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UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM
Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Transportation and International Affairs
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Wednesday, February 6, 2013 at 1:16 pm

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RE: SB 489 Relating to Traffic Safety

Aloha Chairs English and Baker, Vice Chairs Dela Cruz and Galuteria, and members of the committees, thank you for allowing us to testify today. The John A Burns School of Medicine supports the intent of SB 489 which recognizes the role that cell phones play in increasing the risk of accident and injury as well as the costs associated with these events in terms of human suffering, the burden on our trauma system, and the need for additional healthcare workforce to provide care.

The modest surcharge applied to the use of these devices can and should be used for the purposes expressed in the bill. As outlined in the bill, resources going to the trauma system special fund will be used for injury prevention through public health education, support for rehabilitation services, and augmenting our trauma system by creating a network of providers serving via telemedicine all areas of the state.

The resources that this surcharge creates could substantially help in our efforts to build interest in health care careers, identify ways to augment the current provider workforce, build stronger graduate medical education programs, and provide specific curriculum regarding trauma, rehabilitation and emergency services. Indeed, the JABSOM Department of Family Medicine is currently collaborating with the Department of Health on a curriculum for family physicians regarding brain injury prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation in the primary care setting.

We offer for your consideration the attached document of suggested amendments. We also ask that you considering adding research support to the list of potential uses of the trauma system special fund as we need to better understand the impact of phones and other electronic devices.

In summary, the University of Hawai'i supports the intent of SB 489 provided that it does not adversely affect other UH budget priorities. We also look forward to continuing our collaborative efforts with the Department of Health in making Hawai'i a safer place and assuring that we have a strong trauma system with expert providers.

SB 489 - Requested amendments

On page 7, lines 3-4, delete the following phrase:

[health care workforce development training programs,]

And on page 8, lines 3-4, delete the same language:

[Healthcare workforce development training programs associated with an accredited university;]

RATIONALE:

This assignment is given to the trauma system special fund but would better fit with part two of the bill which funds the John A. Burns School of Medicine Special fund 304A-2171 which is designed to address workforce issues.

On page 13, lines 3-5, delete the following phrase:

[provided further that expenditures from the special fund shall be limited to no more than \$245,000 annually].

RATIONALE:

The annual spending cap of \$245,000 was initially assigned to allocate funds so as not to exceed funding from current sources. With the additional funding created by this measure and broader assignment, the imposed spending limit would need to be adjusted upward. We recommend deleting the statement or clarifying that the spending cap applies only to funding from the licensing fee source.

On page 13, lines 12-15 change to read:

(d) Moneys transferred and deposited into the special fund pursuant to section 291C- shall be used to support the John A. Burns School of Medicine's [medical] residency program defined in 304A-1755, workforce development and training programs, and activities relating to education and training for trauma care, rehabilitative care, and emergency medical services.

RATIONALE:

This assures inclusion of all relevant residency programs and adds back the workforce development and training programs under the John A Burns School of Medicine rather than the Department of Health trauma fund.