

alzheimer's association®

Aloha Chapter

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Testimony before the

Senate Committee on Human Services for

SB940, RELATING TO KUPUNA CARE

Tuesday, February 8, 2011, 2:00 p.m.

by Elizabeth Stevenson

Executive Director and CEO

Alzheimer's Association, Aloha Chapter

Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Ihara, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Elizabeth Stevenson and I am the Executive Director of the Alzheimer's Association, Aloha Chapter. Our Chapter serves the State of Hawaii, and we have offices on Oahu, Maui, Kauai and the island of Hawaii.

There are currently an estimated 28,000 residents of the state of Hawaii with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia, and the risk of developing the disease doubles every five years after the age of 65 affecting 50% of the population 85 years or better. Six out of ten people with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia will wander during the course of their illness. Wandering can be dangerous, even life threatening and the stress can weigh heavily on the caregivers and family members.

Working with First Responders, the Executive Office on Aging, and the local Area Offices on Aging throughout the State, the Chapter will conduct targeted outreach to promote enrollment in a wanderer's registry and establish localized search protocol that can be deployed via social media networks when individuals wander and are either missing, or found and not reported missing. The Chapter

data on wandering incidents in 2010 indicates that more elders are found and not reported missing by a ratio of nine to one.

The goal of this program is to significantly increase enrollment and participation in a wanderer's registry so that both families and First Responders have a single point of contact 24/7 to access information and to trigger a search or to quickly return found elders to their family or care facility.

The Chapter is seeking a grant in the amount of \$50,000 funding through the Kupuna Care program to provide one (1) full time (FTE) Safe Return staff person who will be on call 24/7 to assist with wandering incidents, and is dedicated to conducting outreach and training to the general public, First Responders, neighborhood watch groups and other neighborhood associations throughout the State.

More detailed information is provided in Addendum A

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Additional information specific to the **MedicAlert®+Safe Return®** Program:

- The Attorney General's office reports that last year 89 incidents of wandering occurred on Oahu. Data from the **MedicAlert®+Safe Return®** registry indicates that in 2009, four (4) registry members were reported missing and nineteen (19) were found and not reported missing. This represents 26% of the 2009 wandering incidents, all of whom were safely returned to their families.
- There are currently 2,270 enrollees in the **MedicAlert®+Safe Return®** Program, 1,857 on Oahu alone. The Chapter will increase enrollment by 25% each year for two years bringing enrollment to 3,500 individuals enrolled and offering subsidized enrollment in the **MedicAlert®+Safe Return®** Program for low and no-income families as defined by the 2011 poverty guidelines for Hawaii.
- The Chapter will schedule enrollment days across the state to promote the **MedicAlert®+Safe Return®** scholarships.
- When an incident of wandering occurs, member information and a recent photo are sent to local police to aid in the search. Support is provided by **MedicAlert®+Safe Return®** and the Chapter Safe Return staff. Chapter Safe Return staff will provide support and guidance, helping the family stay calm and focused, not search and rescue.
- When a person with Alzheimer's or related dementia is found, but has not been reported missing, the local first responders will have one number to check the registry to find out if the person is enrolled in **MedicAlert®+Safe Return®** or another and contact information for their family and/or caregiver is available.
- After 18 months of research and vetting other products, in 2007 the national Alzheimer's Association selected the **MedicAlert®** organization with which to partner the **Safe Return®** program with, partly due to the longevity of the **MedicAlert®** organization (they have been in operation for over 50 years).
- Affordable \$49.95 to join, \$30 annual renewal. The Aloha Chapter will provide subsidies for low and no-income families to increase access.
- The Chapter will also hold an annual training for First Responder at the Capitol to build awareness and educate search and rescue personnel in best practices when searching for an elder with dementia.
- Since the **MedicAlert®+Safe Return®** Program HIPPA compliant and utilizes an existing robust database, with county by county reporting functions.

LATE

TO : COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Vice Chair

FROM: Eldon L. Wegner, Ph.D.
POLICY ADVISORY BOARD FOR ELDER AFFAIRS (PABEA)

HEARING: 2:00 pm Tuesday February 8, 2011
Conference Room 016, Hawaii State Capitol

SUBJECT: SB 940 Relating to Kupuna Care

POSITION: As a member of The Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs, I **strongly supports** SB 940 which would provide funds to the Alzheimer's Association to promote participation in elder registration services for individuals with dementia.

RATIONALE:

The Policy Board for Elder Affairs has a statutory obligation to advocate on behalf of the senior citizens of Hawaii. While we advise the Executive Office on Aging, we do not speak on behalf of the Executive Office of Aging.

- § The Alzheimer's Association is an appropriate organization to promote registration of seniors at risk of wandering due to dementia or other conditions. The registration of such persons is a step in providing greater safety and security for elder persons with dementia or life-threatening physical illnesses, some of whom become disoriented, wander from home and become lost. The program will greatly assist families and law enforcement agencies in the effort to locate such persons and return them to their homes.
- § The costs of implementation should be relatively small in relation to possible savings which could be incurred by emergency care if such persons are unrecognized for a prolonged period of time.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

LATE

ChunOakland2 - Tyrell

From: Tomoso Home [jtomoso@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 08, 2011 6:57 AM
To: HMS Testimony
Subject: SB 940 - Relating to Kupuna Care

Importance: High

Categories: Blue Category

Testimony on SB 940 – Relating to Kupuna Care
Committee on Human Services
Tuesday, Feb. 8, 2011
2:00 p.m.
Room 016

Aloha kakou,

The idea of “elder registration” to assist in the protection of individuals with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia has been discussed in the aging network for over 10 years. In this year, as the number of Alzheimer’s and other related dementia patients increases in our community, as family caregivers deliver care to their loved ones, it is time we formalize this program and identify the Aloha Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association as our collaborating partner statewide. Please support this bill.

Mahalo a nui,

John A. H. Tomoso, MSW, ACSW, LSW
51 Ku’ula Street
Kahului, Maui, HI 96732-2906

Cc: PABEA, JACOSA