



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the Senate Committee on Health And Senate Committee on Higher Education

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By

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and

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SB 39 RELATING TO REPORTS ON THE HAWAII CANCER RESEARCH SPECIAL FUND

Chair Ige, Chair Tokuda and members of the Committees:

As interim director of the UH Mānoa Cancer Research Center, I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 39, which would require regular financial reports on the Cancer Research Special Fund. I am pleased to support this measure because it promotes transparency in financial accounting relating to this Special Fund.

Our efforts are directed at providing better cancer care to improve the health and well being of the people of Hawai'i – a great goal in which you, as members of Hawai'i's Legislature, are major partners through your establishment of this Special Fund. We are very grateful for your strong support.

There are two priorities on which we are focused at this time and, thankfully, can be accomplished through on-going funding from the State's cigarette-tax to the Special Fund. Those priorities are: 1) hiring faculty to provide the advances in cancer research and facilitate coordination of clinical trials and; 2) building the new Cancer Research Center facility to support those efforts. We are making progress in recruiting more talented researchers to the ranks of our existing excellent faculty and in the planning for the construction for the new cancer center

building which will serve as a demonstration of the community's collective commitment to this goal. In that way, we stay firmly on the path of meeting the high standards required to maintain our current National Cancer Institute designation and move toward the goal of a comprehensive cancer center designation.

Chancellor Hinshaw understands the importance of this effort to the University of Hawai'i and to the State of Hawai'i; and consequently she has asked me, as the interim Cancer Center director, to work with all due speed. As time is of the essence to continue our progress, I am working with the Center's program leaders, the leadership of our medical school and our local hospital systems for the purpose of maintaining our current NCI designation, to begin construction of the new Cancer Center building and to secure the foundation for the future of clinical cancer research in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my comments on this issue.