



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony COMMENTING on HB0474
RELATING TO FALL PREVENTION**

REPRESENTATIVE KYLE YAMASHITA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing Date: February 21, 2025

Room Number: 308

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (Department) requests that this measure be
2 considered as a vehicle to provide this needed funding so long as it does not supplant the
3 priorities and requests outlined in the Governor's executive budget request. The appropriation of
4 \$100,000 for fiscal year 2025-2026 and for fiscal year 2026-2027.

5 **Department Position:** The Department appreciates the intent of this measure and offers
6 comment.

7 **Department Testimony:** The Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System
8 Branch (EMSIPSB) provides the following comments on behalf of the Department. EMSIPSB
9 recognizes the critical importance of fall prevention among seniors, particularly given the
10 alarming statistics related to unintentional falls. As highlighted in the bill, unintentional falls
11 among seniors aged sixty-five years and older in Hawaii are the leading cause of fatal injuries
12 (an average of forty-nine percent) and injury-related emergency room visits (an average of sixty-
13 one percent). Act 153, Session Laws of Hawaii 2014, established a fall prevention and early
14 detection coordinator position within the Department of Health. EMSIPSB has an existing
15 position that is dedicated to addressing senior fall prevention at the state level which enables a
16 coordinated statewide approach. EMSIPSB supports the appropriation of as funding for public
17 education and awareness campaigns has decreased over the past few years.

1 The allocated funding of \$100,000 will support our comprehensive Fall Prevention Campaign.
2 This campaign is conducted twice annually, in June and September, aligning with National Fall
3 Prevention Day. Currently, our budget will only allow for a limited campaign in September for
4 our annual statewide fall prevention campaign. This allocated funding would be used for several
5 key purposes:

6 Broadcast Media: The campaign will feature press releases from the Hawaii Department of
7 Health, morning talk show interviews on all four major networks, and the introduction of two
8 new Public Service Announcements (PSAs). Additionally, our PSAs will be broadcast a total of
9 700 times on five stations, including KIKU, during each campaign flight.

10 Community Outreach: We will organize one-on-one interactions between kupuna and
11 pharmacists to review medications for safety. Presentations at senior facilities and organizations,
12 "Home Safety Workshops" at a major hardware chain, and "Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall
13 Prevention Workshops" will be conducted to re-certify statewide instructors. Additionally, we
14 will use posters on city EXPRESS buses to further reinforce the campaign message.

15 Materials and Travel: Funds will cover the production and distribution of educational materials,
16 such as brochures and magnets on fall prevention, and the costs associated with travel to
17 neighbor islands to support our outreach and education efforts. This includes expanding our
18 FREE pharmacy Medication Reviews to up to 80 locations across four islands and increasing the
19 number of in-person presentations using a PowerPoint program on "How to Prevent Fall
20 Injuries."

21 **Offered Amendments:** The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to the department of
22 health for ~~[the full-time equivalent fall prevention and early detection coordinator position~~
23 ~~established by Act 153.] the current Fall Prevention Campaign.~~

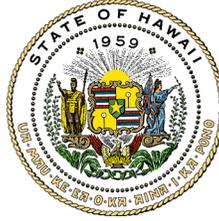
24 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the
25 sum of \$ **100,000** or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
26 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for ~~[one full-time~~

1 equivalent (1.0 FTE) fall prevention and early detection coordinator position established by Act
2 ~~153, Session Laws of Hawaii 2014.]~~ the current Fall Prevention Campaign.

3 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

KENNETH S. FINK, M.D., MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'OKELE



CAROLINE CADIRAO
DIRECTOR

Telephone
(808) 586-0100

Fax
(808) 586-0185

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING
NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT
250 SOUTH HOTEL STREET, SUITE 406
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2831

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB474 HD1
Relating to Fall Prevention

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
REP. KYLE T. YAMASHITA, CHAIR
REP. JENNA TAKENOUCI, VICE CHAIR

Testimony of Caroline Cadirao
Director, Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to the Department of Health

Hearing Date: February 19, 2025
2:00 P.M.

Room Number: 308
Via Videoconference

1 **EOA's Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA), an attached agency to the Department
2 of Health, **supports HB474 HD1.**

3 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure appropriates funds for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the same
4 sum for fiscal year 2026-2027 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) fall prevention and early
5 detection coordinator position within the Department of Health (DOH).

6 **Purpose and Justification:** The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds to the DOH for the
7 full-time equivalent fall prevention and early detection coordinator position. Falls are a serious
8 health risk for older adults, as it can lead to fractures, pain, medication complications, loss of
9 mobility and long-term care admission. According to the CDC in 2020, 36,000 fall related
10 deaths in adults, ages 65 and older was reported, making it the leading cause of injury death for
11 that age group. Older adult falls cost \$50 billion in medical costs annually, with 3/4 of those
12 costs paid by Medicaid and Medicare.

1 Act 153 established a fall prevention and early detection coordinator position within the
2 DOH's emergency medical services and injury prevention system branch. This position enabled
3 DOH to implement a coordinated statewide approach to prevent and reduce the impact of falls
4 among older adults and resulted in Hawai'i having the lowest fall and injury rate in the nation.
5 Appropriating funds for this position will allow DOH to continue that work and help older adults
6 to protect their health and live a longer, better quality of life.

7 **Recommendation:** EOA supports this measure to fund a falls prevention and early detection
8 coordinator position.

9 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HB-474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 10:13:43 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Bailey	American Medical Response	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support.



1001 Bishop Street | Suite 625 | Honolulu, HI 96813-2830
1-866-295-7282 | Fax: 808-536-2882
aarp.org/hi | aarphi@aarp.org | twitter.com/AARPHawaii
facebook.com/AARPHawaii

**The State Legislature
House Committee on Finance
Friday, February 21, 2025
Conference Room 308, 2:00 p.m.**

TO: The Honorable Kyle Yamashita, Chair
FROM: Keali'i Lopez, State Director, AARP Hawaii
RE: Support for H.B. 474 HD1 - Relating to Falls Prevention

Aloha Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i Lopez, and I am the State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a nonpartisan, social impact organization that advocates for individuals age 50 and older. We have a membership of nearly 38 million nationwide and nearly 135,000 in Hawaii. We advocate at the state and federal level for the issues that matter most to older adults and their families.

AARP supports H.B. 474, HD 1 which appropriates funds to the Department of Health to fund one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) fall prevention and early detection coordinator position

According to the U.S. Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "falls among adults aged 65 and older are common, costly, and are the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries among older adults. In the United States, over 14 million, or one in four, adults ages 65 and older (older adults), report falling each year. While not all falls result in an injury, about 37% of those who fall reported an injury that required medical treatment or restricted their activity for at least one day, resulting in an estimated nine million fall injuries." In most cases, falls are preventable especially if people take steps to reduce the risks by making their homes safer, proper medications and health management, and engage in strength and balance exercises such as tai chi. The Hawaii Department of Health has had a successful fall prevention program that included certified tai chi classes, and it has expanded these classes to over thirty locations and all YMCA5 statewide. Exercise programs like Tai-chi and other falls prevention education and awareness efforts should be continued and supported to reduce the risk of fall-related injuries especially among Hawaii's older residents. A statewide falls prevention program should be available with the necessary staff to operate it.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify in **support of H.B. 474, HD1.**

HB-474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 10:17:05 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raelene Tenno	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support HB474 HD1

Fall prevention is so important for all as we age.

There are so many people to include my Uncle that was never the same after a serious fall injury. He was bedridden and I believe that shortened his life.

I urge and encourage the committee to pass HB 474.

Thank you for allowing testimony

Raelene Tenno, Education Chair for Hawaii Council of Community Associations and PABEA Board Member - submitting testimony as an individual.