



March 27, 2021

RE: Senate Concurrent Resolution 53 and Senate Resolution 35

Dear Chair Keohokalole and the Senate Committee on Health,

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce **supports SCR 53 and SR 35** that request the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona.

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization with nearly 500 member businesses, organizations and individuals that represent a variety of industries in the Kona and Kohala districts on Hawai'i Island. We exist to provide leadership and advocacy for a successful business environment in West Hawai'i.

Since our founding in 1968, the tourism industry has grown substantially in the North Kona district on the west side of Hawai'i Island. This provides business and employment opportunities that create population growth. The population increase in North Kona is evidenced by the state's decisions to build new educational institutions such as Kealakehe High School that opened in 1997 and Hawai'i Community College – Pāalamanui in 2015.

Serving the West Hawai'i community for over 100 years, the Kona Community Hospital is a 94-bed full-service acute care hospital with 24-hour emergency services located in Kealakekua on the slope of Mauna Loa. This is a region with a rich history in agriculture, primarily the Kona coffee industry. The hospital location was selected because the population focus was in this area at that time. However, now traveling from North Kona to the hospital is difficult due to inadequate road infrastructure and traffic problems. Additionally, the current facility needs upgrades and this will take considerable investment.

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce works to strengthen our local economy and promote the well-being of our community. We support increased and expanded health care services for West Hawai'i. We encourage programs and incentives to attract more providers. We believe that a new hospital located in North Kona closer to Hawai'i Community College – Pāalamanui will expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. **We support constructing a new hospital in West Hawai'i.**

We support SCR 53 and SR 35 as the first step in moving this project forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wendy J. Laros".

Wendy J. Laros, President and CEO
Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce



Moku O Keawe
Hawai'i Council for the
Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
P.O. Box 7164 | Hilo, Hawai'i | 96720

Senate Committee on Health

Monday, March 29, 2021 Via Videoconference 1:20 p.m.

Re: SCR53/SR35 REQUESTING THE HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A HOSPITAL IN NORTH KONA.

Aloha e Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker and members of the committee,

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs – Hawai'i Council supports **SCR53/SR35** REQUESTING THE HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A HOSPITAL IN NORTH KONA.

The need to just provide adequate health care facilities is a statewide concern. Currently, there are three hospitals that serve the geographic region of West Hawaii expanding from the North and South Kohala district, some of Hāmākua, North and South Kona, and Ka'ū districts. North Kona's population increased significantly, as well as an increase in tourism along the North Kona - South Kohala Coast. Also, adding to the impacts are the Vacation and Fractional Condominium and residential rentals that span Keauhou to Kailua, South Kona, and Ka'ū. This brought concerns during the pandemic. Many residents were concerned that our only capacity hospital in West Hawaii was already limited and capacitated.

Hawaii residents deserve better than just adequate facilities. I urge this committee to **SUPPORT SCR53/SR35**, and really look into this resolution and ensure that a study would not only bring a needed facility, but one that will provide the best services offered.

Me ka mahalo nui,
Shane Akoni Palacat-Nelsen
Pelekikena



March 27, 2021

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Rosalyn Baker, Vice Chair
Committee on Health
Hawaii State Legislature

Support of SCR53 / SR35

Dear Senator Keohokalole, Senator Baker and Members of the Committee on Health,

Thank you for the opportunity to support SCR53 and SR35 requesting that Hawaii Health Systems Corporation convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for the construction of a new hospital in North Kona. With Hawaii Island's growing population, we fully support a new hospital in West Hawaii. Having a new hospital in North Kona closer to Hawaii Community College – Pālanui, will also expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community.

KCRA is a collection of master-planned resorts and hotels, situated north of the Ellison Onizuka Kona International Airport at Keahole which represents more than 3,500 hotel and timeshare accommodations and an equal number of resort residential units. This is approximately 35 percent of the visitor accommodations available on the Island of Hawaii. KCRA member properties annually pay more than \$25 million in TAT, \$25 million in GET and \$11 million in property taxes. KCRA members employ more than 5,000 Hawaii Island residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie P. Donoho". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephanie Donoho
Administrative Director

SR-35

Submitted on: 3/27/2021 10:50:23 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support. Proactive study that may result in better health services and accessibility to Kona residents.

SR-35

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 6:02:01 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Franz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support support SCR 53 and SR 35 that request the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation to convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona. **I support a new hospital in West Hawai'i.** We need increased and expanded health care services for West Hawai'i. I encourage programs and incentives to attract more providers. I believe a new hospital located in North Kona closer to Hawai'i Community College – PÅ• lamanui will expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. Please pass SCR 53 and SR 35.

SR-35

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 9:58:15 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sharon Sakai	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Sharon Sakai and I'm a lifelong resident of West Hawai'i.

I support both SCR 53 and SR 35, requesting the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation to convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona. **I support a new hospital in West Hawai'i.** The population growth and spread in the Kona region has been substantial in the last 50 years, warranting increased and expanded health care services for North Kona and all of West Hawai'i. The region needs, and I support, new programs and incentives to attract more providers. Additionally, a new hospital located in North Kona, closer to Hawai'i Community College – PÄ• Iamanui, will expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. Please pass SCR 53 and SR 35.

Mahalo!

Written testimony submitted by Joseph Jasmon in support of the State of Hawaii's Legislature bills SCR53 and SR35. Formulation of Task Force to determine the feasibility of a new medical facility in North Kona, Hawaii.

Aloha Charman Kenhokalole:

My name is Joseph Jasmon and am a resident of St. Johns, Florida. I am providing my testimony in support of SCR53 and SR35 to establish a Task Force to determine the feasibility of a new medical facility in North Kona, Hawaii.

Given my 30 years of experience in healthcare, the last 17 years as CEO of American Healthcare Management Group and most notably as an innovator and concept co-founder of unique and financially sustainable rural health care (Neighborhood Health Community) concept, that will change the way we look at healthcare moving forward, I fully support the creation of this task force. I am respectfully submitting my testimony to the Great State of Hawaii's thirty-first Legislature in support of the above-mentioned bills currently before you.

The challenges facing our healthcare system due to the Covid-19 Pandemic have all but taxed our hospitals to the breaking point across the Nation. Now that things are beginning to get back to normal, we will continue to see rural hospital closings at an unprecedented rate accompanied by the inability of local governments to save or replace them.

The financial needs of a rural hospital cannot be fixed by simple replacing status quo, rather a unique community based solution is required that combines the resources of the local community (hospital, senior living, mental and behavioral health, primary care, rehab, child day care and employee housing, among others) working together underneath a united umbrella to create recurring revenue streams and a comprehensive continuum of care that will serve the community for decades to come.

Your State's proactive efforts in addressing the healthcare shortage of the North Kona coast today, are tremendous steps, that will create access to quality healthcare today and into the future.

The makeup and proposed membership of the proposed task force will formulate a successful solution given the upheaval of the industry.

Through this testimony, I have one simple request to include in a mandate to the Task Force to meet with myself and other interested parties by the 10th of April, 2021 to learn and evaluate our concepts in order to craft the correct solution for North Kona. I re-iterate my support of this legislative body as they tackle this critical issue head-on.

Respectfully submitted
Joseph Jasmon

SR-35

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 11:03:23 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dr. Frank H. Sayre, D.D.S.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, I am a 46 year resident of North Kona. During that time I have been on the active staff at Kona Community Hospital for 4 years; a member of the HHSC MAC for 8 years; a member of the West Hawaii Regional Board of Directors for 7 years and the Chairman for 5 years. During that time I have seen the KCH facility go from new to falling apart. A lot of the deterioration is happening out of sight. Waste line plumbing that has become clogged and sewage spilling out into rooms and public spaces. Air handlers that leak condensation and grow mildew and mold. A wastewater treatment facility that is operating at maximum and there's no way to expand it. The entry road is narrow and winding and dangerous. Our population has grown and will continue to grow. We need a new hospital closer to the population center and the airport where 30-35% of our patients have to leave the Island because their care is unavailable here. Or, we need enabling legislation to privatize, like Maui, and leave the State for another system that would build a new hospital. That would save the State a lot of money in the long term.

SR-35

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 11:08:30 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ross Wilson Jr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The current Kona Community Hospital was built over 50 years ago and has maxed out its campus in Kealahou. There is no room for any expansion and its facilities today are far removed from the population base and growth in North Kona.

This proposed task force to conduct a feasibility study for the construction of a hospital in West Hawaii is the first step in a long process to expand increased and expanded healthcare services in West Hawaii.

I'm in total support of SR 35.



LATE

SR35

REQUESTING THE HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A HOSPITAL IN NORTH KONA

Senate Committee on Health

29 March 2021 – 1:20 p.m.

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Senate Committees on Health

My name is Jacqui Hoover and I have the privilege of serving as Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer of the Hawaii Island Economic Development Board (HIEDB), a private, member-based 501(c)3 organization incorporated in 1984 to help strengthen and diversify Hawaii Island's economy in partnership with Federal, State, County, and private sector resources to ensure a thriving, resilient community.

HIEDB **strongly supports Senate Resolution 35**. For over a decade, the need for a hospital in North Kona has been identified by our community as imperative as both the resident population and number of visitors has increased. A year of addressing a pandemic has intensified the urgent need for expanded health care services. Situating a hospital closer to the population center, resorts, airport, and Hawaii Community College, Pālanui provides opportunities to attract health care providers to West Hawaii, secure comprehensive on-island health care for residents and visitors, as well as education, economic, and workforce development.

Please approve SR35 so that we may address health care needs for current and future generations in West Hawaii.

Mahalo for this opportunity to share our concerns and comments.

LATE

SR-35

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 4:35:46 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jacqui Hoover	Testifying for Hawaii Leeward Planning Conference	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health,

On behalf of the Hawaii Leeward Planning Conference (HLPC) incorporated in 1974 to promote sound planning decisions for West Hawaii, I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SCR53 and SR35. HLPC has long identified the need for a hospital closer to a growing population center in West Hawaii. In addition to planners, our members include large landowners (including the Ali`i Trusts), developers, general contractors, utilities, and financial institutions who participate respectively and collectively in community planning, land use, infrastructure, and other critical matters.

Please approve SR35 and SCR53 to better ensure increased and improved access to health care on island for West Hawaii residents and visitors, overall good health and well-being for generations to come.

Mahalo for this opportunity to speak on this important issue.