



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Testimony COMMENTING on S.C.R. 183
RELATING TO HEALTH

JARRET KEOHOKALOLE, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: 3/23/2022

Room Number: CR 225 & Via
Videoconference

1 **Department Testimony:** The Department appreciates the intent of S.C.R. 183, to assess the
2 health care needs of residents of Ocean View on the island of Hawaii. This resolution duplicates
3 efforts that are already underway. The Department of Health, Office of Primary Care and Rural
4 Health is engaged with community-based organizations on Hawaii Island, including the Hawaii
5 Physician Shortage Taskforce and Community First, to conduct a Community Health Needs
6 Assessment for the county of Hawaii and its communities. Efforts to date resulted in over two
7 thousand responses to a needs survey and eleven focus groups with providers, community
8 members, and social service organizations. The results of these interactions were analyzed, and
9 a county report is being written. Community level reports are planned for a future release. In
10 addition, plans are already being made to expand this work to other rural areas throughout the
11 state as a part of a broader effort to address disparities in health equity.

12 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

SCR-183

Submitted on: 3/22/2022 6:19:08 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/23/2022 1:30:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sylvia Dolena	Testifying for Aloha Lokahi Association	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SCR 183. OceanView and the Ka'u District of Hawaii Island has been underserved in many ways. There are serious health needs in this district. Please support the assessment defined in SCR 183.

Mahalo,

Sylvia Dolena

Aloha Lokahi Assoc.



Community Association

Mission: "Do What It Takes To Keep Ka'u Healthy"

P.O.Box 878 Pahala, Hi 96777

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LATE

March 23, 2022

To: Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair Committee on Health
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

From: Jessanie Marques, Executive Director Ka'u Rural Health Community Association Inc.

Re: Support of SCR183/SR176: Requesting the Department of Health to conduct a study to assess the health care needs of the residents of Oceanview on the island of Hawaii.

Ka'u Rural Health Community Association, Inc.(KRHCAI) board of directors, support the intent of SCR 183/SR176 and would like to provide some comments. As a non-profit community based organization whose mission is "To Do What It Takes To Keep Ka'u Healthy", KRHCAI believe a study to assess the health care needs of the residents in the diverse, medically underserved, vulnerable and marginalized Oceanview community on the island of Hawaii is essential to the health and well being of our people.

KRHCAI has been the the lead community based non profit organization (Nov. 1998) that focus on health, education, research opportunities and economic sustainability programs, and serve a population of 9,000 in the District of Ka'u. Over the past 5 years, KRHCAI collaborated with many Pacific Islander's (PI) church leaders, community members, and beneficiaries or recipients of the Compact of Free Association (COFA); the Dept. of Health, healthcare providers, civic groups, academic institutions, and public/private sectors.

Oceanview's PI's have expressed concerns of "lack of unmet and inadequately served healthcare needs and social services", such as access to interpreters, advocates, cultural and linguistically appropriate communication, informational material, (i.e. health insurance, transportation, housing, legal aide, immigration etc.). One of the most challenging barriers was that of being able to "trust" the health care provider, who often does not seem to understand the PI's language, culture and values.

An assessment of the healthcare needs in Oceanview would not only identify PI's primary challenges and barriers such as linguistic, cultural and trust barriers; it would "identify unmet and inadequately served health care needs of residents and further identify the potential sources or causes of gaps, patterns of disease and provide policy, operational and any other pertinent recommendations to address the unmet or inadequately served health care needs of residents of Oceanview; and prioritize recommendations according to relative severity and urgency of the health care issue".

KRHCAI acknowledges that this example of barriers and challenges that PI/COFA beneficiaries have and continue to endure, establishes a basis for the Dept. of Health to conduct a much needed study to assess the health care needs of Oceanview's diverse, medically underserved, vulnerable and marginalized community.

Mahalo for this opportunity to share our comments and ask for your continued support.



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