

LATE

SCR-113

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
GARY SIMON	Testifying for ST. FRANCIS HEALTHCARE SYSTEM	Support	No

Comments:

March 22, 2018

Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair

Senator Jill Tokuda, Vice-Chair

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health

Regarding: **SCR 113**

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tokuda, and Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health:

I am Gary Simon, Director of Corporate Affairs and Advocacy for St. Francis Healthcare System of Hawaii (SFHS).

I am testifying as an individual who has worked in healthcare for over thirty years, including seven years as Executive Director of St. Francis Hospice. I am offering testimony on behalf of SFHS.

SFHS strongly supports **SCR 113**, which requests that the Hawai'i Department of Health convene a working group to examine palliative care services and develop recommendations to expand palliative care in Hawai'i.

For too long, patients diagnosed with a life-threatening illness have had to live in a binary healthcare world. They have either had to choose between curative treatment or hospice care.

However, the parameters and eligibility for coverage for these different types of care at opposite ends of the spectrum are beginning to blur. Patients now have the option to

simultaneously choose treatment and hospice care because of forward-looking health plans that cover both instead of making patients choose one path over another.

Palliative care gives patients more options and fills out the spectrum of care. Yet, palliative care still remains mysterious for many patients, and has not yet been fully embraced and valued. Palliative care is often only seen as a prelude to hospice care but the value of palliative care as a stand-alone specialty has not yet been fully explored. We have only scratched the surface to look at palliative care as a path for patients seeking recovery and wholeness.

The task force will be valuable in helping to elevate the role of palliative care in Hawai'i and increase awareness about its effectiveness in care for both patients and healthcare providers.

We strongly urge the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health to support **SCR 113**.

Sincerely,

Gary Simon

Director of Corporate Affairs and Advocacy

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