



HB1772 HD1
RELATING TO FALL PREVENTION
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

March 18, 2024

1:00 p.m.

Conference Room 225

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HB1772 HD1, which appropriates funds to support the Department of Health's Senior Fall Prevention Campaign. The proposal aims to address the pressing issue of fall-related injuries among seniors, a matter of significant concern within our Native Hawaiian community and the state at large.

Kūpuna, aged sixty-five and older, including many within our Native Hawaiian population, are disproportionately affected by fall-related injuries. The emotional, physical, and financial toll on individuals, families, and our healthcare system cannot be overstated.

Research consistently demonstrates that falls are not an inevitable consequence of aging but are preventable through targeted interventions.¹ The incorporation of evidence-based practices, such as tai chi, into fall prevention initiatives has shown promising results in improving balance and overall well-being among seniors.²

The longstanding efforts of the Department of Health's senior fall prevention campaign have been commendable, even in the face of budgetary challenges. Fully funding this campaign is not just a matter of financial investment but a commitment to safeguarding the health and safety of our seniors.

By appropriating funds to support the department's senior fall prevention campaign, HB1772 HD1 signifies a proactive approach to addressing this critical public health issue. OHA acknowledges the success of evidence-based interventions and seeks to

¹ Tricco, Andrea C et al. "Quality improvement strategies to prevent falls in older adults: a systematic review and network meta-analysis." *Age and ageing* vol. 48,3 (2019): 337-346. doi:10.1093/ageing/afy219

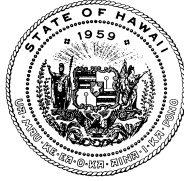
² Chen, Weidong et al. "Tai Chi for fall prevention and balance improvement in older adults: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials." *Frontiers in public health* vol. 11 1236050. 1 Sep. 2023, doi:10.3389/fpubh.2023.1236050



HB1772 HD1
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Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

ensure their continued availability and accessibility to all seniors, including those in our Native Hawaiian communities. Let us stand together in support of proactive measures that will undoubtedly save lives, preserve dignity, and alleviate the burden on families and our healthcare system.

Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS HB1772 HD1**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony COMMENTING on HB1772 H.D.1
Relating to Fall Prevention**

REPRESENTATIVE KYLE T. YAMASHITA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing Date: March 18, 2024

Room Number: 225

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** Appropriates funds to support the Department of Health's Senior Fall
- 2 Prevention Campaign. The Department respectfully defers to the Governor's Executive
- 3 Biennium Budget.
- 4 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health comments on HB1772 H.D.1. The Bill
- 5 appropriates \$100,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for the
- 6 Department of Health's senior fall prevention campaign.
- 7 The Department of Health supports the intent of this bill. Every year Hawaii's seniors experience
- 8 significant mortality and morbidity from falls. This measure would add to the department's fall
- 9 prevention program to include Statewide Public Service Announcements (PSA) about fall
- 10 prevention, fall prevention bus posters, statewide medication reviews for seniors through local
- 11 pharmacies, statewide home safety workshops aimed at removing fall hazards from the home,
- 12 and statewide Tai Chi classes for living with arthritis and fall prevention. The department will
- 13 sponsor fall prevention consortium speakers.
- 14 If appropriated, funds for kupuna fall prevention campaign will benefit Hawaii's kupuna by
- 15 reducing injuries, healthcare costs, stress, and anxiety.
- 16 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

1010 Richards Street, Room 118 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V) • TTY (808) 586-8162 • Fax (808) 586-8129

March 18, 2024

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

House Bill 1772 HD1 – Relating to Fall Prevention

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports House Bill 1772 HD1 – Relating to Fall Prevention.

This bill would appropriate funds to support the Department of Health's Senior Fall Prevention Campaign.

Fall related injuries disproportionately impact the elderly, often resulting in a long term disability. This impacts their quality of life and puts a strain on the medical system, the rehabilitation system, and on family caregivers. Reducing the incidence of falls has short and long term positive effects.

Thank you for considering our position.

Respectfully submitted,

KIRBY L. SHAW
Executive Director



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

KENNETH FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING
NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT
250 SOUTH HOTEL STREET, SUITE 406
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2831

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1772 HD1
RELATING TO FALLS PREVENTION

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
SENATOR JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, CHAIR
SENATOR HENRY J.C. AQUINO, VICE CHAIR

Testimony of Caroline Cadirao
Director, Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to the Department of Health

Hearing: Monday, March 18, 2024, 1:00 P.M., Conference Room 225

- 1 **EOA Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA), an attached agency to the Department of
- 2 Health (DOH) **supports** the intent of this measure, provided that its enactment does not reduce
- 3 or replace priorities with the Administration's budget request
- 4 **Fiscal Implications:** Appropriates funds to support the Department of Health's Senior Fall
- 5 Prevention Campaign. Declares the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded.
- 6 **Purpose and Justification:** Falls are a serious health risk for older adults, as it can lead to
- 7 fractures, pain, medication complications, loss of mobility and long-term care admission.
- 8 According to the CDC in 2020, 36,000 fall related deaths in adults, ages 65 and older was
- 9 reported, making it the leading cause of injury death for that age group. Older adult falls cost

1 \$50 billion in medical costs annually, with 3/4 of those costs paid by Medicaid and Medicare.

2 Many falls are preventable, and education is key. The Department of Health, Falls Prevention

3 Program has a successful falls prevention campaign with the CDC stating that we have the

4 lowest fall and injury rate in the nation. The funding will allow the DOH to continue its public

5 awareness campaign.

6 **Recommendation:** EOA supports this measure to fund a public health awareness campaign for

7 falls prevention.

8 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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The State Legislature
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Monday, March 18, 2024
Conference Room 225, 1:00 p.m.

TO: The Honorable Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
FROM: Keali'i Lopez, State Director, AARP Hawaii
RE: Support for H.B 1772 HD1 -Relating to Fall Prevention

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i Lopez, and I am the State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a nonpartisan, social impact organization that advocates for individuals age 50 and older. We have a membership of nearly 38 million nationwide and nearly 140,000 in Hawaii. We advocate at the state and federal level for the issues that matter most to older adults and their families.

AARP supports H.B 1772 HD1 which appropriates funds to support the Dept. of Health's Senior Fall Prevention Program.

According to the U.S. Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "falls among adults aged 65 and older are common, costly, and are the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries among older adults. In the United States, over 14 million, or one in four, adults ages 65 and older (older adults), report falling each year. While not all falls result in an injury, about 37% of those who fall reported an injury that required medical treatment or restricted their activity for at least one day, resulting in an estimated nine million fall injuries." In most cases, falls are preventable especially if people take steps to reduce the risks by making their homes safer, proper medications and health management, and engage in strength and balance exercises such as tai chi. The Hawaii Department of Health has had a successful senior fall prevention program that includes certified tai chi classes, and it has expanded these classes to over thirty locations and all YMCA5 statewide. Exercise programs like Tai-chi and other falls prevention education and awareness efforts should be continued and supported to reduce the risk of fall-related injuries especially among Hawaii's older residents.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify in **support of H.B. 1772, HD1.**

2024 Hawaii Leadership Board

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LJ R. Duenas
*Executive Director
Alzheimer's Association*

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services Monday, March 18, 2024; 1:00 p.m. Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 225, and Videoconference

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1772, HOUSE DRAFT 1 – RELATING TO FALL PREVENTION

Chair Joy San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Henry Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

The Alzheimer's Association–Aloha Chapter serves the residents of Hawaii to help all those facing Alzheimer's disease and other dementias by providing local support groups and educational resources while advancing crucial research and public policy initiatives. We testify in **SUPPORT of House Bill No. 1772, House Draft 1.**

Alzheimer's disease is a public health crisis across the country. In Hawaii, approximately 29,000 individuals aged 65 and older live with Alzheimer's disease. This figure is projected to increase to over 35,000 by next year.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would appropriate funds to support the Department of Health's Senior Fall Prevention Campaign.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "About 36 million falls are reported among older adults each year – resulting in more than 32,000 deaths." Individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias are at a greater risk for falls because of the changes that are happening in their thinking abilities.

This bill serves a noteworthy purpose to ensure continued education and public awareness of fall prevention. **We ask you to pass House Bill No. 1772, House Draft 1.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. If you have questions, please contact Ron Shimabuku at 808.451.3410 or rkshimabuku@alz.org.



Ron Shimabuku
Director, Public Policy and Advocacy
Alzheimer's Association – Hawaii



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TO: Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Rob Van Tassell, President and CEO

DATE: Monday, March 18, 2024 (1:00 p.m., Conference Room 225 & Videoconference)

RE: **IN SUPPORT OF HB 1772, HD1, Relating to Fall Prevention**

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been serving people in need in the State of Hawaii since 1947.

CCH supports HB 1772, HD1, which would provide funding to support the Department of Health's **Senior Fall Prevention Campaign**.

CCH provides services for over 4,000 older adults each year. From hip/shoulder/wrist fractures to traumatic brain injury, the consequences of a fall for a frail older adult can be devastating. Because fall prevention is so critical to independent living, our Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center has integrated a fall risk assessment for every participating older adult – when they join the center and annually thereafter. In addition, tai chi, which is considered a form of exercise that improves balance, is offered at the Center, including a certified volunteer instructor who teaches the evidence-based Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention.

The Senior Fall Prevention Campaign is needed to increase public awareness and education for older adults and their families. Making your home safe, activities to improve balance and strength are just some of the ways in which older adults, and caregivers, can proactively increase safety to prevent falls. Fall prevention can lead to reduced medical costs but most importantly, it will ensure that older adults are able to enjoy a better quality of life.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i asks for your support of HB 1772, HD1. For more information or questions, please feel free to contact Diane Terada, Division Administrator, at 808-527-4702.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.



LATE

HB-1772-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2024 3:36:37 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/18/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonathan Gillentine	Testifying for Hawaii State Teachers Association - Retired	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Aquino, and members of the committee,

I am offering testimony in support of HB1772 D1 on behalf of the more than 6000 members of HSTA-Retired. We are hopeful that you will fund this vital program to keep our kupuna safe that will help them prevent injuries from falling. We often have program speakers who talk about our well-being. Every one of them urges us to seek ways to not fall. Falls cause serious injuries, which can lead to other complications when we have to remain sedentary while we heal. Please support this measure. We appreciate your efforts to mālama nā kupuna!

Aloha pumehana,

Jonathan Gillentine, PhD, NBCT

President, HSTA-Retired

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

AMENDED NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Monday, March 18, 2024

TIME: 1:00 PM

Re HB1772 HD1 RELATING TO FALL PREVENTION

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee. My name is Linda Dorset, and I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1772 HD1. The bill Appropriates funds to support the Department of Health's Senior Fall Prevention Campaign. I took the class being presented at the Maui Memorial Medical Center because I was having episodes of light headedness while walking. Aside from the usual diet and exercise advice, there was also useful and otherwise unknown advice on the correct way to walk and to strengthen age related foot muscle deterioration. This is yet another program to allow older people to age at home and keep them out of state financed care institutions. Please support this appropriation and allow others to profit from this program.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!

**Linda Dorset
Wailuku, Maui**

HB-1772-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2024 9:53:28 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/18/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dan Gardner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair San Buenaventua, Vice-Chair Aquino, and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

I and my wife Deborah are in support of HB 1772 HD1. In 2021 the costs of Physicians and Hospital treatment reached \$223 Million to pay for senior's falls. Many of these falls can be prevented through continued education of and warning to our seniors. Please support funding to enable continuation of the Department of Health's "Senior Fall Prevention Campaign." Sincerely,

Dan Gardner

Honolulu, Hawaii

daniel.dano.gardner@gmail.com

THE SENATE
KA'AHA KENEKOA

THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2024

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

Amended Notice of Hearing: Monday, March 18, 2024, 1:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and Members of the Committee on Health & Human Services. My name is Carol Wakayama and I wish to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of H.B. 1772 H.D. 1 (“Relating to Fall Prevention”).

H.B. 1772 H.D. 1 would appropriate funds to support the Department of Health’s senior fall prevention campaign. When someone is injured from a fall, it not only causes emotional and physical impacts on the injured person, it can also harm their families.

On “A Bill For An Act” for H.B. 1772 H.D. 1 (Page 2, Lines 20 & 21 and Page 3, Lines 1 & 2), I was struck by the wording ... “when the senior fall prevention campaign was fully funded, the CDC reported that Hawaii had the lowest fall and injury rate in the United States.” This appears to be proof that monies - wisely spent - can make a measurable positive difference in the health of the population.

For more than ten years, I’ve been very mindful of improving my balance and have searched for/participated in various workout classes that help strengthens the body, including yoga, tai chi, qi gong and fall prevention classes. However, I believe that our community’s health and safety could be greatly improved if there was easier and better access to these very important classes and programs. Since improving ones balance and strength doesn’t happen after just taking one workout class, widely-available class/program access and support would provide invaluable benefits to the community.

Humbly, I request your support for H.B. 1772 H.D. 1. Thank you for this opportunity to provide my testimony.

Sincerely,

Carol Wakayama
Honolulu, Hawaii