settlement funds to the programs cited above is not always readily apparent in the University accounting system, since the funds are received very late in the fiscal year (due to mainland protocols in administering the monies from the fund). JABSOM thus must use funds from other sources to cover these vital services until the tobacco funds arrive at the end of the fiscal year. Nonetheless, these funds are essential to the operations of the school and its ability to meet its missions to the community.

We are proud to express our appreciation for this funding from the Hawai'i State Legislature and former Governor Ben Cayetano. The school makes a daily commitment to better health and overcoming and addressing the ills of tobacco use, which will continue to challenge our state for generations to come.

To commemorate the importance of these funds, the medical school has installed signs on campus emphasizing that Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement funding has contributed to the construction of the medical campus buildings (see attached). Related information is provided to our students and visitors during tours and training orientations. During our public tours of the campus and facilities, community groups and visitors learn how tobacco-related illness hurts our populations by increasing organ injury and raising costs for care and treatment. (Health care costs in Hawai'i related to tobacco use are estimated to exceed \$350 million annually in Hawai'i.)

Our medical students organize and host an annual community health fair on campus, drawing media coverage and hundreds of citizens to see health products from local vendors and to learn about health care issues through health exhibits. Counseling against tobacco use is a primary focus of the health fair, with active participation by the Coalition for a Tobacco Free Hawai'i and other partners.

Our Director of the Office of Public Health Studies at the medical school writes the questionnaire, analyzes the data and writes the reports evaluating the statewide *Clear The Smoke* and *Quitline* campaigns.

We have a number of integrated programs aimed at cancer care and prevention throughout the Pacific. The "CEED" program is one that helps spread better health and prevention throughout the U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands, as well as, among Pacific Islanders in Hawai'i.

The Hawai'i Consortium for Continuing Medical Education provides required continuing education for physicians, frequently including updates and briefings about tobacco-related illness. The sponsorship committee consists of representatives of the Hawai'i Medical Association and the John A. Burns School of Medicine. The education efforts contribute to the significant role in tobacco cessation played by primary care physicians. From 1999 through last year, some 25 sessions by the school's Department of Medicine alone focused on tobacco cessation.

In addition to supporting our tobacco cessation efforts, the tobacco settlement monies are an INVESTMENT by the Legislature, which has directly contributed to our school's ability to grow more physicians (who in turn care for more of those affected by tobacco-related illness). These funds helped mitigate the more than \$5 million dollar reduction in our state general funding appropriations last year.

Additionally, these funds assist in supporting the cost of JABSOM's recent efforts to increase the incoming medical student class size from 62 to 64 students. This increase, which we hope to be able to build upon with future class size expansions, requires commitment from our faculty, staff and administrators. We simply are not able to consider increased enrollment to meet workforce needs statewide without continued financial support from the Legislature.

The significant shortage of physicians in Hawai'i worsens annually as the population ages and requires more care. The John A. Burns School of Medicine is the best source for doctors in our community. We train 256 medical students year-round, and, through partnering with our major local hospitals, we simultaneously train another 240 post-graduate trainees or "residents": men and women with their medical degrees who are treating patients while mastering their skills in fields including internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and family medicine.

We have another 12 students who are from culturally disadvantaged backgrounds for whom we are providing a fifth year of college study, so that they may become medical students. Additionally, we have another approximately 120 undergraduate students studying health sciences, including Public Health, Medical Technology and Communication Science Disorders.

JABSOM attracts major funding into the community - \$70 million awarded last year --- that supports jobs in Hawai'i, providing research and outreach to benefit our community. In directing JABSOM to use tobacco settlement monies for some of our operating expenses the Legislature has allowed the medical school to survive, to lead treatment for the estimated \$350 million in annual health care services required to treat Hawaii's people today because of smoking, and to train needed health care professionals for the future throughout Hawai'i.

We urge this Committee to pass SB 239.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

Senate Committee on Education

Senate Committee on Health

Written Testimony Only

**SB239, RELATING TO
THE HAWAII TOBACCO SETTLEMENT SPECIAL FUND**

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

February 4, 2011, 2:45PM

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health offers comments as the administrator of the tobacco
2 settlement special fund (TSSF).

3 **Fiscal Implications:** The University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine (UHJABSOM)
4 proposes to retain the entirety of the 28% portion of the TSSF to be used for debt service and for
5 operational costs till June 30, 2015. In fiscal year 2011 the UHJABSOM is projected to receive an
6 estimated \$13.2 million, of which \$2.3 million would be retained for operational costs. The projections
7 also pertain for the fiscal biennium revenue and distribution in 2012 and 2013.

8 **Purpose and Justification:** The Department provides the following abridged table of the changes in
9 distribution since Act 304 established the TSSF in 1999.

Distributions	Act 304 1999 SLH	Act 270 2001 Special Session	Act 119 SLH <i>SLH 2009</i>
Rainy Day	40%	25.5%	15%
DOH/DHS S-CHIP	25% + 10%	25% + 10%	15% + 10%
Tob Trust Fund	25%	12.5%	6.5%
UHJABSOM	N/A	28%	28%
General Fund	N/A	N/A	25.5%

1 The Hawaii Legislature established the TSSF to receive revenues as a participating state in the 1998
2 master settlement agreement (MSA) between 46 states with five major tobacco companies. The recitals
3 section in the agreement says the payments ...*will achieve for Settling States and their citizens*
4 *significant funding for the advancement of public health, the implementation of important tobacco-*
5 *related public health measures. . .*” In keeping with the spirit of the original lawsuit and the MSA the
6 1999 Hawaii State Legislature passed Act 304, and stated that, *The fund shall serve as a mechanism to*
7 *maximize financial resources for tobacco prevention and control, health promotion and disease*
8 *prevention programs, children's health programs, and to serve as a long-term source of stable funding*
9 *for prevention-oriented public health efforts* (SB1034 CD1).

10 The Department respectfully requests that the proposal for UHJABSOM to retain funding
11 through June 30, 2015 be done in consideration of the impact the redistribution of the TSSF has had on
12 prevention programs. We would also encourage that the UHJABSOM show how the medical school
13 might support the efforts to rebuild the public health prevention capacity in the state.

14 Thank you for this opportunity to testify.
15



HAWAII PACIFIC HEALTH

Kapi'olani • Pali Momi • Straub • Wilcox

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Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813-4333

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Friday, February 4, 2011
Conference Room 225

The Senate Committee on Education and
The Senate Committee on Health

To: Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Senator Josh Green, M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair

From: Virginia Pressler, MD, MBA
Executive Vice President

Re: SB 239 RELATING TO THE HAWAII TOBACCO SETTLEMENT SPECIAL FUND
Testimony in Support

My name is Ginny Pressler, MD Executive Vice President at Hawai'i Pacific Health (HPH). Hawai'i Pacific Health is a nonprofit health care system and the state's largest health care provider, committed to providing the highest quality medical care and service to the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific Region through its four affiliated hospitals, 44 outpatient clinics and more than 2,200 physicians and clinicians. The network is anchored by its four nonprofit hospitals: Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children, Kapi'olani Medical Center at Pali Momi, Straub Clinic & Hospital and Wilcox Memorial Hospital. Collectively, they lead the state in the areas of women's health, pediatric care, cardiovascular services, bone and joint services and cancer care. Hawai'i Pacific Health ranks among the top 3.8 percent of hospitals nationwide in electronic medical record adoption, with system-wide implementation that allows its hospitals to offer integrated, coordinated care throughout the state. Learn more at: <http://www.hawaiipacifichealth.org>

We are writing in strong support of SB 239 which would extend the sunset date on the tobacco master settlement agreement monies for continued use by the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) from June 30, 2011 to June 30, 2015.

JABSOM is the only medical school in Hawaii. The majority of physicians practicing in Hawaii are graduates of JABSOM or its residency program. As many as 80% of JABSOM's graduating physicians remain in Hawaii, providing much needed health care throughout the state.

HPH maintains a close working relationship with JABSOM. Many of JABSOM's residency programs are based in our hospitals; many of JABSOM's graduates also practice in our hospitals. Given the projected shortages of physicians and healthcare professionals for the state, JABSOM's continued ability to educate and train future physicians for practice in Hawaii is critical. Extending the sunset date on the tobacco settlement monies to 2015 is vital to JABSOM's sustainability.

We ask that you pass SB 239. Thank you for your time regarding this measure.



Affiliates of Hawai'i Pacific Health



THE QUEEN'S MEDICAL CENTER

1301 Punchbowl Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 • Phone (808) 538-9011 • Fax: (808) 547-4646

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Josh Green M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Friday, February 4, 2011 - 2:45 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

RE: SB 239 Relating to the Hawaii Tobacco Settlement Special Fund

Chairs Tokuda and Green, Vice Chairs Nishihara and Kidani and Members of the Committees:

My name is Sharlene Tsuda, Vice President, Community Development of The Queen's Health Systems, testifying in strong support of SB 239 which extends the sunset date in Act 264, relating to tobacco fund settlement, for continued use by the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM).

Queen's is the largest private tertiary care hospital in the State of Hawaii offering specialized care in the areas of cardiology, neuroscience, orthopedics, behavioral health, oncology, women's health, emergency services and trauma. Queen's has the largest number of physicians, nurses, and other professional and technical staff in the state supporting the people of Hawaii.

We recognize that education and research are key ingredients in providing excellent patient care. Queen's has a longstanding history of supporting healthcare education and training in Hawaii and is home to a number of residency programs offered in conjunction with JABSOM. Many of the physicians practicing at Queen's today received their education at JABSOM. As medical knowledge, innovation and technology continue to expand, the capability to prepare future physicians for practice here in Hawaii will become increasingly important.

While Queen's wholly appreciates the Legislature's budgetary challenges, we respectfully ask the Legislature's consideration of the positive community benefit of a fully-operational John A. Burns School of Medicine brings to Hawaii. The Queen's Health Systems and The Queen's Medical Center are committed to our partnership with the John A. Burns School of Medicine and look forward to continued collaboration to meet the patient care, education, and research needs of our community.

We urge you to pass this measure and thank you for the opportunity to testify.



The Official Sponsor of Birthdays

February 1, 2010

Committee on Higher Education
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Committee on Health
Senator Josh Green, M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

Hearing:

2:45 p.m., Friday, February 4, 2011
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 225

RE: SB293 – Relating to the Hawai'i Tobacco Settlement Special Fund

Comments

Chairs Tokuda, Chair Green and members of the Committees on Education, and Health. Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments on SB239 which extends the appropriation of the portion of the Hawai'i Tobacco Settlement Special Fund moneys for operating expenses of the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) until June 30, 2015.

As the committee members know, the American Cancer Society has been a long time supporter and advocate for JABSOM and the use of Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) funds to build and help operate the Kaka'ako campus. At the same time, the Society has a mission to eliminate cancer as a major health problem in Hawaii through access to quality health care, medical and biomedical research, and public health policies that strongly advocate for an effective and sustainable tobacco control program.

Needless to say, both our medical school and our tobacco control program have equally positive health impacts in the treatment and prevention of cancers in Hawai'i. The Society certainly values a robust medical school to teach and train high-quality physicians, biomedical scientists, and allied health workers for Hawai'i and the Pacific. We also see equal value in maintaining a viable tobacco control program dedicated to reducing the negative impact tobacco has on the health of our people.

In recent years, the Hawai'i Tobacco Prevention and Control Trust Fund has had its yearly allocation from the MSA cut several times from 25% to 12.5% to 6.5% today. This provides slightly more than \$2.8 million annually to the fund. This year, the fund is expected to expend \$8.3 million. At this rate, the trust fund's balance will be almost depleted in eight or nine years.

We ask that the legislature ensure that JABSON develops and implement practices that will provide for the school's sustainability. That, from July 1, 2015, JABSOM not rely on MSA moneys. We need to replenish funds that were lost because of the allocation percentage cuts made to the Tobacco Prevention and Control Trust Fund over the last few years. If we do not address this issue there may not be an effective tobacco control program in the State of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.


Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Massengale".

George S. Massengale, JD
Director of Government Relations



COALITION FOR A
TOBACCO-FREE HAWAII

To: The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair, Committee on Education
The Honorable Josh Green, M.D., Chair, Committee on Health
The Honorable Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair, Committee on Education
The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Joint Committee on Education and Health
From: Trisha Y. Nakamura, Esq., Policy and Advocacy Director 
Date: February 3, 2011
Hrg: Joint Committee on EDU/HTH; February 4, 2011 in Rm 225 at 2:45 p.m.
Re: **Opposition to SB 239: Relating to the Hawaii Tobacco Settlement Special Fund**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding SB 239. The Coalition for a Tobacco Free Hawai'i opposes SB 239 because it impacts overall funding for tobacco prevention and control which has been dramatically cut since Hawaii started receiving the funds in 1999. The Coalition does not oppose any effort to address the doctor shortage in Hawai'i or efforts to improve medical care here at home. Rather, we raise serious concerns about the use and erosion of Tobacco Settlement funds.

Hawaii's Tobacco Settlement Funds, Having Been Dramatically Reduced, Must Be Returned to Tobacco Prevention Efforts

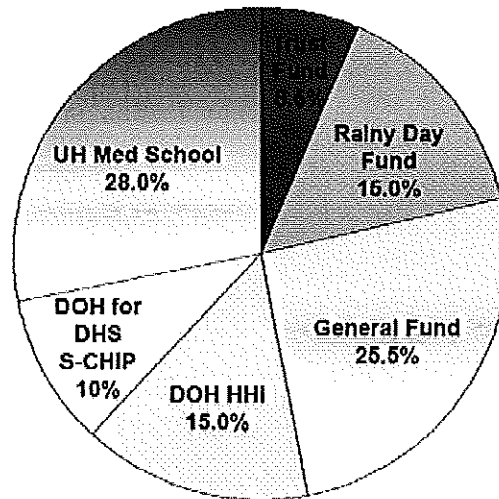
Hawai'i receives Tobacco Settlement moneys as the result of a settlement entered into between 46 states and the major tobacco companies to recover damages for tobacco-related health care costs paid by taxpayers because of the harms caused by cigarettes.

By joining the settlement, Hawai'i made a promise to the people of Hawai'i to reduce youth use of tobacco and to advance public health.¹ The Tobacco Settlement Special Fund was intended to maximize and ensure long-term stable funding for tobacco prevention and control, health promotion, and disease prevention.

In the last few years, the Tobacco Settlement has been redirected away from tobacco prevention and public health efforts. The portion dedicated to funding strong prevention and quit-smoking programs has been whittled down from 25 percent to 12.5 percent to 6.5 percent. The portion of Tobacco Settlement Funds for the Trust Fund is the smallest, compared to the portion for the University of Hawaii's Medical School.

¹ Hawai'i upon signing the settlement, agreed to "reduc[e] underage tobacco use by discouraging such use and by preventing Youth access to Tobacco Products" and avoid further cost of litigation to "achieve for [Hawai'i and its] citizens significant funding for the advancement of public health." (See Master Settlement Agreement, Recitals. Available at <http://ag.ca.gov/tobacco/pdf/lmsa.pdf> (last visited Jan 28, 2010).

Current Distribution of Hawaii Tobacco Settlement Funds (HRS Ch. 328L)



We are deeply concerned that the long-term viability of tobacco prevention efforts is at risk.

Although we've made significant progress in reducing tobacco use and saving lives because of the investment in tobacco prevention and control, tobacco use remains a serious health issue. Tobacco continues to kill more people than alcohol, murders, AIDS, car crashes, illegal drugs and suicides COMBINED. In fact, lung cancer associated with tobacco use kills more women than breast cancer in Hawai'i. Hawai'i still has over 150,000 adult smokers throughout the State. And more than 1,000 Hawai'i youth become daily smokers each year. Smoking costs us over half a billion dollars per year in smoking-related health care costs and lost productivity.

Funding Operations of the University of Hawai'i Medical School with Tobacco Settlement Moneys Is a Concern

In 2001, during special session, the Legislature redirected resources from the Tobacco Settlement for the building of the Medical School's Kaka'ako campus. 28 percent of the Tobacco Settlement was allocated to assist with paying the debt service for the Medical School's construction. This reduced the portion for tobacco prevention by half.

The Legislature's support of the Medical School was never intended to fund operations; and the support was meant to be temporary. If the Medical School did not use all of the moneys, remaining amounts would be returned to the Rainy Day Fund and the Hawai'i Tobacco Prevention and Control Trust Fund. Once the debt had been paid, the Tobacco Settlement moneys would go back to the Rainy Day Fund and Tobacco Prevention and Control Trust Fund.

In 2007, the Legislature gave the Medical School temporary use of the Tobacco Settlement funds for debt service and operations. Again, this was intended to be temporary, to provide the Medical School more time to be able to be self-sustaining.

What is now funding Medical School operations could be supporting almost four community grants for three years. The community lost programs as a result of cuts to the Tobacco Prevention and Control Trust Fund. Our state cannot afford to have Tobacco Settlement moneys directed away from tobacco prevention efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.

The Coalition for a Tobacco Free Hawai'i (Coalition) is the only independent organization in Hawai'i whose sole mission is to reduce tobacco use through education, policy and advocacy. Our organization is a nonprofit organization of over 3,000 organizations and members working to create a healthy Hawai'i through comprehensive tobacco prevention and control efforts. The Coalition started in 1996, under the auspices of the American Cancer Society and was joined by the American Heart Association and the American Lung Association. These three organizations together with many others worked on the initial legislation on how the Tobacco Settlement moneys should be used to promote tobacco prevention and control



February 3, 2011

Dear Education Committee Chair Senator Jill Tokuda and Vice Chair, Senator Michelle Kidani, Health Committee Chair Senator Josh Green, MD and Vice Chair Senator Clarence Nishihara, and members of the committees:

Re: **Opposition to SB 239, RELATING TO THE HAWAII TOBACCO SETTLEMENT SPECIAL FUND.**

My name is Valerie Chang. I am Executive Director of the Hawaii COPD Coalition. Our organization provides services and support and improves treatment for Hawaii's people affected by Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), more commonly known as emphysema, chronic bronchitis and similar conditions. COPD is now the third leading cause of death in the US. Our 2007 and 2008 survey data reveal that slightly under 4% or about 20,000 to 30,000 of Hawaii adults have been told they have COPD, emphysema and/or chronic bronchitis. It is estimated that at least another 20,000 to 30,000 Hawaii adults remain undiagnosed while suffering from COPD. Tobacco smoking is the major cause of these health conditions. For more information and Hawaii Department of Health's Burden of COPD in Hawaii 2010 Report to go <http://hawaiicopd.org>.

We oppose SB 239. Our organization is very concerned about the constant diversion of funds available for Hawaii tobacco prevention and control. Some of these are funds that have been diverted to the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM). Originally, it was for debt service; now that the amount has been lessened due to refinancing, the medical school wants to keep using it for operational expenses. We are very concerned that these funds are not being used for curriculum and research to help Hawaii's people with respiratory disease, including COPD and asthma, as well as smoking prevention and cessation programs, since that is why the Tobacco Prevention and Control Trust was created!

JABSOM needs to help support Hawaii's tobacco prevention and cessation efforts, not constantly erode and divert funding for these efforts and programs. ***JABSOM also needs to come up with a viable plan to become an economically self sufficient entity, as it was originally envisioned; to date no such plan has emerged or been proposed by JABSOM.***

Please continue to do the right thing to restore funding back to the Tobacco Prevention and Control Special Fund, which keeps our community programs working for tobacco prevention and control. We have lost many valuable community programs due to funding cuts and many more continue to be threatened. ***Please hold SB 239 in Committee.*** It will save our state so much money in healthcare costs and improved health for ALL of us!

Aloha,
Valerie Chang, JD
Executive Director
Hawaii COPD Coalition
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