



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
and
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
February 28, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.
by
Donald O. Straney
Chancellor, University of Hawai'i at Hilo

LATE

SB 272 SD1 – RELATING TO RAT LUNGWORM DISEASE

Chairs Baker and Tokuda, Vice Chairs Nishihara and Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Donald Straney, Chancellor of the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and I support the intent of SB 272 SD1 to fund programs, studies and activities to prevent and eradicate rat lungworm disease.

UH Hilo views the proposal as a positive solution to address a critical health issue in the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 272 SD1. Aloha.

CPH Testimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2017 3:06 PM
To: CPH Testimony
Cc: tiana@farmtokeiki.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB272 on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM

LATE

SB272

Submitted on: 2/27/2017

Testimony for CPH/WAM on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tiana Kamen	Farm to Keiki	Support	No

Comments: I am a nutritionist to teach young children and families to be healthy. The healthiest foods we have are grown in our island soils. Rat Lungworm is a huge threat that is scaring children and parents from eating locally grown foods. Without fresh vegetables, children are not able to grow, learn and properly develop. We need your help to establish support for controlling rat lung worm, educating people about how to safely grow and eat locally grown food, and establishing protocols to help people who have the disease. A dear friend of mine went for almost a year without proper diagnosis of rat lungworm. It ate through her brain and spinal cord. She almost died. Now she is alive, but is on heavy medications, is bound to a wheelchair and suffers from pain, mental fog and more. She is not able to take care of herself, hold a job to pay for medical bills or live her life without suffering. She was a grown woman (31 years old). Can you imagine what rat lungworm will do if it affects a child? Rat lungworm is extremely serious. It does not pick its victims. Everyone who eats locally grown food in Hawaii is susceptible. Please respect, represent and honor the health of our community and pass this bill. The health of our community lies in your hands and hearts. Mahalo nui loa, Tiana Kamen, Masters of Science in Nutrition Director, Farm to Keiki

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

CPH Testimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2017 5:00 PM
To: CPH Testimony
Cc: doran_vaughan@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB272 on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM

LATE

SB272

Submitted on: 2/27/2017

Testimony for CPH/WAM on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Doran Vaughan	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please support funding UHH School of Pharmacy Research on Rat Lung Worm Disease. This research is essential to the welfare of people living in as well as visiting Hawaii.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

CPH Testimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2017 5:14 PM
To: CPH Testimony
Cc: PAVMiller721@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB272 on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM*

LATE

SB272

Submitted on: 2/27/2017

Testimony for CPH/WAM on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Paula Miller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

baker4 - Mary Kate

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2017 10:38 PM
To: CPH Testimony
Cc: millikan@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB272 on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM

LATE

SB272

Submitted on: 2/27/2017

Testimony for CPH/WAM on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Debbie Millikan	Individual	Support	No

Comments: SB272, SD1: RELATING TO RAT LUNGWORM DISEASE Chairs Baker and Tokuda, Vice Chairs Nishihara and Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committees, I strongly support SB272, SD1. Rat Lungworm Disease (RLWD) is an issue that can no longer be ignored in Hawai'i. There is a desperate need for funding, research, monitoring/control, and educational outreach dedicated to this disastrously debilitating disease, so that there are ZERO cases going forward. As someone who works regularly with young children teaching them about where their food comes from and watching the excitement when harvesting and tasting garden produce for the first time, I am concerned about the possibility of RLWD in our schools. We need additional resources to understand how we can keep our keiki safe. Please pass this bill to enable the ERADICATION of RLWD in Hawai'i. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

baker4 - Mary Kate

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2017 8:55 PM
To: CPH Testimony
Cc: candiceleetan@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB272 on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM*

LATE

SB272

Submitted on: 2/27/2017

Testimony for CPH/WAM on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Candice Tan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

baker4 - Mary Kate

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2017 8:51 PM
To: CPH Testimony
Cc: rbennett22@earthlink.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB272 on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM

LATE

SB272

Submitted on: 2/27/2017

Testimony for CPH/WAM on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ruth Bennett	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: I strongly support the passage of SB 272. Addressing the health crisis for Hawai'i (not just the Big Island) that rat lung disease presents, in a holistic, coordinated way will not only save many people from serious illness but rescue our state's important locally sustainable and organic farming from the terrible stigma of a disease with a really revolting name. The welfare of our rural communities is in your hands. Do the right thing and PASS SB 272.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

baker4 - Mary Kate

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2017 6:52 PM
To: CPH Testimony
Cc: lorie.farrell@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB272 on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM*

LATE

SB272

Submitted on: 2/27/2017

Testimony for CPH/WAM on Feb 28, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lorie Farrell	Hawaii Farmers & Ranchers United	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

Aloha Hawaii State Representatives,

My name is Donna Mitts and I reside on the Hamakua Coast of Hawaii Island. I have been involved with school learning gardens here for around 15 years. I am testifying in support of HB 474 as the need for funding for the University of Hawaii at Hilo for research and education for rat lungworm disease is essential. The University of Hawaii at Hilo has been the leading proponent for research and education on rat lungworm disease since 2012, and they have been operating with very little funding. Increased funding is crucial for the following reasons:

- Over the past 15-years cases of rat lungworm disease in Hawaii have been increasing in number and severity, costing people their lives, livelihoods, savings, health, and well-being. There have been deaths and disabilities from the disease, many people never recover fully. Those of us who know about the disease are afraid of getting it as we have seen or have heard about the impact it can have on one's health. The disease has affected people in Hawaii, Maui, Oahu, and Kauai Counties, and the parasite has been found on all of the major Hawaiian Islands with the exception of Lanai.
 - Case numbers are under-reported because many doctors are not familiar with the disease and there is no easy diagnostic. Diagnosis currently requires a spinal tap, which is a costly dangerous procedure, and therefore many, many cases go undiagnosed.
 - Rat lungworm disease, a food-borne illness, is detrimental to Hawaii's efforts to become food secure. This problem will hurt our farmers, grocers, school gardens and consumers. Already there are those of us who do not purchase fresh vegetables grown in Hawaii, and many of us will not consume salads at restaurants because we don't know how well the lettuce has been washed. Education for food handlers is important!
 - There needs to be more education available for residents, especially new residents, and visitors who know nothing about the disease. There also needs to be education for the school garden projects so our keiki are safe.
 - The vectors of rat lungworm disease are all invasive species, as is the parasite itself, and there is a need for host control. When case numbers started to rise 10 years ago control efforts should have begun. The semi-slug is an important carrier of the rat lungworm, and it has spread around the island because there has been no education or efforts for host control. All slugs and snails, and some flatworms can be carriers, and they all are invasive species. Rats are also bad for Hawaii and should be controlled.
 - Studies are showing the potential for infection through water, and Hawaii Island relies heavily on rainwater catchment, which may be a reason cases of rat lungworm disease are higher in Hawaii County. We need to know if filters, what size filters, and if UV light will keep the parasite out of household water in a catchment system. There is a need for education for those using rainwater catchment. The use of rainwater catchment for agriculture needs to be explored to ensure prevention of crops.
- People who know about rat lungworm disease and are taking precautions and some are still getting sick. This problem is endangering residents and visitors, as well as Hawaii's reputation as a tropical vacation paradise. I am in support of HB 474 because rat lungworm disease must be addressed in order to ensure that the health and mental well-being of Hawaii's residents and visitors are protected. Please fully support HB 474 and provide funding for UHH to continue to do their work with adequate monies.

Mahalo,

Sincerely,

Donna Mitts