



March 22, 2023

To: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
House Committee on Health & Homelessness

Re: Testimony in Support of **HOUSE RESOLUTION 211 / HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 207**

Hrg: 23 March 2023, 9:30AM, Conference room 415

Dear Chair Della Au Belatti, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi, and Committee Members,

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 450 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. Our mission is to promote public health in Hawai'i through leadership, collaboration, education and advocacy. Additionally, HPHA aims to call attention to issues around social justice and equity in areas that extend beyond the traditional context of health (e.g., education, digital equity, cultural sensitivity), which can have profound impacts on health equity and well-being. Therefore, as stewards of public health, HPHA is also advocating for equity in all policies.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **supportive testimony for HR 211/HCR 207 relating to lung cancer**. This bill extends the work of the early lung cancer screening task force, which brings the community together to determine what steps are needed to increase Hawai'i's very low rate of early lung cancer screening.

Lung cancer is the number one cancer killer for men and women in the state. The American Lung Association's State of Lung Cancer Report in Hawai'i for 2022 places Hawai'i dead last in early diagnosis of lung cancer. Early diagnosis gives lung cancer patients a better chance of survival and more affordable and effective treatment options. According to the American Cancer Society, in 2023, more people will die of lung cancer in Hawai'i than breast, liver, or prostate cancer combined.

The task force proposed in this bill will take on the important duty of researching and recommending the steps and resources necessary to increase early lung cancer screening in Hawai'i, conducting any additional research that is needed, and providing a report to the legislature with possible policies the state can adopt. This task force will also create a public awareness campaign to inform people lung cancer screening. It is particularly important to extend the timeline and funding of this task force because it was not able to meet in 2022.

The burden of lung cancer is too high to bear. We must do all we can to make sure that all people at high risk of lung cancer are screened early so that they are allowed all the treatment options available. I ask you please pass House Resolution 211 / House Concurrent Resolution 207 and ensure we are doing all we can to help people with lung cancer get an early diagnosis and another chance at life.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Kessler
Executive Director

TO: House Committee on Health & Homelessness
Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

DATE: Thursday, March 23, 2023

TIME: 9:30 AM

PLACE: Via Videoconference
Conference Room 329

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 211/HOUSE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION 207**

Dear Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dr. Cynthia J. Goto and I am writing to express my support of House Resolution 211/House Concurrent Resolution 207, requesting the Department of Health to convene an early lung cancer screening working group to continue the efforts of the early lung cancer screening task force established pursuant to Act 162, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022.

Lung cancer is the number one cancer killer for men and women in the state. The American Lung Association's State of Lung Cancer Report in Hawaii for 2022 places Hawaii dead last in early diagnosis of lung cancer. Early diagnosis gives lung cancer patients a better chance of survival and more affordable and effective treatment options. According to the American Cancer Society, in 2023, more people will die of lung cancer in Hawaii than breast, liver, or prostate cancer combined.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends low-dose computed tomography (LDCT) for lung cancer screening in high-risk patients, however, a minority of eligible people are screened. Research suggests that increased awareness of these guidelines by primary care physicians is associated with increased utilization of LDCT for screening, and educational interventions may improve adherence with this recommendation.¹

The working group proposed in this resolution will take on the important duty of researching and recommending the steps and resources necessary to increase early lung cancer screening in Hawaii, conducting any additional research that is needed, and providing a report to the legislature with possible policies the state can adopt.

Increased early screening for lung cancer will allow people diagnosed with lung cancer to benefit from all the treatment options available. I ask you to please pass House Resolution 211/House Concurrent Resolution 207 and ensure we are doing all we can to help people with lung cancer get an early diagnosis and another chance at life.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Cynthia J. Goto, M.D.

¹ Raz, Dan J., et al. The Effect of Primary Care Physician Knowledge of Lung Cancer Screening Guidelines on Perceptions and Utilization of Low-Dose Computed Tomography. *Clinical Lung Cancer*, Volume 19, Issue 1, 51-57, January 2018.