

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony COMMENTING on HB1283**  
**RELATING TO HEALTH.**

REP. RYAN I. YAMANE, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, & HOMELESSNESS

Hearing Date: February 16, 2021      Room Number: N/A

1    **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) concurs that more community  
2    education on Alzheimer’s disease and related conditions (AD/ADRD) is beneficial but expresses  
3    concerns that part XVIII of chapter 321 is an inappropriate part of Hawaii Revised Statutes to  
4    amend.

5    Statutory Authority for Alzheimer’s Disease

6    Section 349-6.5, HRS, authorizes the Executive Office on Aging (EOA) to prepare and update  
7    the state plan on Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias. This training program proposed by  
8    HB1283 should be vetted through the state plan, including as pursuant to this section, “the tasks,  
9    timelines, and milestones for each goal [of the Alzheimer’s state plan] along with parties  
10    assigned to each task...”

11    There is no program infrastructure or subject-matter expertise on AD/ADRD in the Department  
12    of Health.

13    Limitations of Part XVIII, Chapter 321

14    Section 321-229, HRS, requires the University of Hawaii to provide training for emergency  
15    medical services personnel, which include statewide standards for such. As a result, this  
16    measure lacks accountability and enforcement. The requirement of HB1283 to train all first  
17    responders – firefighters, emergency medical technicians, police officers, et al. – is well beyond

1 the scope and budget of the EMS program. The Department of Health does share infrastructure  
2 or methods with law enforcement and fire department personnel, whereas the counties do.

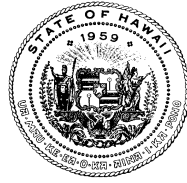
3 Alternatives

- 4 1. DOH respectfully recommends the requirement for first responder training for  
5 AD/ARRD be established with the County Offices on Aging in Session Law. This is the  
6 most logical entity to coordinate training given their proximity to county government and  
7 with the Executive Office on Aging. Trainings should be reported up through EOA to  
8 align with the state plan.
- 9 2. A second alternative is to establish in chapters relating to county government  
10 organization, such as chapter 46 because first responders are largely county employees or  
11 county-contracted services.

12

13 **Offered Amendments:** N/A.

14



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17    responders – firefighters, emergency medical technicians, police officers, et al. – is well beyond  
18    the scope and budget of the EMS program. The Department of Health does not share

1 infrastructure or methods with law enforcement and fire department personnel to the extent that  
2 the counties do.

3 Alternatives

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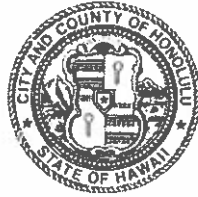
12

13 **Offered Amendments:** N/A.

14

POLICE DEPARTMENT  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

801 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET · HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
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SUSAN BALLARD  
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JOHN D. McCARTHY  
AARON TAKASAKI-YOUNG  
DEPUTY CHIEFS

OUR REFERENCE **ML-SK**

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
and Members  
Committee on Health, Human Services,  
and Homelessness  
House of Representatives  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street, Room 329  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Yamane and Members:

Subject: House Bill No. 1283, Relating to Health

I am Mike Lambert, Major of the Training Division, of the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), City and County of Honolulu.

The HPD supports the passage of House Bill No. 1283, Relating to Health. This bill would require specialty training by law and enable funding for training by private contributions from relevant non-profit organizations. The benefit of this training will help to ensure that our officers' actions are current and appropriate when dealing with citizens who have this disease.

The HPD currently includes a module of instruction to acknowledge and recognize the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. The passage of this bill will help to support the continued training of best practices and strategies to identify and intervene with someone in crisis.

The HPD urges you to support House Bill No. 1283, Relating to Health.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

APPROVED:

Handwritten signature of Susan Ballard in black ink.

Susan Ballard  
Chief of Police

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mike Lambert in black ink.

Mike Lambert, Major  
Training Division

# alzheimer's association®

## HAWAII

1130 North Nimitz Highway Suite A-265, Honolulu, Hawaii 96817  
Phone: 808.591.2771 Fax: 808.591.9071 [www.alz.org/hawaii](http://www.alz.org/hawaii)

February 16th, 2020

Honorable Ryan I. Yamane  
House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness  
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 329, 10:00 AM  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

### **RE: HB1283 RELATING TO DEMENTIA TRAINING.**

Dear Chair Ryan I. Yamane, Vice Chair Adrian K. Tam, and members of the Committee:

The Alzheimer's Association - Hawaii extends our **strong support** for House Bill 1283. This measure requires the employers of first responders to develop and provide dementia training to first responder.

Alzheimer's disease is a public health crisis all across the country, including in Hawaii. People who have the disease are impacted, along with their loved ones and the entire healthcare system. By 2025, the number of people living with Alzheimer's disease is expected to rise to 35,000. It is our position is that it is time to for the state to take the step of mandating training requirements to make Hawaii more dementia capable so that we can better protect our state's kupuna.

A person with dementia may not remember his or her name or address—and can become disoriented, even in familiar places. This is a frequent problem; six in ten people with dementia will wander. When individuals with dementia are lost, they may show signs of anxiety, fear, or hostility—all of which can escalate to more aggressive behaviors. As the disease progresses and individuals with dementia forget family members and societal norms, there may be cases of false reports and victimization, indecent exposure, and shoplifting.

First responders may also interact with people with dementia while searching for a lost individual, stopping drivers who exhibit unsafe driving, rescuing people with dementia from abuse, and intervening in crisis or disaster situations. Individuals with Alzheimer's and other dementias can also be the victims of elder abuse but, they may be unaware they are victims and may not know how to—or be able to—report it. Complicating the situation, people with Alzheimer's may also present as uncooperative, disruptive, and combative when they have difficulty communicating and understanding what is happening. Dementia training for first responders will help these professionals effectively respond these situations and to ensure the safety of those with dementia.

Hawaii would not be alone in requiring this type of training. As of 2015, ten states have taken the step of passing laws requiring dementia training for first responders. It is also easier than ever to adopt these training standards. Dementia training for first responders and the

# alzheimer's association®

## HAWAII

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accompanying certification can be received online for no cost to first responders or their employers.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of this legislation.

Ian Ross

Public Policy and Advocacy Manager

[iaross@alz.org](mailto:iaross@alz.org) | Phone: (808) 591-2771 x1333

**HB-1283**

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 5:24:58 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Gordon takaki	Alzheimer's Association Hawaii Chapter	Support	No

Comments:

I am in support of HB 1283. This measure requires the employers of first responders to develop and provide dementia training to first responders. It also enables the Department of Health to set the standards and frequency for the dementia training.

First responders will often encounter individuals with dementia in a variety of settings. A person with dementia may not remember his or her name or address—and can become disoriented, even in familiar places. Six in ten people with dementia will wander at some point. When individuals with dementia are lost, they may show signs of anxiety, fear, or hostility—all of which can escalate to more aggressive behaviors. As the disease progresses and individuals with dementia forget family members and societal norms, there may be cases of false reports and victimization, indecent exposure, and shoplifting. Dementia training for first responders can help these professionals to effectively handle these situations and to ensure the safety of those with dementia.

As of 2015, 10 states have taken the step of passing laws requiring dementia training for first responders/law enforcement personnel. Now is the time for the state to take the step of mandating dementia training standards so that we can better protect our citizens.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this legislation.



February 15, 2021

Committee on Health, Human Services and Homelessness  
House of Representatives  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 S. Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: **HB1283 - SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Ryan I. Yamane, Vice Chair Adrian K. Tam, and members of the Committee:

I support HB1283 because this bill calls for first responders to receive dementia training. Passage of this bill provides first responders with the specific skills and knowledge on dementia, especially Alzheimer's type of dementia, and will be able to better serve those in need of emergency services.

Hawaii's kupuna population continues to rise each year. Many have dementia along with other illnesses. Those over age ninety, fifty percent will have some form of dementia.

In my thirty plus years career in long term care, I have witnessed first responders coming in to aide seniors with dementia. There have been times when the first responders could have exercised emergency care reflective on his or her understanding of dementia, how to verbally communicate to someone with dementia and show empathy and aloha in that greatest time of need. Requiring dementia training to all first responders will provide for consistency and best practices in caring for kupuna with dementia.

I encourage you to support HB1283.

Sincerely,



Calvin M. Hara

**HB-1283**

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 6:26:12 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Amy Truong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I submitting testimony in support of HB 1283. This measure requires the employers of first responders to develop and provide dementia training to first responders. It also enables the Department of Health to set the standards and frequency for the dementia training.

My mother has younger-onset Alzheimer's and is only 65 years old (50 when diagnosed). If we aren't careful, it is possible for my mother to leave the house and wander around. If met with a first responder who didn't have the proper training, they could easily mistake her condition with Alzheimer's disease for something else like she's mentally ill or on drugs because she could be irritable, hostile, and confused. She may not be able to answer questions properly she might think she's in a different time or place, she might look homeless because she left the house in her pajamas - there are many scenarios in which we fear that without the proper training, a first responder might mistake Alzheimer's disease for something else and not be able to effectively handle the situation. It really takes training to be able to understand people with dementia because it's such a difficult disease to handle - even for caregivers who are properly trained already.

Dementia training for first responders can help these professionals to effectively handle these situations and to ensure the safety of those with dementia. It would help my family's anxiety levels knowing that if we ever ran into a situation with a first responder, we know that the community there is equipped and able to help her rather than do anything to unintentionally harm her or make the situation worse.

As of 2015, 10 states have taken the step of passing laws requiring dementia training for first responders/law enforcement personnel. Now is the time for Hawaii to take the step of mandating dementia training standards so that we can better protect our state's kupuna.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this legislation. Mahalo

- Amy Truong

**HB-1283**

Submitted on: 2/16/2021 5:24:08 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Poki'i Balaz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

*I am submitting testimony in support of HB 1283. This measure requires the employers of first responders to develop and provide dementia training to first responders. It also enables the Department of Health to set the standards and frequency for the dementia training.*

*First responders will often encounter individuals with dementia in a variety of settings. A person with dementia may not remember his or her name or address—and can become disoriented, even in familiar places. Six in ten people with dementia will wander at some point. When individuals with dementia are lost, they may show signs of anxiety, fear, or hostility—all of which can escalate to more aggressive behaviors. As the disease progresses and individuals with dementia forget family members and societal norms, there may be cases of false reports and victimization, indecent exposure, and shoplifting. Dementia training for first responders can help these professionals to effectively handle these situations and to ensure the safety of those with dementia.*

*As of 2015, 10 states have taken the step of passing laws requiring dementia training for first responders/law enforcement personnel. Now is the time for the state to take the step of mandating dementia training standards so that we can better protect our state's kupuna.*

*I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this legislation.*

Mahalo for your time,

Dr. Poki'l Balaz

**HB-1283**

Submitted on: 2/16/2021 9:51:13 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bernard Carvalho	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Ryan I. Yamane, Vice Chair Adrian K. Tam, and members of the Committee:

I am proud to testify in favor of House Bill 1283 and as a former Mayor and current Council member, I know the depth of professionalism, talent, and dedication that is on display each day by Hawai'i's EMTs, firefighters, and police officers. As a person with family affected by dementia, this topic is one that is close to my heart. I ask you to support this legislation so that we can ensure that their training keeps up with the changing demographics of our state.

Hawai'i's population is aging and age is the number one risk factor for dementia. Today 29,000 individuals over the age of 65 live with dementia and that number is anticipated to grow to 35,000 by 2025. With many of our kÅ«puna aging in place and younger family members that could have been caregivers often moving to the mainland, I anticipate that the need for dementia training for our first responders will only grow.

First responders can oftentimes be the first to interact with someone with Alzheimer's disease is confused and wandering. This is not an uncommon scenario, as an estimated 6 in 10 people with dementia will wander. A person with Alzheimer's may not remember his or her name or address and may become disoriented, even in familiar places. When someone with dementia is lost, they may show signs of anxiety, fear, or hostility all of which can escalate to more aggressive behaviors. People with Alzheimer's may present as uncooperative, disruptive, and combative when they have difficulty communicating and understanding what is happening. Education of the disease and training in de-escalation tactics can often effectively address the situation and ensure the safety of individuals with dementia.

The benefits of this legislation are large while the cost is minimal. A statewide standard is the best way to make sure that all kupuna with dementia are safer and that our incredible first responders have the tools they need to respond properly to these challenges. Let's take advantage of 21st-century resources to make Hawai'i more dementia capable. A variety of organizations including the Alzheimer's Association offers online training and certification at no cost and that can be completed in an hour.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 1283.

