



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
February 23, 2016 at 9:50 a.m.

By

Robert Bley-Vroman, Chancellor

and

Jerris Hedges, MD, MS, MMM

Dean, John A. Burns School of Medicine

Interim Director, University of Hawai'i Cancer Center

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2687 – RELATING TO CANCER

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Cancer Center strongly supports this bill.

The UH Cancer Center is one of only 69 institutions in the United States that hold the prestigious National Cancer Institute (NCI) designation, and is the only NCI-designated center in the Pacific. The NCI designation provides cancer researchers in Hawai'i with greater access to federal funding and research opportunities, and gives the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific region access to many innovative and potentially life-saving clinical trials without the necessity of traveling to the mainland.

This bill will launch a sorely needed public colorectal cancer screening and awareness program. The goal of the program is to increase colon cancer screening rates in Hawai'i in conjunction with the "80% by 2018" initiative of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths, killing nearly 60,000 people in the United States and more than 250 people in Hawai'i each year. Regular colorectal cancer screening in men and women over age 50 can reduce these deaths by more than 40 percent, with the potential to save 100 lives in Hawai'i each year.

Recommended colorectal cancer screening tests include colonoscopy, sigmoidoscopy, and stool blood tests. Costs for these tests range from \$600 for colonoscopy every 10 years to \$25 - \$30 for annual stool tests. In contrast, the cost of treating colon cancers ranges from \$10,000 (early stage disease) to \$40,000 (late stage disease) per person. This tremendous cost burden does not consider the debilitating morbidity and loss of productivity associated with colorectal cancer and its treatment.

Currently, approximately 72 percent of United States men and women age 50 and over have been screened for colorectal cancers. Hawai'i's screening rates for this group is approximately 64 percent. However, when we look at differences by gender, ethnicity,

location, education, or income, the colorectal cancer screening rates are much lower – often less than 40 percent for people over age 50 in some groups. The UH Cancer Center is currently conducting research designed to improve the uptake of colorectal cancer screening in several key underserved groups, including rural and Native Hawaiian populations, and we are meeting with great success in improving screening rates.


We believe that launching a state-led colorectal cancer screening and awareness campaign will provide the “rising tide that raises all ships” to help improve colorectal cancer screening rates in all at-risk groups, and to help Hawai‘i achieve and perhaps surpass the CDC’s goal of having 80 percent of Hawai‘i’s men and women over age 50 regularly screened for colorectal cancer by 2018.

We respectfully urge you to pass this bill.



THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

To: The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair, Committee on Ways and Means
The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair, Committee on Ways and Means
Members, Committee on Ways and Means

From:  Paula Yoshioka, Senior Vice President, The Queen's Health Systems

Date: February 19, 2016

Hrg: Senate Committee on Ways and Means Hearing; Tuesday, February 23, 2016 at 9:50am
in Room 211

Re: Support for SB 2687, Relating to Cancer

My name is Paula Yoshioka, and I am a Senior Vice President at The Queen's Health Systems (Queen's). I would like to express my **support** for SB 2687, which would establish a colorectal cancer screening and awareness program.

Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in our nation. Screening and early detection is key in the prevention of colorectal cancer. Screening can detect pre-cancerous polyps and discover colorectal cancer at an early stage, when treatment is most effective. As a member of the MD Anderson Cancer Network, Queen's is committed to deliver the very best cancer management services and works diligently to advocate for increased early detection within the community.

We urge the legislature to support SB 2687. Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.



American Cancer Society
Cancer Action Network
2370 Nu`uanu Avenue
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96817
808.432.9149
www.acscan.org

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

SB 2678 – RELATING TO CANCER

Cory Chun, Government Relations Director – Hawaii Pacific
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments in support of SB 2678, which appropriates funds to the Department of Health to promote and educate the public on colorectal cancer prevention and awareness.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is the nation's leading cancer advocacy organization. ACS CAN works with federal, state, and local government bodies to support evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem.

Colorectal cancer affects about 900 people in Hawaii each year. Colorectal cancer is a dangerous and deadly cancer because precancerous polyps and early-stage colorectal cancer don't always cause symptoms, especially at first. This means that someone could have polyps or colorectal cancer and not know it. That is why having a screening test is so important.

The purpose of this measure is to establish an education program through the 80 by 18 national initiative. The 80 by 18 initiative seeks to increase the screening rates for colorectal cancer to 80% by 2018. The Department of Health, along with community and health care organizations, are working to increase these rates to achieve the 80 by 18 goal. Funding through this measure will help all the parties move closer to achieving this goal.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this important issue.

From: [Val Toro](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Date: Monday, February 22, 2016 8:38:22 AM

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz and members of the committee,

I am in support of Senate Bill 2687. Too many people suffer and needlessly die from cancer every year, when preventative screenings can help save lives. Colo-rectal cancer is often found after symptoms appear, but most people with early colorectal cancer don't have symptoms of the disease. This is why it's important to get the recommended screening tests before any symptoms develop. In many people, screening can also prevent colorectal cancer by finding and removing polyps before they have the chance to turn into cancer. When colorectal cancer is found at an early stage before it has spread, the 5-year relative survival rate is about 90%. But only about 4 out of 10 colorectal cancers are found at this early stage. When cancer has spread outside the colon or rectum, survival rates are lower. Please move this measure forward and help us take one step closer to preventing another tragic loss of life from cancer.

--

***Mahalo no,
Sista Val
Pa'ia, Maui, Hi.
On-air Personality/Music Director
KPOA 93.5 F.M.
sistaval@kpoa.com***

From: [Holly Dupont](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: "Testimony in Support of SB2687; 2/23/16 WAM hearing"
Date: Monday, February 22, 2016 8:41:21 AM

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz and members of the committee,

I am in support of Senate Bill 2687. Too many people suffer and needlessly die from cancer every year, when preventative screenings can help save lives. Colorectal cancer is often found after symptoms appear, but most people with early colorectal cancer don't have symptoms of the disease. This is why it's important to get the recommended screening tests before any symptoms develop. In many people, screening can also prevent colorectal cancer by finding and removing polyps before they have the chance to turn into cancer. When colorectal cancer is found at an early stage before it has spread, the 5-year relative survival rate is about 90%. But only about 4 out of 10 colorectal cancers are found at this early stage. When cancer has spread outside the colon or rectum, survival rates are lower. Please move this measure forward and help us take one step closer to preventing another tragic loss of life from cancer.

Holly DuPont, Oncology Navigator
P.O. Box 446
Honolulu, Hawaii 96728

Confidentiality Notice: This email message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure, or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply e-mail and destroy all copies of the original message.

From: [Yoanna Tamura](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: "Testimony in Support of SB2687; 2/23/16 WAM hearing"
Date: Monday, February 22, 2016 3:25:06 PM

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz and members of the committee,

I am in support of Senate Bill 2687. Too many people suffer and needlessly die from cancer every year, when preventative screenings can help save lives. Colorectal cancer is often found after symptoms appear, but most people with early colorectal cancer don't have symptoms of the disease. This is why it's important to get the recommended screening tests before any symptoms develop. In many people, screening can also prevent colorectal cancer by finding and removing polyps before they have the chance to turn into cancer. When colorectal cancer is found at an early stage before it has spread, the 5-year relative survival rate is about 90%. But only about 4 out of 10 colorectal cancers are found at this early stage. When cancer has spread outside the colon or rectum, survival rates are lower. Please move this measure forward and help us take one step closer to preventing another tragic loss of life from cancer.

Yoanna Tamura
Pearl City, HI