



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
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By

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and

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SB 1032 SD1 – RELATING TO CHAPTER 245, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Cancer Center supports this bill.

The UH Cancer Center is one of only 68 institutions in the U.S. that hold the prestigious National Cancer Institute (NCI) designation, and is the only NCI-designated center in the Pacific. The NCI designation provides greater access to federal funding and research opportunities. More importantly, it gives the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific region access to innovative and potentially life-saving clinical trials without the necessity of traveling to the mainland.

Our passion at the UH Cancer Center is to be a world leader in eliminating cancer through research, education and improved patient care. Because tobacco consumption is a leading preventable cause of cancer, we take all issues related to tobacco in Hawai'i very seriously. Whereas the UH Cancer Center always has supported strong tobacco control measures in Hawai'i, the recent emergence of electronic smoking devices presents new challenges for tobacco control and tobacco-related legislation.

The UH Cancer Center perspective on electronic smoking devices is informed by the scientific literature, including original published research by our own faculty. For example, UH Cancer Center researcher Thomas Wills, PhD, uncovered a growing public health problem among Hawai'i's youth by showing Hawai'i teens used e-cigarettes at nearly triple the rate of mainland teens. His study in the journal *Pediatrics* further showed that e-cigarettes use was growing nationally among teens.

Despite the complexities of the larger debate regarding electronic smoking devices, we believe this bill represents reasonable legislation that balances the rights of adults to use electronic smoking devices in appropriate venues while restricting the use of electronic smoking devices in public places where conventional cigarettes are banned. We also support the prohibition of the sale of electronic smoking devices to minors, and we support the provisions in this bill that enhance the ability of authorities to enforce these laws.

As scientific research on electronic smoking devices progresses, we will have a stronger basis to adjust laws according to evidence. At the present time, however, caution is warranted. As others have noted, the FDA currently does not regulate electronic smoking devices, and thus the consumer has no assurances regarding electronic smoking device ingredients. Further, because of the novelty of electronic smoking devices, the long term effects of using these devices are unknown. A further concern, not often discussed, is the potential for electronic smoking devices to be used as drug delivery devices for substances other than nicotine.

We respectfully urge you to pass this bill.