

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

21669

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 16 2024

RE: S.B. No. 2722  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2024  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Higher Education, to which was referred  
S.B. No. 2722 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO CANCER,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Appropriate funds to the University of Hawaii Cancer Center to conduct a multiethnic cohort study focusing on the social determinants of health, lifestyles, environmental exposures, and resilience factors of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos; and
- (2) Require the Cancer Center to seek federal funding to complete the study.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the University of Hawai'i System, Department of Health, Hawai'i Primary Care Association, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Hawai'i Public Health Association, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Friends of the University of Hawaii Cancer Center, a petition signed by one hundred sixty-three individuals, and fourteen individuals.

Your Committee finds that the University of Hawaii Cancer Center ("Center") is one of seventy-one National Cancer Institute-



designated cancer centers in the United States. Additionally, the Center is the only institution in the State, and the Pacific region, providing critical medical research and treatment for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander populations. Your Committee further finds that despite a decrease in cancer incidence and mortality rates in the State, disparities among ethnic populations continue to be of concern. Native Hawaiians continue to have the highest cancer incidence and mortality rates among men and women, including higher incidences of breast and ovarian cancer. Similarly, other ethnic groups such as Filipino women also have high rates of cancer incidences. As cancer research focusing on Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos cannot be as easily conducted elsewhere in the world, this measure provides critical data to support the overall health of Hawaii's people.

Your Committee has concerns, however, regarding the funding appropriated to the Center through the Tobacco Tax and Cancer Research Special Fund utilized for purposes other than conducting research. According to testimony from the University of Hawaii at a public hearing on this measure, funds from the Tobacco Tax and University of Hawaii Tuition and Fees Special Fund have been utilized for daily operations rather than funding components of research studies. As a research center, the Center should prioritize research as one of its fundamental operations.

Additionally, your Committee also believes that the Center should prioritize grant funding to research demographics matching the local community. Previous and current studies have not prioritized local communities in securing grant funding and your Committee finds that there should be a greater emphasis on achieving results to assist with cancer prevention in the State's communities. According to testimony from the University of Hawaii, the original multiethnic cohort study that began in the 1990s did not include Filipinos, nor did it include social determinants of health. Additionally, previous studies of the State's local communities were smaller studies focused on preventative screening. Accordingly, your Committee believes that research conducted by the Center should reflect the local communities to provide residents with opportunities for high quality care. As the Center has secured grant funding for previous studies, your Committee believes the Center should prioritize state funds received for the continuation of critical research.



Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting language to require the University of Hawaii to, at a minimum, seek matching federal funding to further the study; and
- (2) Amending section 1 to update its amended purpose.

Your Committee notes that this measure, as amended, contains an appropriation for an unspecified amount. Should your Committee on Ways and Means choose to deliberate on this measure, your Committee respectfully requests that it consider an appropriate amount to be inserted.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Higher Education that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2722, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2722, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Higher Education,



DONNA MERCADO KIM, Chair



The Senate  
 Thirty-Second Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Higher Education**  
**HRE**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <b>SB 2722</b>	Committee Referral: <b>HRE, WAM</b>	Date: <b>02-13-24</b>
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The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.  
 If so, then the previous decision was to: \_\_\_\_\_

The Recommendation is:

Pass, unamended 2312    
  Pass, with amendments 2311    
 Hold 2310    
 Recommit 2313

Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
KIM, Donna Mercado (C)	/			
KIDANI, Michelle N. (VC)	/			
FUKUNAGA, Carol	/			
HASHIMOTO, Troy N.				/
FEVELLA, Kurt	/			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>			<b>1</b>

Recommendation:  Adopted      Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature: *Michelle N. Kidani*

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\*Only one measure per Record of Votes