



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

SCR 167 SD1, SUPPORTING THE HEALTH CARE COMMUNITY'S EFFORTS TO OBTAIN FEDERAL FUNDING FOR HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY GRANTS

Testimony of Chiyome Leinaala Fukino, M.D.
Director of Health

April 24, 2009
8:45 AM

- 1 **Department's Position:** The Department provides comments on this measure.
- 2 **Fiscal Implications:** None
- 3 **Purpose and Justification:** The Senate Concurrent Resolution has been amended so the Senate and
- 4 House of Representatives would be the convener of a task force to develop and implement a partnership
- 5 plan. While the elements of the plan are not delineated, the Department construes the plan would
- 6 address building collaboration and agreement between the Legislature, state agencies and non-
- 7 governmental stakeholders on the development of public-private health information technology (HIT)
- 8 and submitting grant applications to fund the efforts through the American Recovery and Reinvestment
- 9 Act (ARRA).

10 The Department recognizes the potential economic and health benefits of establishing a health

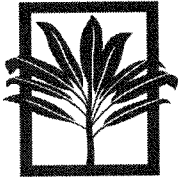
11 information exchange infrastructure in Hawaii and that the establishment of an HIE would significantly

12 enhance public health surveillance, the cornerstone of evidence-based public health practice. The

13 Department offers to work with stakeholders from the private and public sector so that Hawaii is able

1 and ready to respond to grant opportunities through ARRA for HIT development and is willing to lead
2 in convening a task force for that purpose.

3 Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Hawai'i Primary Care Association

345 Queen Street | Suite 601 | Honolulu, HI 96813-4718 | Tel: 808.536.8442 | Fax: 808.524.0347
www.hawaiipca.net

To: **The House Committee on Health**
The Hon. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
The Hon. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of SCR 167, SD 1
Supporting the Health Care Community's Efforts
To Obtain Federal Funding for
Health Information Technology Grants
Submitted by Beth Giesting, CEO
April 24, 2009, 8:45 a.m. p.m. agenda, Room 229

The Hawaii Primary Care Association agrees with both the premises and conclusions of this resolution. The availability of new health information technology can support the transformation of our health care system through improved quality and reduced errors and costs. While competing interests might seek to seize HIT for business advantage, it is absolutely imperative that our public policy ensures that these technologies are used to unite the health care sector and employ their advantages to the benefit of our entire population. Any federal funding that may become available to the State for HIT should be thoughtfully used following a plan prepared by an inclusive group for systems that serve a public purpose.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this bill.

HMSA



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April 24, 2009

The Honorable Ryan Yamane, Chair
The Honorable Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair
House Committee on Health

Re: SCR 167 SD1 – Supporting the Health Care Community’s Efforts to Obtain Federal Funding for Health Information Technology Grants

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Nishimoto and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in strong support of SCR 167 SD1.

As you are aware, Hawaii is on its way to becoming a national leader in the field of health care technology. Earlier this year, HMSA launched its Online Care program, aimed at improving access to care throughout the Islands. Residents can speak with a local physician from HMSA’s network of credentialed participating physicians 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week. In conjunction with this project HMSA is talking with other community entities to examine how an initiative such as an HIE could be developed in Hawaii.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) contains language encouraging the increased use of health information technology (HIT) through the awarding of grant monies to states. We believe that the best option to obtain funding under the ARRA is through a public-private partnership between all interested health care stakeholders to build a statewide network. This public-private partnership would ideally consist of the Legislature and the appropriate state agency which would be responsible for designating an entity as a “state designated entity” as required under the ARRA. This would allow for rapid response and action. SCR 167 SD1 reiterates this structure and supports mobilizing efforts already taking place in the community so that Hawaii can be one of the first states to qualify to receive funding.

Through numerous meetings and conversations between the many private sector stakeholders, the community has come together in order to ensure that Hawaii is poised and ready to accept federal funding as soon as it is made available. HMSA along with many other community members have been able to come to an agreement in support of appointing the Hawaii Health Information Exchange (HHIE) as the “state-designated entity” in Hawaii for purposes of facilitating ARRA grant monies. We support amending the language of SCR 167 SD1 to state that HHIE be named Hawaii’s state-designated entity.

This could be accomplished by amending lines 17 – 24 on Page 2 to read as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Legislature supports naming the Hawaii Health Information Exchange (HHIE) as the state-designated entity under the ARRA funding requirements to ensure that

Hawaii is able to rapidly respond to and qualify for grant money offered in the ARRA for health care information exchange technology; and

HMSA is also very interested in participating on the Task Force and would respectfully request that HMSA be included as a member when the Task Force is convened. We believe that participating in the Task Force fits in with our own efforts to improve access to health care across the state.

Additionally, we would also ask that HHIE be included among the agencies named to receive certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution.

HMSA is excited by the opportunities presented by the ARRA funding for Hawaii and appreciates the support for the resolution before you today. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JD', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jennifer Diesman
Assistant Vice President, Government Relations



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Rep. Ryan Yamane, Chair

Conference Room 229
April 24, 2009 at 8:45 a.m.

Testimony in support of SCR 167 SD 1

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii advocates for its member organizations that span the entire spectrum of health care, including acute care hospitals, two-thirds of the long term care beds in Hawaii, as well as home care and hospice providers. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SCR 167 SD 1, which urges the State Senate and House of Representatives to convene a task force consisting of public and private agencies to develop and implement a plan to access funds for health care technology offered in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

A robust system of health care information technology has the potential to improve access to medical care, enable different providers to share patient information, enhance adherence to best practices, reduce medical errors, and advance the quality of health care. However, upgrading information technology infrastructure is costly.

For example, many doctors and other health care providers have not computerized medical records because the benefits accrue mostly to those who pay the medical bills -- insurers, employers and governments -- while the costs are borne primarily by those who provide the care. This mismatch explains why fewer than 5% of doctors' offices have electronic medical records.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 makes \$19 billion for health care information technology available through various incentives. This concurrent resolution initiates a partnership between public and private entities to create a coordinated effort that allows Hawaii to access- these funds. These funds will enable Hawaii to advance its health care information technology infrastructure significantly.

For the foregoing reasons the Healthcare Association supports SCR 167 SD 1.