



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony
Submitted to the
House Committee on Human Services
Tuesday, March 12, 2013, 9:30 a.m.
by
Jerris. R. Hedges
Dean and Professor
John A. Burns School of Medicine

SB 102 SD2 – RELATING TO THE ELDERLY

Chair Carroll, Vice Chair Kobayashi and Members of the Committee:

Faculty of the Department of Geriatric Medicine at the John A. Burns School of Medicine published an article in the *Hawai'i Medical Journal* in 2006, reporting on the cases of 11 patients in Honolulu who were defrauded by so-called “sweepstakes” scams.

The seniors each lost money, in amounts ranging from \$6,600 to \$400,000. Ten of these patients had dementia; most had been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease. The year of the study, the Hawai`i chapter of the AARP reported that in a survey of 2,000 of its members, 25% described themselves as having been victimized by financial predators.

The graying of Hawai`i’s population only increases the likelihood that more of our State’s citizens will be victims of financial fraud.

Hawai`i law requires physical abuse of the elderly to be reported to law enforcement. We believe the safety of our kūpuna also demands that financial institutions also report suspected financial abuse and exploitation of our senior citizens.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.