

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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**Committee on Human Services**

**SB940, RELATING TO KUPUNA CARE**

**Testimony of Wes Lum  
Director, Executive Office on Aging  
Attached Agency to Department of Health**

**Tuesday, February 8, 2011**

**2:00 p.m.**

1 **EOA's Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA) supports the intent of this measure and  
2 defers on the fiscal implications until the Executive Budget has been finalized.

3 **Fiscal Implications:** Currently, there is an unspecified amount to support and promote  
4 participation in elder registration services.

5 **Purpose and Justification:** EOA believes that an elder registration program for people with  
6 Alzheimer's Disease and other forms of dementia promotes the safe return of individuals who may  
7 be at risk of harm and injury, and provides a sense of security for their families.

8 While EOA supports the intent of this measure, we would like to point out that the  
9 stakeholders (including EOA, the Alzheimer's Association, and Area Agencies on Aging) need to  
10 convene to determine the feasibility of implementing this program through Kupuna Care. We also  
11 note that the bill appropriates these funds as a grant pursuant to Chapter 42F, HRS, to the  
12 Alzheimer's Association, which is contrary to the current Kupuna Care funding system.

(SB940)

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1           Additionally, on page 4, the bill incorrectly specifies the Department of Human Services as  
2 the expending agency. The correct reference should be the Department of Health, Executive  
3 Office on Aging, as EOA is responsible for the Kupuna Care program.

4           In conclusion, EOA supports the intent of this measure, and believes that additional  
5 dialogue among the stakeholders are necessary to ensure proper implementation of this new  
6 Kupuna Care service. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

February 7, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

I am in strong support of SB940 and the use of the MedicAlert+Safe Return program.

In my history of working with seniors who have Alzheimer's Disease at an Assisted Living facility, the program has been of tremendous value to our residents, their families and our staff. Even though we provide our residents with a secure living environment with access to the dementia floor by code only, having the MedicAlert+Safe Return program offers us additional peace of mind. We know that if for whatever reason the resident should wander from the building or wander while out of the facility with a family member, we have a backup plan. We know that we can call the registry and report the missing person right away and also know that if a good Samaritan comes across the lost individual, they will be able to call the program and place a report.

This program is even more critical for those individuals with Alzheimer's Disease who live in the community in their own homes, and who do not reside in secure facilities. Whenever I come across individuals with Alzheimer's Disease who do not move into our facility, I always encourage them to enroll in the MedicAlert+Safe Return program because if they are at risk of wandering, they are also at risk of harm and injury.

To enroll in the program requires only a minimal enrollment fee and annual fee that is very affordable and well worth the money. It is so important that every family who has someone with Alzheimer's Disease is made aware of this vital program and the benefits of enrolling their loved one.

Again, I am in strong support of SB940 and am very hopeful that this important bill will be passed.

Sincerely,

Dawn Meaney  
Administrator  
The Plaza at Mililani