



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Joint Legislative Committee on Family Caregiving and
Kupuna Caucus

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by
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Act 285, SLH 2006 - Relating to Caregiving

Co-Chair Ihara, Acting Co-Chair Lee and Members of the Committee
Kupuna Caucus

On behalf of the University of Hawai'i Community Colleges (UHCC), I am pleased to report to you our plans and ongoing efforts to address the needs of Hawai'i's elderly population and their caregivers. Through seven degree-granting colleges, and affiliated University Centers on Maui, Kaua'i, and in West Hawai'i, the Community Colleges collectively serve over 25,000 students each semester (52% of the total University of Hawai'i credit headcount enrollment) and offer continuing education, short-term offerings, averaging 52,000 annual registrations in recent years (averaging 57% of the total University of Hawai'i annual continuing education, short-term offerings registrations). Over the years, we have seen the average age of our students increase and expect that it will continue to do so as the post-war baby boomer population starts to retire and seek second careers and/or learn new skills.

The needs of our rapidly increasing aging population for housing, health and social support services are most challenging. Hawai'i's elderly population is increasing at a rate 2-3 times faster than the national average, and there is every indication that the State's present infrastructure and ability to meet the workforce demands for long-term care healthcare workers will be inadequate.

Most paid providers of long-term care are paraprofessional workers. After informal caregivers, these workers are the most essential component in helping older

persons and younger people with disabilities maintain some level of function and quality of life. It is this level of training that the community colleges have been best able to provide in many other health-related professions.

The UHCC recognizes that while aging and long-term care is a growing concern, it represents an important growth area for workforce development with professionals and paraprofessional. The attached Aging and Disabilities-Related Activities and Initiatives report provides a snapshot of each community college. While we plan to continue building our training efforts in Health Sciences and Nursing, we are addressing other related areas such as culinary, business education, sports exercise science, and legal education. Additionally, we plan to assist family caregivers and active retirees.

We are most appreciative of the 2006 Legislature's appropriation for Kapi'olani Community College's Aging and Long-Term Care Training Initiative. With these funds, Kapi'olani CC plans to build upon its foundation of credit programs, targeting Hawai'i's aging and long-term care needs with our educational resources and expertise to train long-term care workers and family caregivers. Kapi'olani CC is in the final stages of hiring a Long-Term Care Coordinator to oversee and guide this initiative as shown in the attached Development of an Elderly Care and Active Aging Training Initiative.

The challenge facing Hawai'i requires the commitment and coordinated cooperation of many agencies and individuals. Kapi'olani CC is creating a long-term care coordinators' workgroup among the community colleges to ensure a Statewide approach that addresses aging and long-term care issues. Also, Kapi'olani CC is working collaboratively with the State's network of providers to help meet the State's goal of creating a better community of caring professionals, paraprofessionals, family caregivers, and volunteers for its aging population.

Thank you again for your support and confidence in the UHCC.