



March 27, 2021

RE: Senate Concurrent Resolution 53 and Senate Resolution 35

Dear Chair Keohokalole and the Senate Committee on Health,

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce **supports SCR 53 and SR 35** that request the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona.

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization with nearly 500 member businesses, organizations and individuals that represent a variety of industries in the Kona and Kohala districts on Hawai'i Island. We exist to provide leadership and advocacy for a successful business environment in West Hawai'i.

Since our founding in 1968, the tourism industry has grown substantially in the North Kona district on the west side of Hawai'i Island. This provides business and employment opportunities that create population growth. The population increase in North Kona is evidenced by the state's decisions to build new educational institutions such as Kealakehe High School that opened in 1997 and Hawai'i Community College – Pāalamanui in 2015.

Serving the West Hawai'i community for over 100 years, the Kona Community Hospital is a 94-bed full-service acute care hospital with 24-hour emergency services located in Kealakekua on the slope of Mauna Loa. This is a region with a rich history in agriculture, primarily the Kona coffee industry. The hospital location was selected because the population focus was in this area at that time. However, now traveling from North Kona to the hospital is difficult due to inadequate road infrastructure and traffic problems. Additionally, the current facility needs upgrades and this will take considerable investment.

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce works to strengthen our local economy and promote the well-being of our community. We support increased and expanded health care services for West Hawai'i. We encourage programs and incentives to attract more providers. We believe that a new hospital located in North Kona closer to Hawai'i Community College – Pāalamanui will expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. **We support constructing a new hospital in West Hawai'i.**

We support SCR 53 and SR 35 as the first step in moving this project forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy J. Laros". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy J. Laros, President and CEO
Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce



Moku O Keawe
Hawai'i Council for the
Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
P.O. Box 7164 | Hilo, Hawai'i | 96720

Senate Committee on Health

Monday, March 29, 2021 Via Videoconference 1:20 p.m.

Re: SCR53/SR35 REQUESTING THE HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A HOSPITAL IN NORTH KONA.

Aloha e Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker and members of the committee,

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs – Hawai'i Council supports **SCR53/SR35** REQUESTING THE HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A HOSPITAL IN NORTH KONA.

The need to just provide adequate health care facilities is a statewide concern. Currently, there are three hospitals that serve the geographic region of West Hawaii expanding from the North and South Kohala district, some of Hāmākua, North and South Kona, and Ka'ū districts. North Kona's population increased significantly, as well as an increase in tourism along the North Kona - South Kohala Coast. Also, adding to the impacts are the Vacation and Fractional Condominium and residential rentals that span Keauhou to Kailua, South Kona, and Ka'ū. This brought concerns during the pandemic. Many residents were concerned that our only capacity hospital in West Hawaii was already limited and capacitated.

Hawaii residents deserve better than just adequate facilities. I urge this committee to **SUPPORT SCR53/SR35**, and really look into this resolution and ensure that a study would not only bring a needed facility, but one that will provide the best services offered.

Me ka mahalo nui,
Shane Akoni Palacat-Nelsen
Pelekikena



March 27, 2021

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Rosalyn Baker, Vice Chair
Committee on Health
Hawaii State Legislature

Support of SCR53 / SR35

Dear Senator Keohokalole, Senator Baker and Members of the Committee on Health,

Thank you for the opportunity to support SCR53 and SR35 requesting that Hawaii Health Systems Corporation convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for the construction of a new hospital in North Kona. With Hawaii Island's growing population, we fully support a new hospital in West Hawaii. Having a new hospital in North Kona closer to Hawaii Community College – Pālanui, will also expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community.

KCRA is a collection of master-planned resorts and hotels, situated north of the Ellison Onizuka Kona International Airport at Keahole which represents more than 3,500 hotel and timeshare accommodations and an equal number of resort residential units. This is approximately 35 percent of the visitor accommodations available on the Island of Hawaii. KCRA member properties annually pay more than \$25 million in TAT, \$25 million in GET and \$11 million in property taxes. KCRA members employ more than 5,000 Hawaii Island residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie P. Donoho". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephanie Donoho
Administrative Director

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/27/2021 10:48:42 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Fully support. Proactive study that may result in better health accessibility by Kona residents.

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 6:01:18 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Franz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support support SCR 53 and SR 35 that request the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation to convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona. **I support a new hospital in West Hawai'i.** We need increased and expanded health care services for West Hawai'i. I encourage programs and incentives to attract more providers. I believe a new hospital located in North Kona closer to Hawai'i Community College – PÅ• lamanui will expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. Please pass SCR 53 and SR 35.

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 7:12:53 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kaye Levine	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Kaye Levine and I'm a resident of West Hawai'i. I support support SCR 53 and SR 35 that request the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation to convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona. I support a new hospital in West Hawai'i. We need increased and expanded health care services for West Hawai'i. I encourage programs and incentives to attract more providers. I believe a new hospital located in North Kona closer to Hawai'i Community College – PÄ• Iamanui will expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. Currently, the chances of making it to the current hospital in a life-threatening situation in time are questionable. Healthcare resources are very limited in West Hawai'i. Please pass SCR 53 and SR 35.

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 9:05:57 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lori Gale	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Lori Gale and I am a resident of West Hawai'i. I support support SCR 53 and SR 35 that request the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation to convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona. I support a new hospital in West Hawai'i. We need increased and expanded health care services for West Hawai'i. I encourage programs and incentives to attract more providers. I believe a new hospital located in North Kona closer to Hawai'i Community College – PÄ• Iamanui will expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. Please pass SCR 53 and SR 35.

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 9:15:31 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Janine Lowery	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Janine Lowery and I'm a resident of West Hawai'i. I support support SCR 53 and SR 35 that request the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation to convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona. I support a new hospital in West Hawai'i because the North Kona area is growing significantly and hospital services are limited. We need increased and expanded health care services for West Hawai'i. I encourage programs and incentives to attract more providers. I believe a new hospital located in North Kona closer to Hawai'i Community College – PÄ• Iamanui will also expand workforce development, attract more quality healthcare providers and businesses creating increased employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. Please pass SCR 53 and SR 35.

Thank you for your service!

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 9:57:04 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sharon Sakai	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Sharon Sakai and I'm a lifelong resident of West Hawai'i.

I support both SCR 53 and SR 35, requesting the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation to convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona. **I support a new hospital in West Hawai'i.** The population growth and spread in the Kona region has been substantial in the last 50 years, warranting increased and expanded health care services for North Kona and all of West Hawai'i. The region needs, and I support, new programs and incentives to attract more providers. Additionally, a new hospital located in North Kona, closer to Hawai'i Community College – PÄ• Iamanui, will expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. Please pass SCR 53 and SR 35.

Mahalo!

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 10:03:06 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Darlene Ellefson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Darlene Ellefson and I'm a resident of West Hawaii. I support SCR 53 and SR 35 that request the Hawaii Health System Corporation to convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona. I support a new hospital in West Hawaii. We need increased and expanded healthcare services for West Hawaii. I believe it will expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. Please pass SCR 53 and SR 35.

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 10:17:38 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joy Green	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Joy Green and I'm a kupuna resident of West Hawai'i. I support support SCR 53 and SR 35 that request the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation to convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona. I support a new hospital in West Hawai'i. We need increased and expanded health care services for West Hawai'i. I encourage programs and incentives to attract more providers. I believe a new hospital located in North Kona closer to Hawai'i Community College – PÄ• Iamanui will expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. In light of the new possibility of expanded US infrastructure opportunitites our time is now. Please pass SCR 53 and SR 35

Mahalo for all you do for Hawaii citizens

Written testimony submitted by Joseph Jasmon in support of the State of Hawaii's Legislature bills SCR53 and SR35. Formulation of Task Force to determine the feasibility of a new medical facility in North Kona, Hawaii.

Aloha Charman Kenhokalole:

My name is Joseph Jasmon and am a resident of St. Johns, Florida. I am providing my testimony in support of SCR53 and SR35 to establish a Task Force to determine the feasibility of a new medical facility in North Kona, Hawaii.

Given my 30 years of experience in healthcare, the last 17 years as CEO of American Healthcare Management Group and most notably as an innovator and concept co-founder of unique and financially sustainable rural health care (Neighborhood Health Community) concept, that will change the way we look at healthcare moving forward, I fully support the creation of this task force. I am respectfully submitting my testimony to the Great State of Hawaii's thirty-first Legislature in support of the above-mentioned bills currently before you.

The challenges facing our healthcare system due to the Covid-19 Pandemic have all but taxed our hospitals to the breaking point across the Nation. Now that things are beginning to get back to normal, we will continue to see rural hospital closings at an unprecedented rate accompanied by the inability of local governments to save or replace them.

The financial needs of a rural hospital cannot be fixed by simple replacing status quo, rather a unique community based solution is required that combines the resources of the local community (hospital, senior living, mental and behavioral health, primary care, rehab, child day care and employee housing, among others) working together underneath a united umbrella to create recurring revenue streams and a comprehensive continuum of care that will serve the community for decades to come.

Your State's proactive efforts in addressing the healthcare shortage of the North Kona coast today, are tremendous steps, that will create access to quality healthcare today and into the future.

The makeup and proposed membership of the proposed task force will formulate a successful solution given the upheaval of the industry.

Through this testimony, I have one simple request to include in a mandate to the Task Force to meet with myself and other interested parties by the 10th of April, 2021 to learn and evaluate our concepts in order to craft the correct solution for North Kona. I re-iterate my support of this legislative body as they tackle this critical issue head-on.

Respectfully submitted
Joseph Jasmon

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 10:49:33 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dr. Frank H. Sayre, D.D.S.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, I am a 46 year resident of Kailua-Kona. During that time I have been on the active staff of Kona Community Hospital for 4 years, a member of the HHSC MAC for 8 years, and the West Hawaii Regional Board of HHSC for 7 years. In that time it has gone from a new hospital to falling apart. Most of the deterioration is out of sight. Waste line plumbing that has become clogged and sewage dumping out into rooms and public spaces. A wastewater treatment system that is operating at maximum capacity with no ability to expand. Air handlers that leak condensation and breed mildue and mold. In short, it is obsolete and not fixable long term. The entry road is narrow and winding and dangerous. We need a new hospital closer to the population center and airport. Alternatively, we need to privatize like Maui and find a new solution with another system.

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 11:07:46 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ross Wilson Jr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The current Kona Community Hospital was built over 50 years ago and has maxed out its campus in Kealahou. There is no room for any expansion and its facilities today are far removed from the population base and growth in North Kona.

This proposed task force to conduct a feasibility study for the construction of a hospital in West Hawaii is the first step in a long process to expand increased and expanded healthcare services in West Hawaii.

I'm in total support of SCR 53.

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 11:40:38 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Katherine Buckovetz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

West Hawaii desperately needs more hospital services and physicians. As a kupuna resident who volunteers with organizations, I see the unmet medical need of the many kupuna here who live in town or country. Many cannot travel to Oahu due to inability to finances or hardship related to travel. Lives are at stake and ohana are stressed by the suffering of family members. You can intiate change this now by passing this bill. I urge you to support this much needed bill to help Big Island residents. With Aloha, Katherine Buckovetz

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 12:08:08 PM

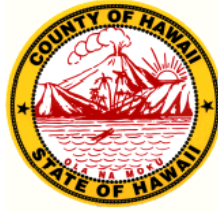
Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dustin Fargher	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Dustin Fargher and I'm a resident of West Hawai'i. I support support SCR 53 and SR 35 that request the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation to convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona. I support a new hospital in West Hawai'i. We need increased and expanded health care services for West Hawai'i. I encourage programs and incentives to attract more providers. I believe a new hospital located in North Kona closer to Hawai'i Community College – PÄ• Iamanui will expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. Please pass SCR 53 and SR 35.

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor



Lee E. Lord
Managing Director

Robert H. Command
Deputy Managing Director

LATE

County of Hawai'i
Office of the Mayor

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(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

March 28, 2021

Chair, Sen. Jarrett Keohokalole
Vice-Chair, Sen. Rosylyn H. Baker
Senate Health Committee
Hawai'i State Legislature
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Subject: S.C.R. 53, S.R. 35, REQUESTING THE HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A HOSPITAL IN NORTH KONA.

Hearing Date: Monday, March 29, 2021 at 1:20 p.m.
Time/Place of Hearing: Via Video Conference

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and members of the Senate Committee on Health;

The County of Hawai'i, expresses it's strong support for SCR 53, SR35, as the initial step to improving the overall availability of quality medical services in West Hawai'i and particularly in North Kona.

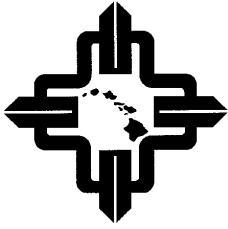
As that area's population continues to grow, access to healthcare has become a important community priority that has only become more evident during the COVID 19 pandemic.

We are asking for your committee's utmost consideration and support of this measure. Please feel free to contact our office for any additional information.

Mahalo,

Steven D. Bader

Steven D. Bader
Executive Assistant/Government Relations
Office of the Mayor



HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS
C O R P O R A T I O N

"Quality Healthcare For All"

LATE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

March 29, 2021
1:20 p.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Via Videoconference

**Testimony in Support with Suggested Amendments
S.C.R. 53/S.R. 35
REQUESTING THE HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION TO CONVENE A
TASK FORCE TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A
HOSPITAL IN NORTH KONA.**

Linda Rosen, M.D., M.P.H.
Chief Executive Officer
Hawaii Health Systems Corporation

On behalf of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation (HHSC) Corporate Board of Directors and the HHSC West Hawaii Region we thank you for the opportunity to present testimony **in support of SCR 53/SR 35 with suggested amendments.**

This measure draws attention to the future healthcare needs of the community of West Hawaii, specifically the feasibility of construction of a hospital in North Kona. At the present time there are three hospitals in the geographic area of West Hawaii, two of which are operated by HHSC. Kohala Hospital, a small hospital at the very northern end of the island, and Kona Community Hospital, located upside of South Kona. North Hawaii Community Hospital, operated by the Queens Health System, is a small hospital located in Waimea. These three hospitals combined serving the existing population are not operating at their full capacity in terms of occupied beds, but they are all an hour or more from the Kona airport and the growing urban core. In addition, the services they offer are limited, leading to what has been termed "out migration" of patients to Honolulu. Therefore, the problem is not necessarily one of inadequate "beds" but the location and scope of services of the beds that currently exist are not optimal.

Planning for the future is important but even today there are significant unmet needs for healthcare services in West Hawaii, particularly specialty services, that will only become more pronounced with time. We believe a study for a new hospital should be conceptualized within the context of all healthcare services that could benefit the population of the region. For this reason, we respectfully request that the scope of the task force not be limited to the feasibility of construction of a hospital but instead direct

HHSC to conduct a healthcare needs assessment of the West Hawaii region. In addition, we suggest that a representative of North Hawaii Community Hospital and the Queens Health System be added to the task force.

A healthcare needs assessment for West Hawaii can identify unmet healthcare needs and can serve as a valid, evidence-based tool that can consider and analyze demand and supply options. It can identify opportunities to improve alignment of current services and will lay a solid foundation for planning for future needs, including the feasibility of constructing a new hospital for North Kona.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.

LATE

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 3:31:18 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rick Gaffney	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I'm a 40+ resident of West Hawai'i and I support support SCR 53 and SR 35 requesting the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona. We desperately need increased and expanded health care services for West Hawai'i. A new hospital in North Kona closer to Hawai'i Community College – PÄ• Iamanui will expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. Please pass SCR 53 and SR 35.

Mahalo,

Rick Gaffney

LATE

SCR-53

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 8:44:06 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/29/2021 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lydia Hoepner	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Lydia Hoepner and I'm a resident of West Hawai'i. I support support SCR 53 and SR 35 that request the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation to convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study for construction of a hospital in North Kona. I support a new hospital in West Hawai'i. We need increased and expanded health care services for West Hawai'i. I encourage programs and incentives to attract more providers. I believe a new hospital located in North Kona closer to Hawai'i Community College – PÄ• Iamanui will expand workforce development and employment opportunities for future generations in our local community. Please pass SCR 53 and SR 35.