



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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**Testimony COMMENTING on HCR138
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO DEVELOP STRATEGIES TO
PREVENT THE STATEWIDE SPREAD OF SEASONAL INFLUENZA WITH
PRIORITY GIVEN TO HIGH-RISK ELDERLY RESIDENTS IN ASSISTED LIVING
FACILITIES.**

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN M. MIZUNO, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Hearing Date: 3/21/2018

Room Number: 329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** If the Department of Health is required to implement additional strategies
2 to educate the public, increased funding would be needed. Previous public education campaigns
3 targeting individuals at-risk of complications from influenza cost from \$60,000 to \$80,000,
4 including development of TV and radio ads; media airtime purchases; print materials distribution
5 to healthcare provider offices, schools, and community partners; and bus posters.

6 **Department Testimony:** DOH appreciates the intent of this measure and emphatically agrees
7 with the importance of providing education about influenza disease and vaccination. The
8 promotion of influenza vaccination has been a priority of DOH for many years. DOH regularly
9 implements educational strategies for the public and assisted living facilities.

10 DOH currently provides information to the public on the importance of influenza vaccination
11 and personal hygiene habits (e.g., hand washing, covering coughs/sneezes, staying home when
12 sick) to prevent disease transmission. Current strategies to educate the public include use of
13 mainstream, print, and social media. In addition, DOH utilizes strategies to increase access to
14 vaccination, including maintenance of an interactive map of community pharmacies/clinics
15 providing vaccinations and contracting with Aloha United Way to provide free, statewide
16 telephone referral services to immunization resources.

17 DOH also provides information about influenza and vaccination to assisted living facilities
18 statewide each year. For over 10 years, the Immunization Branch and Office of Health Care

1 Assurance together have distributed letters to Adult Residential Care Homes (ARCH) and Long-
2 Term Care Facilities (LTCF) statewide. The letters inform these homes and facilities about the
3 importance of influenza vaccination, especially for residents/patients who are at high-risk for
4 complications from influenza disease. Through this annual letter, we recommend influenza
5 vaccination of staff and healthcare personnel. Resources for additional information about
6 influenza disease and vaccination are also included in the letter.

7 In addition, the DOH Influenza Surveillance and Response Coordinator has conducted a recent
8 training for the Healthcare Association of Hawaii, a membership organization of acute care
9 hospitals, Medicare-certified home health agencies, hospices, private and public skilled nursing
10 facilities, assisted living facilities, and other healthcare organizations. The presentation included
11 information about influenza disease, vaccination, surveillance, and reporting procedures.

12 The Department looks forward to continuing its work in educating the public and assisted living
13 facilities about influenza and the importance of vaccination, and appreciates any support the
14 legislature may offer.

15 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HCR-138

Submitted on: 3/20/2018 9:17:33 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/21/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maly Nakoa	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a registered nurse I oppose this bill. The flu shot year after year is showing less effectiveness and increased injury. The flu shot has not shown to decrease incidence of flu at any significant rate. Please review the Cochran review on flu vaccines. The flu shot is now the largest payout for injury. This is not surprising as it is pushed so heavily without properly educating patients of its potential risk. I strongly oppose this resolution.