

HB2400

LATE

TESTIMONY



H.B. 2400, Relating to Temporary Disabilities Benefits
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
March 18, 2014; 10:00 a.m.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of HB 2400, Relating to Temporary Disability Benefits. My name is Dr. Loraine Fleming, Director of Behavioral Health, Transplant, Liver Center, and Medicine with The Queen's Medical Center.

The Queen's Medical Center continues to successfully re-build Hawaii's Transplant Center, as we proudly provide this critical healthcare service to the community. Still, the need for kidney donations remains critical in Hawaii. There are currently over 400 Hawaii patients awaiting organ transplants, mostly for kidneys. The biggest obstacle to shortening the list is the lack of organ donors. Sadly, about 5 percent of people on the waiting list die every year. What's more, Hawaii consistently has the longest waiting time compared with the national average due to the higher rate of renal failure and inadequate number of donors. In the two years since the program was re-started at QMC, we have completed a total of 89 transplants, which includes kidneys and livers. Of these, there have been 14 live kidney donations.

It is always breathtaking to imagine what one must emotionally go through when deciding to give an organ to another. The selflessness is simply inspiring. The act of organ donation can be physically challenging, requiring adequate time for recuperation. For those that are employed, this measure would provide relief and support to recovering donors.

We recognize the employer cost that could result from this measure, albeit we respectfully suggest the number of times this requirement might be utilized by an employee would be relatively few and therefore the financial impact minimal.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.