



**Testimony to the Senate Joint Committee on Health and Judiciary
Wednesday, February 17, 2021; 9:30 a.m.
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0663, RELATING TO THE SOLEMN COVENANT OF THE STATES TO AWARD PRIZES FOR CURING DISEASES.

Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill No. 0663, RELATING TO THE SOLEMN COVENANT OF THE STATES TO AWARD PRIZES FOR CURING DISEASES.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would formally certify and approve the State of Hawaii for adherence to a compact of states that would award prizes for the curing of diseases and establish the administrative framework for the participating states to raise funds for prizes. The bill would also allow the Governor to appoint a commissioner subject to Senate Advise and Consent,

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

The goal of medical research is to develop safe and effective methods to prevent, detect, diagnose, treat, and ultimately cure the collections of diseases known as cancer. The better we understand these diseases, the more progress we will make toward diminishing the tremendous human and economic tolls disease inflicts upon our citizenry.

By formally entering the compact of states to award prizes for the curing of diseases, the State of Hawaii is joining the larger community across the Nation that sees the value in incentivizing medical breakthroughs for the benefit of all humanity.

Accordingly, the HPCA wholeheartedly supports this important measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.

SB-663

Submitted on: 2/13/2021 9:14:20 AM

Testimony for HTH on 2/17/2021 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Scott Smart | Individual | Oppose | No |

Comments:

I OPPOSE SB663.

Hawaii's citizens, as citizens of the United States, currently authorize and fund the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation to investigate and find cures for diseases. This is accomplished using the accountability of an elected Congress.

This compact would establish a "commission" with extensive powers, including imposing "dues" (i.e., a tax) on Hawaii and also to issue bonded indebtedness for which Hawaii would be liable. The compact further anticipates not only finding cures, but also engaging in the business of providing cures.

The "sunshine" requirements imposed on the commission are weak and there is no recourse except to litigate in a foreign jurisdiction.

The commission can impose "dues" and "fees" on Hawaii based on the commission's determination on health care spending "saved" due to a cure it controls.

In sum, the proposed charter transfers important powers of taxation and public expense from elected legislators to an unelected commission. The charter creates an entity that is duplicative with existing administrative agencies. The charter lacks meaningful oversight of the activities of the commission. For these reasons, Hawaii should not join in such a compact. We should keep our sovereignty.

SB-663

Submitted on: 2/13/2021 9:49:44 AM

Testimony for HTH on 2/17/2021 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Yvonne Geesey | Individual | Oppose | No |

Comments:

Aloha Legislators;

Having experience in both law and healthcare the best I can ascertain from this archaic, convoluted, legalese filled proposed law is that someone came up with the idea of forming yet another commission in order to collaborate with other states and the federal government, liaison with foreign countries to "award prizes for curing disease(s)."

I don't think it is a good idea.

Mahalo for your consideration, Yvonne Geesey JD APRN

LATE

SB-663

Submitted on: 2/16/2021 11:25:55 AM

Testimony for HTH on 2/17/2021 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ian Chun | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Ian Chun and as a medical student, I fully support awarding the efforts of researchers as they seek to cure diseases. There are numerous diseases that require further investigation and as the process to create cures can take many years and a substantial financial investment, the efforts of these researchers and institutions should be compensated. The challenges to creating new cures are numerous and without substantial incentives, I fear that progress in developing new treatments will be stymied. Research these days is also very collaborative and crosses state lines thus the financing of such an award should also come from an equally large coalition of states. The cost of innovation and its benefits should be shared by many.

Thank you,

Ian Chun