Aloha,

Please find attached testimony. Signature is pending. I will provide a signed copy today.

Mahalo
Aloha Members of the Board of Regents Committee:

I would like to express my support of the UH Cancer Center for the work they do to improve the health and well-being of Native Hawaiians.

Native Hawaiians have high incidence and mortality rates for cancer. Overall incidence rates in women are highest in Native Hawaiians; and overall cancer mortality rates are highest in Native Hawaiian men and women. Over the past 30 years, as a nutritionist in public health, I have worked tirelessly to attain health equity for all people, and especially Native Hawaiians. I authored and co-authored chapters in the Native Hawaiian Health Care Act, and helped to establish the Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems and ‘Aha Hui o nā Kauka (Association of Native Hawaiian physicians).

I have partnered with the UH Cancer Center, for over 20 years, to address Native Hawaiian health disparities as it relates to cancer. In partnership with the American Cancer Society, we developed Ka Lōkahi Wahine (the healthy balance of women), a cultural training for health care professionals, to address the highest incidence and mortality for breast cancer in the state experienced by Native Hawaiian women. Over 350 health care professionals were trained statewide. Since 2002, we have worked with the Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems statewide to provide health education to Native Hawaiian kāne (men), and to increase colorectal cancer screening. We have conducted over 33 discussion groups reaching over 300 kāne throughout the state.

The University of Hawaii Cancer Center is a valuable asset for our Native Hawaiian community. Together we have addressed cancer health disparities among Native Hawaiians, and there is much more work to do in the future.

Aloha,

Claire Hughes, DrPH, RD