

HCR 129

Measure Title: REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

Report Title: Colorectal Cancer Screening Rates; Working Group

Description:

Companion:

Package: None

Current Referral: CPH, WAM

Introducer(s): KOBAYASHI



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
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Testimony in SUPPORT of HCR0129

**REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A
WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE
COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE**

SENATOR ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH

Hearing Date: April 12, 2017

Room Number: 229

1 **Fiscal Implications:** Department will rely on existing resources to meet the requests.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) supports HCR0129. The United
3 States Preventive Services Task Force recommends screening for colorectal cancer beginning at
4 age 50 years and continuing until age 75 years. Early detection is crucial since survival rates for
5 localized disease is 90 percent, but in Hawaii, from 2009-2013, 50% of colorectal cancer was
6 diagnosed at late stages.^{1 2} Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in
7 Hawaii and the mortality rate is highest for Native Hawaiians.³

8 Colorectal cancer screening rates for people over age 50 are much lower for those
9 residing in low-income households and those with less than a high school education. Colorectal
10 screening rates have been steadily increasing from 59.4% in 2011, to 66.5% in 2014, and 70.5%
11 by 2015. Achieving the state goal of 80% by 2020 is a priority of the Department's Hawaii
12 Comprehensive Cancer Control Program and the Hawaii Cancer Control Coalition.⁴ Therefore,
13 the Department concurs with the recommendations of the measure to convene the working group

¹ Cancer Facts & Figures 2017, American Cancer Society.

² Hawai'i: Cancer at a Glance 2009-2013, University of Hawai'i Cancer Center and Hawai'i Tumor Registry.

³ *ibid*

⁴ Source: Hawaii Health Data Warehouse; Hawaii State Department of Health, Hawaii Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Colorectal screening (50-75), for the State of Hawaii, for the Years 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015.

1 with the assistance of the American Cancer Society (ACS) - Hawaii Pacific and the ACS Cancer
2 Action Network to develop recommendations, including any proposed legislation that will
3 increase colorectal cancer screening rates in the state. The proposed working group reflects
4 many of the current partners in the Hawaii Cancer Coalition and will also be an opportunity to
5 collaborate with other organizations to achieve the state objective of increasing the proportion of
6 adults who meet the colorectal cancer screening guidelines to 80%.

7 Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health
Wednesday, April 12, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

By
Randall F. Holcombe, MD, MBA
Director, University of Cancer Center
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HCR 129 – REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

Chair Baker, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Committee:

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

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

This bill will bring together cancer control and prevention advocates in our community to identify barriers to colorectal cancer screening among underserved, hard-to-reach population groups, and enhance the need for public colorectal cancer screening and awareness. The goal is to increase colon cancer screening rates in Hawai'i to 80% by 2020.

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.

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 great success in improving screening rates.

We believe that developing recommendations to increase colorectal cancer screening and awareness will help to improve colorectal cancer screening rates in all at-risk groups, and to help Hawai'i achieve 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.

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



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health
Wednesday, April 12, 2017; 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

RE: SUPPORT OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 129 - REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

Chair Baker, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Hirokawa and I am the Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA), a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA appreciates this opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of House Concurrent Resolution No. 129.

The Concurrent Resolution, as received by your Committee, would request the Department of Health to convene a working group, with the assistance of the American Cancer Society-Hawaii-Pacific and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, to develop recommendations to increase colorectal cancer screening rates in the State. In addition, the working group would be requested to, among other things, *“assess existing and potential state and community resources to address screening and awareness of colorectal cancer”*, and *“strategies to partner across health systems, providers, insurers, and community organizations to collaborate on reaching underserved populations.”*

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), colorectal cancer--cancer of the colon or rectum-- is one of the most commonly diagnosed cancers in the United States, and is the second leading cancer killer in the United States. The CDC estimates that if all adults aged 50 or older had regular screening tests for colon cancer, as many as 60% of the deaths from colorectal cancer could be prevented. Risks and benefits of using different screening methods, such as stool-based tests, sigmoidoscopies, and colonoscopies, vary. The US Preventive Service Task Forces recommends that screening begin at age 50 and continue until age 75; however, testing may need to begin earlier or be more frequent if colorectal cancer runs in the family, or if there is a previous diagnosis of inflammatory bowel disease.

Community Health Centers serve on the front line providing desperately needed primary care for Hawaii's underprivileged communities. The HPCA welcomes the opportunity to partner with the Department of Health, the American Cancer Society, and all stakeholders to expand testing for colorectal cancer. Ultimately, such efforts will promote a healthier and happier population.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit supportive testimony.



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

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health
Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Senator Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee

**HCR 129 – REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING
GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL CANCER
SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HCR 129, which requests the Department of Health to convene a working group to develop recommendations to address increasing colorectal cancer screenings. This measure is a community effort between the American Cancer Society, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, and the Department of Health.

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in men and the third leading cause of death in women in the state. Hawaii sees an average of 660 new cases of colon and rectum cancer each year, with an average of 240 deaths from the disease. Hawaii has a higher incidence rate than the overall U.S. rate, with the highest ethnic incidence rate coming from Japanese males and females while the highest mortality rate coming from Native Hawaiian males and females. These deaths are preventable, and increasing access to screenings will go a long way to saving more lives from cancer.

This measure is important for two reasons; it incorporates objectives in the 2016-2020 Hawaii State Cancer Plan and recognizes that the Department of Health and community partners can accomplish more towards public health and cancer prevention together. The work done pursuant to this measure could create the groundwork for increasing colorectal cancer screening in the State to achieve the goals of reaching an 80% screening rate of eligible individuals for colorectal cancer by 2020.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important matter.

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

FROM: Beverly Wong

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A
WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL
CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

My name is Beverly Wong and I am writing to express my support for HCR129. I believe that this concurrent resolution will go a long way toward saving the lives of Hawaii residents by providing recommendations to promote the early screening of colorectal cancer.

My mother was a colon cancer survivor and were fortunate to have her love, care and company for 25 additional years. Her survival was in no small part due to a very competent doctor who diagnosed her condition at an early stage.

Because of this personal experience, I feel that others would benefit from the early detection and screening of colon cancer. This resolution allows the American Cancer Society Hawaii-Pacific and the Department of Health will form a work group of community partners to develop recommendations to increase colorectal cancer screening rates in the State.

Sincerely,
Beverly Wong

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

FROM: Chandra Quinlan

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A
WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL
CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

As a cancer survivor I understand the importance of early detection and screening for cancer. As a friend of someone who is currently battling metastatic colon cancer I especially know the significance of colorectal cancer screenings.

My friend Linda was diagnosed with Stage IV colon cancer in 2012. By then, the cancer had already metastasized to her lungs and her oncologist bluntly told her that she had just months to live. Four years later, a new oncologist, several surgeries, chemotherapy and radiation, Linda is still here but facing daily challenges and will likely continue to face these challenges for the rest of her life. Had Linda been screened for colorectal cancer sooner she most likely would not have been faced with such a dire prognosis.

This resolution allows the American Cancer Society Hawaii-Pacific and the Department of Health will form a work group of community partners to develop recommendations to increase colorectal cancer screening rates in the State.

Hawaii is such a close-knit state and like myself I am sure you have been touched by someone who has been diagnosed with colon cancer. We ask that you take the lead in preventing so many from the unnecessary pain and suffering of cancer.

Mahalo,

Chandra Quinlan

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

FROM: Holly Ho-Chee-Dupont

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A
WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL
CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

My name is Holly Ho-Chee-Dupont and I am writing to express my support for HCR129. I was a caregiver to many family members who died from cancer. I want to tell you about my sister, Deborah, who passed away from colon cancer.

It's been two years since my sister Deborah passed away. She was diagnosed with colon cancer and despite the treatment she endured, remained kind, generous and touched many people because of her loving spirit and dedicated effort in making someone's day.

Because of her and her memory, I am a strong advocate for this resolution. As a Cancer Patient Navigator for the Queen's Medical Center Cancer Center, I can personally attest to the need for greater outreach to community partners throughout Hawaii regarding the options for colorectal cancer screenings.

I wish to thank you for your anticipated support of HCR129.

Mahalo,
Holly Ho-Chee-Dupont

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A
WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL
CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

My name is Niha Prasad and I am writing to express my support for the HCR129. As a wife of a physician, I have heard many stories of patients who were diagnosed with various cancers, particularly colorectal cancer, at advanced stages.

Often my husband has been the first person to bear this heartbreaking news to the patient and their families. I have watched him struggle over and over again trying to understand why so many people do not get screening for colon cancer. It is truly heartbreaking to hear about people's lack of awareness about colorectal cancer screening until there are not many options are left for treatments.

HCR129 will help to convene community partners and the Department of Health to come up with actionable objectives to allow for higher colon cancer screening rates in our state. It is the second deadliest form of cancer but it is also one of the few forms of cancer that can be prevented with early screening. I wholeheartedly believe we should all work towards bringing awareness to this issue so diagnosis and treatments could be done at the right time.

I encourage you to support this resolution.

Sincerely,

Niha Prasad

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

My name is Ye Eun “Stella” Lee. I’m a graduate of Sacred Hearts Academy and I’m currently attending Brown University. My eventual goal is to come back to Hawaii and attend JABSOM, where I’m hoping to make a difference in our community.

In the meantime, I want to make a difference by advocating for policies that would provide benefits to Hawaii residents. This resolution will help to convene a workgroup that allows for outreach to communities that are typically underrepresented for colon cancer screening. Having helped to conduct outreach to lower-socio economic status communities, I wholeheartedly believe that this will help improve the colon cancer screening rate in Hawaii.

As someone that is hoping to be involved in the medical community in Hawaii, I urge you to support this resolution.

Sincerely,
Ye Eun “Stella” Lee

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A
WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL
CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

My name is Patrick Tran. I'm a graduate of the University of Hawaii at Manoa and currently work as a Software Engineer in the Bay Area.

I am testifying because cancer has affected my family. My uncle was recently diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, the same form of cancer that Congressman Takai's life. While my uncle is undergoing treatment, I want to make sure that others never have to go through the pain and suffering caused by cancer.

I support this resolution because it would help to convene a workgroup on a much needed issue: ensuring that the state can outreach to communities that typically do not undergo important cancer screenings. If we can help prevent hundreds of Hawaii residents from developing cancer due to the detection of precancerous polyps and help those with the early stages of colon cancer, this will help better our community.

I urge you to support this resolution.

Sincerely,
Patrick Tran

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

My name is Alberto Rodriguez and I am writing to express my support for HCR129. I have witnessed my coworker's fight against cancer and I want to make sure that others are able to undergo early detection and screening for cancer.

In my military service over the past two decades, I have had the pleasure of supervising great men and women that proudly serve our country. One of the men I supervised, Master Sergeant Hewitt, received a cancer diagnosis upon returning from serving in Afghanistan. Upon hearing the news, we all approached his diagnosis with the Soldier's Creed: You never quit, you never leave a fallen comrade. MSG Hewitt approached the situation with a positive and inspirational attitude. The rest of his colleagues, including myself, his direct supervisor, tried our best to support him throughout his cancer treatment by ensuring that we could support him in his work-life balance as he underwent the stress of cancer treatment.

Eventually, MSG Hewitt separated from the military. While this built upon the stress of his cancer treatments, he demonstrated the will of a warrior that showed that he would be able to beat his cancer diagnosis.

I know that MSG Hewitt's experience is similar to many others in our armed services. And I have personally committed myself to ensuring that I can help out my fellow servicemen and all Hawaii residents by supporting legislation that would help promote early detection and treatment of cancer to ensure that individuals like MSG Hewitt are able to serve another day.

I urge you to support this resolution.

Sincerely,
Alberto Rodriguez
Ewa Beach, Hawaii

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

I am writing to express my support for HCR129. I have witnessed a family member's struggle against cancer and I want to make sure that others are able to undergo early detection and screening from cancer.

My sister is a fifteen-year colorectal cancer survivor. Her children, grandchildren as well as our family members have been undergoing colorectal cancer screenings and we all want to make sure that we can help promote outreach to Hawaii residents about why screening is so important.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Mahalo,
Gay Okada
Kailua-Kona, Hawaii Island

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A
WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL
CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

My name is Irene Stielow and I am writing to express my support for HCR129. My family has been directly impacted by cancer, and as someone that has witnessed and served as a caregiver to these loved ones, I want to make sure that others are able to undergo early detection and screening to help prevent their early passing.

My father, brother-in-law and husband have all passed away from cancer that may have been prevented with early screenings and detection. My father, who was diagnosed with stage 3 lung cancer, passed away from the surgery tied to his cancer diagnosis. My brother-in-law also passed away from lung cancer which again, could have been avoided had it been detected earlier. Finally, my husband lost his battle to cancer when he found that he was diagnosed with stage 3 kidney cancer. After undergoing surgery, he spent eight days in intensive care before he passed away at 67 years of age.

Cancer has touched my life so significantly and taken away so many loved ones before their time. I want to make sure that other Hawaii residents do not have to go through the pain and suffering caused by cancer. On behalf of all those touched by cancer, I want to thank you for consideration of my testimony and urge your support for this resolution.

Mahalo,
Irene Stielow

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice-Chair

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Nishihara and members of the committee,

I am writing to express my support for HCR129. While that my immediate family has been cancer free, I witnessed the hardships that one of the pastors at our local congregation has gone through over the past several months. As such, I wholeheartedly support legislation that would help to lessen the burden of cancer.

One morning service, Pastor Janet gave a sermon despite weeks of chemotherapy and its side effects. Her husband and the church family have been critical social supports during her treatments. Losing hair, weight, and much sleep, she still pushed through to deliver an inspiring, heart-felt, and humorous message to the congregation with a focus around the need for us to realize that we can put action to faith in addition to praying for a cure. Several of the men and other pastors shaved their heads bald to stand with Pastor Janet. I demonstrate my faith in action by testifying to the need to screen a larger share of the population to detect and fight cancer.

This resolution allows the American Cancer Society Hawaii-Pacific and the Department of Health will form a work group of community partners to develop recommendations to increase colorectal cancer screening rates in the State; ensuring that we reach under screened communities and also provide coverage for colorectal cancer screenings to those who need it the most.

I urge you to support this resolution. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,
James Gauer.

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A
WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL
CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

My name is Jennifer Hausler and I am writing to express my strong support for HCR129. I believe that this resolution will go a long way toward saving the lives of Hawaii residents by promoting early screening of colorectal cancer.

My husband, Glenn Shimada, died at age 32 from colon cancer. He may be alive today if he had been screened and not have missed the lives of our two sons who were five years old and eight months old when he passed away.

Colorectal cancer affects nearly 1,000 Hawaii residents in Hawaii every year which could be prevented with early detection and screening for pre-cancerous polyps. Two of my best friends were diagnosed with colon cancer after they completed a screening. Fortunately, both were able to afford the screening and both are now 5+ year survivors.

Because of this personal experience, I feel that others would benefit from the early detection and screening of colon cancer. This resolution allows the American Cancer Society Hawaii-Pacific and the Department of Health will form a work group of community partners to develop recommendations to increase colorectal cancer screening rates in the State. It will help to ensure that we reach under screened communities and also provide coverage for colorectal cancer screenings to those who need it the most.

On behalf of my husband, my best friends and so many Hawaii residents, please pass this resolution.

Mahalo,
Jennifer Hausler

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice-Chair

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Nishihara and members of the committee,

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

My name is Laura Evans and I am writing to express my support for HCR129. As a cancer survivor, I know how important early detection and cancer screenings are to a successful outcome for cancer patients.

I have battled breast cancer four times, spanning 12 years. When I was first diagnosed, my son was only three years old. My first and greatest fear was that I would not live to see the many milestones in his life that mothers cherish such as his graduation, first girlfriend, college marriage-the list is endless.

I was too young for a mammogram and too busy with my growing business to take time out for routine checkups. Consequently, my tumor was quite large when detected. After surgery with radiation, the cancer returned again and was invasive. Throughout these past years, I have endured a total of four occurrences, endured four rounds of chemotherapy, two rounds of radiation and lost my hair twice. I had to seek treatment on the mainland, and this traveling and separation wreaked havoc on family, leading to my divorce from my husband. I missed so many priceless moments with my son. I was unable to continue working and suffered financial hardship.

I am so grateful to be alive today and to share a wonderful life with my amazing son. I cannot help but wonder however, what our lives would have been like if my cancer had been detected early.

As you may be aware, mammograms and colorectal cancer screenings are some of the most effective ways that we could detect cancers at an early or pre-cancerous stage. I want to make sure that the American Cancer Society Hawaii-Pacific and the Department of Health can form a workgroup to outreach to those that desperately need screenings but may be unaware of where to turn.

On behalf of Hawaii's cancer survivors, I wish to thank you for your support of HCR129.

Mahalo,
Laura Evans
Lihue, Kauai

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health

Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair

Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice-Chair

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Nishihara and members of the committee,

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

My name is Lauren Muraoka and I am writing to express my support for HCR129. As a cancer survivor, I believe this resolution will help to ensure that so many other Hawaii residents are able to avoid the pain and suffering caused by cancer.

When I was seven months old I was diagnosed with a type of cancer, Neuroblastoma. Since I was so young I thankfully don't remember the actual treatments that I went through. However, I do remember all the yearly check-ups and visits with my oncologists and my first summer camp that the American Cancer Society put on for cancer patients and survivors-Camp Anuenue. It was here that I truly got to see the realities of what some of these patients, kids themselves, had to go through to make sure they were healthy enough to participate in activities.

I was so inspired by their love for life and their determination to fight and beat cancer. As I've gotten older, I've been able to appreciate the friendships that I've developed as a result of our shared experienced with cancer. I also remember, and hold close to my heart, the memory of all of those that I've met that have lost their fight against cancer. It is in the memory of those friends that I support this resolution.

I urge you to support this resolution. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

Lauren Muraoka

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice-Chair

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Nishihara and members of the committee,

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A
WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE
COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

My name is Uri Martos and I am writing to express my support for HCR129. As a recent cancer survivor I can certainly tell you that I would not be here today if it wasn't for an early detection screening.

About 20 years ago my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. Luckily, she survived and her experience generated an awareness in me about my own health. Because of her diagnosis and my proactive approach to my personal health, I was able to start my mammogram screenings at the age of 35. It was after my second mammogram when I was 36 that my breast cancer was discovered. I consider myself extremely blessed to have found my cancer at the earliest possible stage, but for so many I know that may not be the case.

As you may be aware, mammograms and colorectal cancer screenings are some of the most effective ways that we could detect cancers at an early or pre-cancerous stage. This resolution will help ensure that we fight against colorectal cancer by forming a workgroup with the American Cancer Society Hawaii-Pacific, the Hawaii State Department of Health and other community partners to address colorectal cancer screening rates. It will help to ensure that we reach under screened communities and also provide coverage for colorectal cancer screenings to those who need it the most.

On behalf of Hawaii's cancer survivors, I wish to thank you for your anticipated support of HCR129.

Mahalo nui loa,
Uri Martos
Lawai, Kauai

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Vice-Chair

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Nishihara and members of the committee,

RE: HCR129, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A
WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE COLORECTAL
CANCER SCREENING RATES IN THE STATE.

My name is Gary Tanimitsu, and I am writing to express my support for HCR129. I believe this resolution will help to address potential shortfalls in medical coverage that may eventually impact low-income seniors such as myself.

As a senior, I have had difficulty finding permanent work over the past few years. In spite of this, I am grateful to have been covered by Medicare and Medicaid during this period. I've been able to receive excellent medical care when I landed in the hospital with pneumonia in 2011 and when I came down with an extreme case of the Shingles in 2015.

However, I'm long overdue for a colonoscopy, 8 years overdue to be exact. I was scheduled to have it done a couple of months ago but had to postpone it to take care of other pressing matters. I'm now planning to have it done this month and this screening procedure is made possible by the Medicare and Medicaid coverage that I currently have.

Since the recent election however, I'm genuinely worried about my ability to get cancer screenings like this and others in the future. As I continue to age, I anticipate that my need for such screenings as well as other services will increase.

This resolution allows the American Cancer Society Hawaii-Pacific and the Department of Health will form a work group of community partners to develop recommendations to increase colorectal cancer screening rates in the State and ensure that low-income residents can maintain access to colorectal cancer screenings. It will ensure that folks like me can still have coverage even with the turmoil that we're going through at the federal level.

I urge you to support this resolution. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,
Gary Tanimitsu