



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committees on Higher Education and
Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Thursday, February 8, 2018 at 1:20 p.m.

By

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

And

Michael Bruno, PhD
Vice Chancellor for Research
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2877 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII CANCER CENTER

Chairs Kahele and Baker, Vice Chairs Kim and Tokuda, and members of the committees:

The University of Hawai'i supports SB 2877, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR approved supplemental budget. This measure proposed by Senator Breene Harimoto supports the Hawai'i Early Phase Cancer Clinical Trials Program at the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center (UH Cancer Center).

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. More importantly, it 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.

Each year more than 6,000 Hawai'i residents are diagnosed with cancer, and more than 2,000 will die from the disease. Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawai'i, and accounts for one of every five deaths statewide. Hawaii's racial/ethnic mixture makes us unique (as compared with national norms) in the types and incidents of cancer. As a NCI-designated cancer research center, the UH Cancer Center brings ground-breaking studies and new cancer-fighting drugs and treatment to our community, making it possible for Hawaii's people to receive many advanced treatments for cancer without the need to travel to the mainland away from home and at great expense. However, the most novel medications for the treatment of cancer

provided through early phase (Phase 1) clinical trials are not currently available in the State of Hawai'i.

Rationale:

1. Early phase (phase I) clinical trials offer patients with cancer access to novel treatments to improve the quality and quantity of life, especially when having exhausted standard treatments
2. There is currently no opportunity for patients in Hawai'i to access early phase cancer clinical trials without traveling to the mainland
3. As the only academic center in the State, the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center has the unique capacity to establish an early phase clinical trials program

Goal:

Establish a Program committed to bringing novel early phase trials to Hawai'i for the benefit of cancer patients throughout the State.

The University of Hawai'i Cancer Center, in collaboration with healthcare partners in the Hawai'i Cancer Consortium, provides access to clinical trials for nearly 2/3 of the cancer patients in the State. It maintains a robust infrastructure of protocol review and oversight. However, phase I and other early phase cancer trials are distinctive and require specific expertise and a dedicated treatment facility.

Our vision is to recruit physicians with early phase trial experience to the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center to build the program. Dedicated space will be designed and constructed in available shell space (Annex) adjacent to the Cancer Center. This program will complement drug discovery programs already in place within the Cancer Center focused on identifying compounds derived from natural products with anti-cancer activity. These compounds, along with novel therapies developed by industry, will form the basis for novel clinical trials and enable patients to receive this type of treatment in Hawai'i where their family and support systems are nearby and without the expense of months-long stays on the mainland while at other centers. The **Hawai'i Early Phase Cancer Clinical Trials Program** will provide remarkable benefit for cancer patients in Hawai'i.

Location: 1st and 2nd floors, University of Hawai'i Cancer Center, Annex

Partnerships: Queens Medical Center, Hawai'i Pacific Health and the Hawai'i Cancer Consortium

Benefit to people in Hawai'i – often cancer patients are feeling reasonably fit even if their cancer progresses on standard therapies and they wish to explore new

approaches and novel treatments for their cancer. This provides hope for the patients, the potential for improved outcomes and, not insignificantly, provides us with the type of knowledge needed to improve cancer care in the future. Often, participation in early phase clinical trials requires a substantial time commitment and many physician visits. This is difficult if patients are away from home, both financially and because they are away from their family support structure. This program will allow patients with advanced cancer who live in Hawai'i to have access to these novel treatments without the expense and hardship of relocating to the mainland.

The CIP funds requested for the UH Cancer Center will be used to build out available shell space adjacent to the UH Cancer Center in order to develop an Early Phase Clinical Trials Unit. The program providing access to these trials is envisioned as a joint partnership between the UH Cancer Center and the Hawai'i Cancer Consortium members, including Queens Medical Center and Hawai'i Pacific Health.

We respectfully urge this Committee to approval of this measure.

SB-2877

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 1:03:48 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/8/2018 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2877

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 11:27:37 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/8/2018 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Charles Rosser	University of Hawaii Cancer Center	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony Presented Before the

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

By

Charles J. Rosser, MD, MBA
Associate Director, Translational and Clinical Research

University of Hawaii Cancer Center

SB2877 - Relating to the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the committee:

I write in support of the CIP appropriation for the UH Cancer Center proposed by Senator Breene Harimoto under SB2877 in support of the Hawai'i Early Phase Cancer Clinical Trials Program.

As you may already know, 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. More importantly, it 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. Specifically, these clinical trials from NCI come through UH

Cancer Center, who then distributes the trials to our community partners (hospitals and private physician offices), monitors the conduct of the trial (make sure everything is done to ensure the safety and well being of the patients on these trials) and report the results of the trial back to NCI. Without UH Cancer Center, it is extremely unlikely that Hawaii would possess the necessary infrastructure to oversee these clinical trials, as the trials have grown more complex over the past 5 years. Just last year, UH Cancer Center in conjunction with our community partners enrolled nearly 130 patients on clinical trials with 2018 projections to be near 170 patients on clinical trials. Since we opened our doors several decades again, we have treated nearly 6,000 patients on clinical trials.

As you may know, over the past decade, there has been significant progress made in better understanding and treating cancers. The performance of a new drug/treatment is unraveled in what is called a phase 1 clinical trial. In this phase 1 clinical trial, we determine the optimal dose of the drug in patients and we begin to identify side effects of the new drug. Most phase 1 clinical trials take part in the mainland. Subsequent studies (phase 2, 3 and 4) have occurred with high frequency here in Hawaii via UH Cancer Center. However, our unique population may require different dosages of the drug or may have different side effects. Thus it is imperative that we have the ability to perform this critical phase 1 testing in relevant populations so that it can be transferred not only to the people of Hawaii but to these same ethnic/racial groups we see in Hawaii who are in the mainland, Asia and beyond.

Additional rationale for a phase 1 (early phase) clinical trial program in Hawaii:

1. Early phase (phase I) clinical trials offer patients with cancer access to novel treatments to improve the quality and quantity of life, especially when having exhausted standard treatments
2. There is currently no opportunity for patients in Hawai'i to access early phase cancer clinical trials without traveling to the mainland
3. As the only academic center in the State, the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center has the unique capacity to establish an early phase clinical trials program

Goal:

Establish a program committed to providing the latest cancer therapeutic breakthroughs for the people of Hawaii.

In close collaboration with our community partners (hospital systems and private MDs), as well as key UH Schools (Pharmacy, Nursing and Medicine), UH Cancer Center will use the CIP funds to build out an Early Phase Clinical Trials Unit within UH Cancer Center on the Kaka'ako campus.

We respectfully urge this Committee to approve the appropriation for the UH Cancer Center as submitted by Senator Harimoto under SB2877.

SB-2877

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 3:58:21 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/8/2018 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
sheri higa		Support	No

Comments:

TO: MEMBERS OF THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

I submit this letter in support of SB 2877 regarding appropriation of funds to the University of Hawaii Cancer Center to be used to build out the unused space in the annex and to fund early phase cancer clinical trials in Hawaii.

As a cancer survivor I am only too aware of the importance of allocating resources and recruiting top notch researchers and doctors in order to battle this horrific disease.

Given Hawaii's isolated geography and its diverse population, it takes specialized research and expertise, which requires long term commitment from all of us.

Additionally, these clinical trials will allow patients to be treated at home in Hawaii which can only improve the treatment experience. How wonderful and beneficial it will be for patients to be surrounded by family and friends and not worry about the burden of traveling and the additional cost associated with having to go to the mainland.

We, as a community, have to look forward toward a brighter future and commit to continue the good works the UH Cancer Center provides.

I thank you for your consideration and urge you to approve SB 2877.

Sincerely

Sheri Higa

SB-2877

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 10:16:10 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/8/2018 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Monica McLaren		Support	No

Comments:

Testimony Presented Before the

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

By

Monica McLaren

SB2877 - Relating to the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and members of the committee:

I am writing in support of the CIP appropriation for the UH Cancer Center proposed by Senator Breene Harimoto under SB2877 in support of the Hawai'i Early Phase Cancer Clinical Trials Program.

The UH Cancer Center is a critical resource for Hawaii. As someone whose family and friends have been affected by cancer, making the most novel clinical trials available to the people in the State is of great importance. As there is currently no opportunity for patients in Hawai'i to access early phase cancer clinical trials without traveling to the mainland (which we had to do in one case), and given that University of Hawai'i Cancer Center is the only academic center in the State, UHCC has the unique capacity to establish an early phase clinical trials program and immediately improve the quality of life and chance of longer-term survival for Hawaii's cancer patients.

I respectfully urge this Committee to approve the appropriation for the UH Cancer Center as submitted by Senator Harimoto under SB2877.

Respectfully,

Monica McLaren

SB-2877

Submitted on: 2/4/2018 10:08:48 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/8/2018 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brian Issell		Comments	No

Comments:

I write to provide my strongest support of CIP appropriation for the UH Cancer Center proposed by Senator Breene Harimoto under SB2877 in support of the Hawaii Early Phase Cancer Clinical Trials Program.

I have been a practicing cancer physician for 40 years. I had the distinct honor of being the UH Cancer Center director when it first attained National Cancer Institute designation.

Before my Center appointment in 1988, I led the early phase clinical development of several cancer drugs at mainland cancer centers. These are still among the best we now have and truly provided those patients who participated in these clinical trials with lifesaving opportunities they would not otherwise have had.

Consequently, during my leadership and association with the Center, which I now continue as a volunteer, I have been the strongest advocate for developing an early phase clinical trial capability here in Hawaii. This will provide our patients with improved treatment opportunities without having to leave the islands. With the progression of SB2877, I see an unprecedented opportunity to achieve this long held goal which will positively impact Hawaii's cancer patients.

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

By

Joe W. Ramos, PhD
Deputy Director, University of Hawaii Cancer Center

SB2877 - RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII' I CANCER CENTER

Chairs Kahele and Baker, Vice Chairs Tokuda and Kim and members of the committees:

I write in support of the CIP appropriation for the UH Cancer Center proposed by Senator Breene Harimoto under SB2877 to provide funding for the construction of the Hawaii early phase cancer clinical trials program at the University of Hawaii Cancer Center. This funding would specifically contribute to construction of the Early Phase Clinical Trials space on the first and second floor of the shell space of the Annex at the UH Cancer Center.

There is currently NO Early Phase Clinical Trials program in the state of Hawai'i and the shell space in the annex of the UH Cancer Center is not completed so as to provide appropriate advantage and return on the state's investment in the Kaka'ako facility. Enactment of this CIP will provide a high impact benefit to the cancer patients of Hawai'i.

Each year more than 6,000 Hawaii residents are diagnosed with cancer, and more than 2,000 will die from the disease. Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii, and accounts for one of every five deaths statewide. Hawaii's racial/ethnic mixture makes us unique (as compared with national norms) in the types and incidents of cancer. As a NCI-designated cancer research center, the UH Cancer Center brings ground-breaking studies and new cancer-fighting drugs and treatment to our community, making it possible for Hawaii's people to receive many advanced treatments for cancer without the need to travel to the mainland away from home and at great expense. However, the most novel medications for the treatment of cancer provided through early phase (Phase 1) clinical trials are not currently available in the State of Hawai'i.

Early phase (phase I) clinical trials offer patients with cancer access to novel treatments to improve the quality and quantity of life, especially when having exhausted standard treatments. There is currently no opportunity for patients in Hawai'i to access early phase cancer clinical trials without traveling to the mainland. As the only academic center in the State, the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center has the unique capacity to establish an early phase clinical trials program.

We have therefore set the goal to establish a Program committed to bringing novel early phase trials to Hawai'i for the benefit of cancer patients throughout the state.

The University of Hawai'i Cancer Center, in collaboration with healthcare partners in the Hawai'i Cancer Consortium, provides access to clinical trials for nearly 2/3 of the cancer patients in the State. It maintains a robust infrastructure of protocol review and oversight. However, phase I and other early phase cancer trials are distinctive and require specific expertise and a dedicated treatment facility.

The vision is to recruit physicians with early phase trial experience to the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center to build the program. Dedicated space will be designed and constructed in available shell space (Annex) adjacent to the Cancer Center. This program will complement drug discovery programs already in place within the Cancer Center focused on identifying compounds derived from natural products with anti-cancer activity. These compounds, along with novel therapies developed by industry, will form the basis for novel clinical trials and enable patients to receive this type of treatment in Hawai'i where their family and support systems are nearby and without the expense of months-long stays on the mainland while at other centers.

The Hawai'i Early Phase Cancer Clinical Trials Program will provide remarkable benefit for cancer patients in Hawai'i. Often cancer patients are feeling reasonably fit even if their cancer progresses on standard therapies and they wish to explore new approaches and novel treatments for their cancer. This provides hope for the patients, the potential for improved outcomes and, not insignificantly, provides us with the type of knowledge needed to improve cancer care in the future. Often, participation in early phase clinical trials requires a substantial time commitment and many physician visits. This is difficult if patients are away from home, both financially and because they are away from their family support structure. This program will allow patients with advanced cancer who live in Hawai'i to have access to these novel treatments without the expense and hardship of relocating to the mainland.

The CIP funds requested for the UH Cancer Center will be used to build out available shell space adjacent to the UH Cancer Center in order to develop an Early Phase Clinical Trials Unit. The program providing access to these trails is envisioned as a joint partnership between the UH Cancer Center and the Hawai'i Cancer Consortium members, including Queens Medical Center and Hawai'i Pacific Health.

I respectfully urge this Committee to approve this CIP.

SB-2877

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 7:08:52 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/8/2018 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Howard Stephenson	Friends of the UH Cancer Center	Support	No

Comments:

Chair DelaCruz and members of the committee

I write in support of the CIP appropriation for the UH Cancer Center proposed by Senator Breene Harimoto under SB2877 in support of the Hawaii Early Phase Cancer Clinical Trials Program

The UH Cancer Center is a critical resource for Hawaii. Making this type of trial available to the people of Hawaii can represent one of the very best solutions to one of the most serious problems facing this community. People are not able to get the benefits of such trials here and as a result many early deaths occur from cancer that could be prevented. The fact that there is space available at the Cancer Center for such a program makes it even more feasible that we move ahead with early trials.

I respectfully urge the Committee to approve the appropriation for the UH Cancer Center as submitted by Senter Harimoto under SB 2877.

Howard Stephenson, former chair of the UH Board of Regents.