

TULSI GABBARD
2ND DISTRICT, HAWAII'

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
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OVERSIGHT & INVESTIGATIONS
SEAPOWERS & PROJECTION FORCES

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA & THE PACIFIC



300 ALA MOANA BOULEVARD, ROOM 5-104
HONOLULU, HI 96850
(808) 541-1986

1609 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4906

www.gabbard.house.gov

February 5, 2016

House of Representatives
Committee on Health
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

To Hawaii State House of Representatives Committee on Health:

I'm writing to support HB 2061 and HB 2234 that target resources to the fight against the outbreak of dengue on Hawaii Island. Coordinated action by all sectors of government, working with the private sector and community, will result in halting the growing numbers of locally acquired cases of dengue fever.

On October 21, 2015 the dengue exposure rate on Hawaii Island was 1 in 185,079. As of January 27, 2016, 1 out of every 853 of our constituents and 3 out of every 50,000 visitors has contracted dengue fever. This constitutes an approximate infection of 66 residents and 6 visitors every month.

The same mosquito that carries dengue fever is also a carrier of the Zika virus which is "spreading explosively" according to UN health officials who have declared an international health emergency. More than a third of the world's population lives in areas at risk for infection from the dengue virus, which is a leading cause of illness and death in the tropics and subtropics. As many as 400 million people are infected annually. The increasing rate of dengue exposure necessitates swift decisive action at every level to halt the spread of dengue and prevent the entry of Zika.

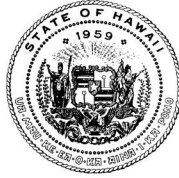
I urge quick passage of HB 2061 and HB 2234 that call for necessary action to protect the people of Hawaii Island and our state from this tragic outbreak, and I look forward to our continuing partnership to protect the people of Hawaii.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tulsi Gabbard".

TULSI GABBARD
Member of Congress (HI-02)

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



VIRGINIA PRESSLER, M.D.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

Testimony COMMENTING on HB 2234
RELATING TO DENGUE FEVER

REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: February 5, 2016 Room Number: 329
Time: 8:30am

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The department appreciates the recommendation of financial assistance for
2 vector borne disease assessment and control efforts, however we would respectfully recommend
3 support of HB 2061 or SB 2240 as the vehicles to pursue restoration of the department's Vector
4 Control Program.

5 **Department Testimony:** The measure proposes the auditor conduct a management audit of the
6 efficiency and effectiveness of the DOH Disease Outbreak Control Division in the current
7 dengue outbreak occurring on Hawaii Island and to provide funding to assist in mosquito control
8 and abatement efforts. The department would like to respectfully provide comments on this
9 measure.

10 As requested by Governor Ige, a thorough assessment of the department's response to the dengue
11 outbreak on Hawaii Island was conducted by Lyle R. Petersen, MD, MPH, Director, Division of
12 Vector-Borne Diseases, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which was
13 documented in a report dated December 8, 2015. The report assessed the epidemiologic
14 response, entomologic assessment and control measures, community outreach, outreach to health
15 care providers, laboratory testing communications and coordination of response efforts.

16 Dr. Petersen determined the epidemiological response to be timely and well considered and that
17 current surveillance should be maintained. Dr. Petersen also indicated the coordination efforts
18 between county and state agencies has been extremely well organized and exemplary. He did

1 note the potential of limited surge capacity should another health outbreak occur simultaneously
2 with the current dengue outbreak. However, a long-term solution may require additional
3 positions to provide the depth required to respond to multiple public health incidents.

4 In addition to Dr. Petersen's evaluation, CDC also provided additional technical assistance to the
5 response efforts. In December, 2015 and February, 2016, a CDC entomology team were
6 dispatched to work with our DOH entomologists to conduct mosquito assessments in Hawaii
7 County. A CDC communications team also did come to Hawaii to evaluate and provide
8 assistance to the response as well.

9 The CDC report noted that the communications capacity of DOH was very limited with only one
10 full-time dedicated position for communication activities. The department acknowledges that
11 deficiency and continues to request support for additional positions and resources.

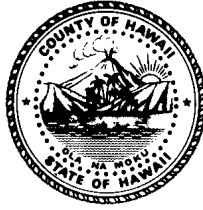
12 Overall, the department acknowledges the independent audit by CDC did identify shortfalls and
13 deficiencies but when possible they were quickly addressed. However, the evaluation also
14 validated our procedures, methodologies and strategies and determined our outbreak response
15 was appropriate.

16 Deficiencies that are directly related to personnel shortages are currently being addressed both in
17 the short and long term and we respectfully request your support in our proposal to restore the
18 vector control and communications positions.

19 In summary, the department welcomes an audit regarding the outbreak response. A further note
20 that CDC will be available to evaluate our response efforts once the outbreak ends. Finally, a
21 standard practice for all incident response actions is to complete a documented incident
22 completion report or "hot wash" among the response team. This activity is particularly critical
23 for this public health outbreak so we can identify lessons learned, establish documentation of
24 response planning and operations activities, and apply this gained knowledge to potential future
25 public health incidents.

26 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Karen Eoff
Council Member
Council District 8 - North Kona



Phone: (808) 323-4280
Fax: (808) 329-4786
Email: karen.eoff@hawaiicounty.gov

HAWAII COUNTY COUNCIL

County of Hawai'i
West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

February 4, 2016

House Committee on Health
Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Representative Richard P. Creagan, Vice Chair

Re: Testimony In Support of HB2234; Relating to Dengue Fever
Hearing Date: February 5, 2016 at 8:30 a.m., Conference Room 329

Dear House Committee on Health:

On behalf of myself and constituents of Council District 8, North Kona, our support for the above referenced bill is expressed, with brief testimony provided as follows:

It is appropriate to requiring the auditor to conduct a management audit to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the disease outbreak control division of the department of health in response to the 2015 outbreak of dengue fever on the island of Hawai'i.

We strongly urge approval for the appropriation of funds for the department of health to perform mosquito assessments, and for control efforts for the island of Hawaii to assist in reducing occurrences, and combatting dengue fever risks.

I strongly encourage you to pass this bill.

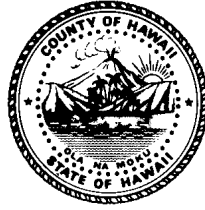
Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Karen Eoff in cursive script.

KAREN EOFF, Vice Chair,
Council District 8, North Kona

KE.wpb

Maile Medeiros David
Council District 6
Portion N. S. Kona/Ka'ū /Volcano



Phone: (808) 323-4277
Fax: (808) 329-4786
Email: maile.david@hawaiicounty.gov

HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

County of Hawai'i
West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

February 4, 2016

Honorable Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair and
Honorable Rep. Richard P. Creagan, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Health
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 402
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: HB 2234 – Relating to Dengue Fever

Honorable Chair Belatti:

I would like to express my strong support of HB 2234 relating to Dengue Fever requiring the auditor to conduct a management audit to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department of Health's response to the 2015 dengue fever outbreak on Hawai'i island. Many constituents in my Council District have expressed concerns regarding our State and County's response to this serious matter.

Your favorable consideration will be greatly appreciated. Mahalo a nui loa.

Very truly yours,

Maile David

Maile David, Councilmember
Hawai'i County Council
Council District 6

md/



February 3, 2016

Testimony in Support of HB2234

Members of the Hawaii Legislature:

The Kohala Coast Resort Association (KCRA) is in support of requiring the auditor to conduct a management audit and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the disease outbreak control division of the Department of Health, in the division's response to the 2015 outbreak of dengue fever on Hawaii Island. We encourage the Legislature to appropriate funds to the Department of Health for mosquito assessment and control efforts for Hawaii Island and to assist in reducing the occurrence and combatting the risk of dengue fever.

KCRA is a collection of master-planned resorts and hotels situated north of the airport which represents more than 3,500 hotel accommodations and an equal number of resort residential units. This is about 60 percent of the accommodations available on the Island of Hawai'i. This dengue fever outbreak has had an impact on our residents, our employees, and visitors to our island and we encourage the Legislature and the Department of Health to take proactive measures to ensure that the Department of Health is adequately funded.

Mahalo for your support.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Donoho
Administrative Director

Patrick Fitzgerald, Hualalai Resort
Kelley Cosgrove, The Fairmont Orchid, Hawai'i
Debi Bishop, Hilton Waikoloa Village
Rodney Ito, Mauna Lani Bay Hotel & Bungalows
John Tolbert, Waikoloa Beach Marriott Resort & Spa
Craig Anderson, Mauna Kea Resort

Takashi Yamakawa, Mauna Lani Resort
Scott Head, Waikoloa Land Company
Denise Hill, Hualalai Resort
Robert Whitfield, Four Seasons Resort Hualalai
Peter Thoene, Mauna Kea Beach Hotel
and Hapuna Beach Prince Hotel

HLTtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 04, 2016 11:18 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: jeandb@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2234 on Feb 5, 2016 08:30AM

HB2234

Submitted on: 2/4/2016

Testimony for HLT on Feb 5, 2016 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| PAUL BREESE | Individual | Support | No |

Comments: I strongly support this bill and any other measures that will help control the dengue carrying mosquito.

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Cc: Merway@hawaii.rr.com
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HB2234

Submitted on: 2/4/2016

Testimony for HLT on Feb 5, 2016 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| marjorie erway | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

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HLTtestimony

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To: HLTtestimony
Cc: mokdatta@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2234 on Feb 5, 2016 08:30AM

HB2234

Submitted on: 2/4/2016

Testimony for HLT on Feb 5, 2016 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Maureen Datta | Individual | Support | No |

Comments: The response to the threat of Dengue is still insufficient. First priority should be immediate test results, not in 7 to 10 days. Second should be ensuring that infected individuals have a screened in place to convalesce without infecting mosquitos nearby. Third should be treating the daytime areas where victims have been for mosquitos. Huge fail all around on all three counts. This is not the first or last time we will have to respond. People in power should learn or be replaced by more capable people.

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Sent: Thursday, February 04, 2016 2:21 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: nsainsevain@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2234 on Feb 5, 2016 08:30AM

HB2234

Submitted on: 2/4/2016

Testimony for HLT on Feb 5, 2016 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Natalie Sainsevain | Individual | Support | No |

Comments: I support this control against dengue fever mosquitoes.

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Aloha,

My name is Edward Rau and I am resident of Naalehu, Hawaii. Recently I retired as an Environmental Health Director of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps after serving on active duty for 30 years. I have over 40 years of professional experience in environmental health practice and am a Licensed Environmental Health Specialist in Maryland. I am also a volunteer with Department of Health (DOH) Big Island Medical Reserve Corps and have assisted with response activities relating to the ongoing dengue outbreak on Hawaii Island.

Today I would like to offer testimony in support of House Bill 2234 requiring the a management audit of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Disease Outbreak Control Division of the Department of Health (DOH) in its response to the 2015 outbreak of dengue fever on the island of Hawaii. The bill also appropriates funds to the DOH for mosquito assessment and control efforts for the island of Hawaii to assist in reducing the occurrence and combatting the risk of dengue fever.

From my observations of the progress of the dengue outbreak and some direct participation in response efforts in a deployment with the Big Island Medical Reserve Corps it has been readily apparent to me the DOH does not have sufficient equipment, staffing and professional expertise to bring this outbreak under control and maintain an effective and comprehensive vector control program needed to prevent future outbreaks.

These resource limitations undoubtedly constrained the Department's response to the dengue outbreak but there appeared to be other problems not clearly related to resource limitations. I have not studied this in detail and don't have access to information on internal operations but these response problems seemed to be in the areas of planning, preparedness and organization. These problems may have impaired response to the outbreak; particularly in it's early phases. With the past history of multiple documented dengue outbreaks in Hawaii as far back as the mid-1800's, the current dengue pandemic in the tropics, thousands of visitors of visitors arriving on the islands and the adverse potential impacts of climate change on transmission, outbreaks of dengue and other arbovirus diseases in Hawaii should be expected. Detailed island-specific response plans should have been ready for immediate activation and the plans should have been accessible to, reviewed by and practiced in advance by DOH personnel, coordinating agencies, the health care community, the Medical Reserve Corps and responders. That does not appear to have been the case. Examples:

1. Early in the outbreak cases apparently had late reporting and follow-up;
2. Issues relating to patient access to health care providers and laboratory services were encountered and are still ongoing;
3. Multilingual brochures and health education materials were not available;
4. There was no communication plan for rural areas with sensitive populations and high exposure potentials relating to outdoor agricultural occupations;

5. Dengue outbreaks typically exhibit a seasonal disease with an epidemic curve beginning in the early summer, peaking in fall and returning to baseline in winter. Spraying and other response activities were initiated too late and are now being expanded at a time when the outbreak could be burning out with little intervention, and control efforts may have little impact. I prepared a presentation relating to this and have provided it to DOH. I would like to include it with this testimony.
6. The unique cultural, economic, environmental, communications, health care availability and logistical aspects of Hawaii Island may not have received adequate consideration and reduced the effectiveness of control efforts.

These problems suggest that there are many problems to be addressed and there is reason to be concerned about our level of preparedness for future outbreaks and other emergencies affecting public health. For these reasons I believe the audit proposed in this bill is urgently needed. Its findings should help to improve the response to the current outbreak and preparedness for future exigencies.

The audit should also pay particular to deficiencies relating to Division management, disease control priority within other DOH programs, the Department's ability to identify gaps in critical capabilities, and where funding is inadequate, make these needs known to the legislature.

I would also like to see provisions in this or another bill for establishing a permanent, fully transparent oversight entity for the DOH that is independent of the DOH and reports to the legislature. I have limited understanding of the applicable HRS provisions but it appears that the Board of Health (BOH) was established long ago for similar purposes. It now appears to be an inactive component, is shown on the DOH organizational charts but is largely invisible, does not have a website as do most of the other boards and commissions, and is apparently made up of political appointees that may not be required to have health credentials. Perhaps the BOH could be reconstituted and given this oversight authority.

I am supportive the other provisions of this bill relating to additional funding for the dengue response effort on Hawaii Island. I am providing testimony in support of companion bill HB2061 that provides additional funding for vector control and the reasons that I support it are also applicable to this bill and will not be repeated here.

I would offer some other suggestions for revisions to HB2234 for your consideration:

1. It is unclear what the public qualifications of the auditor(s) will be. Some members of the audit team should have public health credentials.
2. A timeline and deadline for completion of the audit should be set.
3. The audit should review and focus on the availability and effectiveness of response plans, and training provided to responders in implementing the plans. This should be added to the list of audit targets in the Bill.

4. Provisions should be added to the bill to ensure that the additional appropriated funds for dengue control will be applied to address deficiencies found in the audit. While audit timing issues may preclude this for applications where funds are urgently needed some funds could be set aside until the audit findings are released.
5. The leadership of DOH should be directed to provide a spending plan and ongoing tracking of expenditures made from this special appropriation.
6. The uses of funds provided by this bill and its companion bill appear to be potentially overlapping and should be more clearly defined.
7. Consider adding here or in other legislation provisions to reinvigorate and expand the Medical Reserve Corps to augment DOH response capabilities for this outbreak and future public health emergencies.

I am submitting this testimony on very short notice. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or would like more comments.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

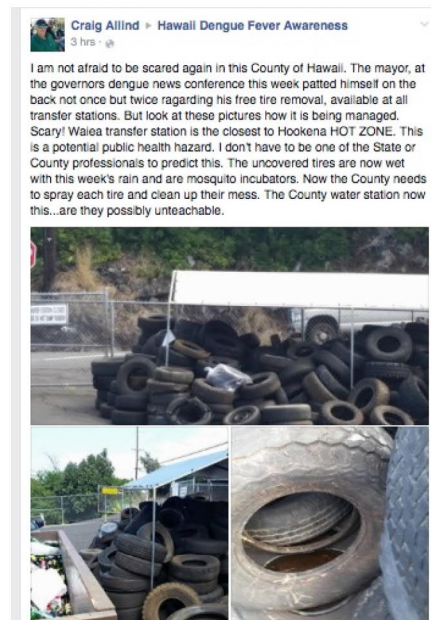
Edward H. Rau, MS, LEHS
Captain, U.S. Public Health Service, Retired

I am positive that there is no way that anyone could look at the current spread of Dengue fever around the Island of Hawaii and not recognize that this outbreak is far from be controlled and isolated. Yet our state officials from the Department of Health, and the Mayor and Civil Defense officials are trying to assure the public that this outbreak is controlled. The following are a few of my concerns:

Our state DOH contracted out the communications for this outbreak to the Bennet Group. Some residents and few visitors have noted the "Fight the Bite: Protect Yourself Protect Hawaii from Dengue Fever" brochure (http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/files/2015/11/Fight_The_Bite_final.pdf) that was produced as the DOH outreach. Dr. Pressler even toted the information on this brochure as a the way we, in Hawaii County, can stay safe in her PBS Hawaii Insights interview. This product was not designed for use as it is being used, in Hawaii County, and was not designed for Dengue Fever. The color choices were not designed to be distributed through photocopier or B/W printer copies (as most schools and public offices here in Hawaii have used). This brochure was a cut and paste from a West Nile brochure that was used decades ago in the midwest and has one inherently misleading piece of information that shows that it was not produced for fighting the bite of mosquitos that carry Dengue Fever. In the "Protect Yourself" section, the mosquito pointer tells the reader to "Avoid...going outdoors at dawn and dusk when mosquitos are most active". While the mosquitos that are vectors for Dengue Fever are active at dawn to dusk, their trademark is that they are active all day long. If anyone who had produced, advocated and distributed this product had checked with CDC "Fight the Bite" brochure, (http://www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/pdfs/fs_mosquito_bite_prevention_us.pdf) they would have noticed that they got the wrong disease and vector on this product! For weeks I have asked many in our state and county government this: "Is there any way that Hawaii can get a PSA produced with "Hawaii-centric" mosquito hazards? I think our government paid somewhere between \$75-\$100K (have seen news reports with both amounts...) to the Bennet Group to do the media campaign, in which I have only seen the "Fight the Bite" handouts (seemingly identical to midwest MAD handouts), photocopied in public buildings, can the Bennet Group use up their media grant with something that was not produced originally for a midwest audience dealing with a different vector and disease than we have here?"

Today in the 'Hawaii Dengue Fever Awareness' FB group was this posting on the tire pile hazards that are building at the Hawaii County waste transfer stations. I hope everyone who sees this can see the potential for disaster that these piles create!

I would also love to see more proactive mosquito control. Right now there is a product awaiting EPA approval that the World Health Organization has seen as a potential "new paradigm" in mosquito control. Has anyone in Hawaii State or County government look into getting the In2Care mosquito traps? <http://www.in2care.org/product/trap-workings/>
http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/137318/1/9789241508025_eng.pdf



Mahalo, Carey Yost, Keaau, Hawaii

HLTtestimony

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Cc: hawaiifishingfanatic@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB2234 on Feb 5, 2016 08:30AM*

HB2234

Submitted on: 2/4/2016

Testimony for HLT on Feb 5, 2016 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Don Aweau | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

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Cc: douglasperrine@yahoo.com
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HB2234

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| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Douglas Perrine | Individual | Support | No |

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