



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness
Tuesday, March 29, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

By
Joe W. Ramos, Ph.D.
Interim Director
University of Hawai'i Cancer Center
And
Michael Bruno, PhD
Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HCR 33 – REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT A SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED MANDATORY HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR EARLY ACCESS BREAST CANCER SCREENING

Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i Cancer Center supports HCR 33, requesting the Auditor to conduct a social and financial assessment of proposed mandatory health insurance coverage for early access breast cancer screening.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in Hawai'i women. Annually in Hawai'i, an average of 1,233 women are diagnosed with invasive breast cancer and another 308 are diagnosed with in situ (non-invasive) tumors. An average of 155 women in Hawai'i die of breast cancer each year. The incidence of breast cancer in Hawai'i is higher than the U.S. overall and statewide rates continue to increase each year. There are substantial disparities in the burden of breast cancer across Hawai'i's multiethnic populations with the highest mortality in Native Hawaiian women. Nearly ¼ of all breast cancer patients are diagnosed at advanced stages when it is more difficult to treat, and survival is poorest. Mammography is an important tool for the early detection of breast cancer.

The Resolution is necessary to determine the impact of expanding health care coverage for baseline mammograms for women between the ages of thirty-five and thirty-nine. The UH Cancer Center is prepared to provide relevant expertise and data to facilitate the proposed assessment.

HCR-33

Submitted on: 3/26/2022 11:00:23 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/29/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laeton J Pang	Hawaii Radiological Society	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm please as president of the Hawaii Radiological Society and as a practicing radiation oncologist serving as the operations medical director of the Cancer Center of Hawaii, our state's leading radiation therapy treatment provider to write in support of HCR 33/SCR 123 .

This resolution requests that the Auditor conduct an impact assessment report for a proposed mandate of health insurance coverage for early access breast cancer screening. This report would include the social and financial effects of the proposed mandated coverage.

Hawaii SEER data presented by Dr. Brenda Hernandez of UH Cancer Research Center shows that women of Asian ancestry in Hawaii are the ethnic group most likely to develop breast cancer before age 50 in our state. The women of Hawaii between ages 40-49 have a higher incidence of breast cancer compared to the US national average. Additionally Native Hawaiian women have the greatest breast cancer incidence and mortality in Hawaii. Nationally half of all fatal cancers are diagnosed in women before age 50 in the general population.

Our hope is that this auditor study can be completed for the legislature, and the results will allow for the next step of legislation toward earlier breast cancer screening for Hawaii.

Thank you for your consideration.

Laeton J Pang, MD, MPH, FACR, FACRO

HCR-33

Submitted on: 3/27/2022 10:38:50 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/29/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Martha Wiedman, M.D.	Martha Wiedman, M.D., Inc., Hawaii Radiological Society	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

The Hawaii Radiological Society collaborated with the Hawaii Medical Association in 2021 and 2022 to increase the availability of mammogram screening to decrease breast cancer death and mortality in our state. The current US Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF) guidelines, which recommend breast cancer screenings starting at age 50 fail to recognize that women in Hawaii between ages 40-49 have a higher incidence of breast cancer compared to the national average, particularly among Asian and Native Hawaiian populations. Native Hawaiian women have the greatest breast cancer incidence and mortality in Hawaii.

As a member of the Hawaii Radiological Society, a radiologist specializing in body and breast cancer imaging for 33 years, the first 28 in California and the last 3 years in Hawaii, I support increasing the availability of screening to women ages 40-49, as approved by the American College of Radiology, and also support the HCR 33 resolution to request that the Hawaii State Auditor conduct an impact assessment for a proposed mandate of health insurance coverage for early access to breast cancer screening. The report would include the social and financial effects of the proposed mandated coverage to support this legislation.

Respectfully,

Martha Wiedman, M.D.

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair

Rep. Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair

Date: March 29, 2022

From: Hawaii Medical Association

Elizabeth Ann Ignacio MD, Chair, HMA Legislative Committee

Elizabeth England MD, Vice Chair, HMA Legislative Committee

Re: HCR 33 Auditor; Impact Assessment Report; Mandatory Health Insurance Coverage; Early Access Breast Cancer Screening

Position: Support

This resolution requests that the Auditor conduct an impact assessment report for a proposed mandate of health insurance coverage for early access breast cancer screening. This report would include the social and financial effects of the proposed mandated coverage.

The most frequently diagnosed cancer in the women of Hawaii by far is breast cancer, making up approximately 34% of newly diagnosed cases^{1,2}. United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) guidelines recommend cancer screening for women at age fifty. But women in Hawaii between the ages of forty and forty-nine have higher incidence of breast cancer compared to the national average. USPSTF guidelines adversely impact women of Asian ancestry in Hawaii who are the ethnic group most likely to develop breast cancer before the age of fifty. In addition, Native Hawaiian women have the greatest breast cancer incidence and mortality in Hawaii.

Risk assessment and early detection decreases breast cancer morbidity and mortality. Expansion of insurance coverage for breast cancer screening for younger women of Hawaii will increase the early identification of breast cancer, and forward earlier initiation of the treatment needed.

A proposed mandate for health insurance coverage for early access breast cancer screening is necessary for the early detection and treatment of breast cancer in the women of Hawaii. HMA commends our lawmakers for this auditor resolution, which is an important step toward legislation that can save lives, especially for our minority women who are more likely to develop breast cancer before age 50. HMA strongly supports this resolution and all efforts to improve breast cancer screening in Hawaii.

Thank you for allowing the Hawaii Medical Association to testify in support of this resolution.

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REFERENCES

1. Loo LWM, Williams M, Hernandez BY. The high and heterogeneous burden of breast cancer in Hawaii: A unique multiethnic U.S. Population. Cancer Epidemiol. 2019 Feb;58:71-76.
2. University of Hawaii at Manoa Speaker Series. "Cancer Disparities and Survival in Hawai'i." Jan 7, 2022.
3. Sharp Declines in Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening. 2021 June 30. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). [https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/p0630-cancer-screenings.](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/p0630-cancer-screenings)
4. Hawaii Radiological Society and American College of Radiology: "Breast Screening Disparities, Diverse Populations and Divergent Guidelines" September 25, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9o8uMuLxM4k&feature=youtu.be>
5. Sherman R. Mammogram guidelines can put women of color at risk. *Washington Post*. December 8, 2020. <https://www.thelily.com/mammogram-guidelines-can-put-women-of-color-at-risk-these-women-thank-god-they-advocated-for-themselves/>
6. Monticciolo DL, Newell MS, Hendrick RE, Helvie MA, Moy L, Monsees B, et al. Breast Cancer Screening in Women at Higher-Than-Average Risk: Recommendations From the ACR. J Am Coll Radiol. 2018;15(3):408-414.

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HCR-33

Submitted on: 3/27/2022 7:31:37 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/29/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Christenson, MD	CHI Lifestyle Medical Center, LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Risk assessment and early detection decreases breast cancer morbidity and mortality. Expansion of insurance coverage for breast cancer screening for younger women of Hawaii will increase the early identification of breast cancer, and forward earlier initiation of the treatment needed.



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March 29, 2022

REPRESENTATIVE RYAN YAMANE, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE ADRIAN TAM, VICE-CHAIR
MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE

Re: **House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 33– SUPPORT**
REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT A SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL
ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED MANDATORY HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR
EARLY ACCESS BREAST CANCER SCREENING.

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Society of Clinical Oncology (HSCO) is a local community of oncologists, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and other allied health professionals who provide a voice for multidisciplinary cancer care teams and the patients they serve. Founded in 1996, HSCO is the largest oncology professional organization in the state.

We support HCR33 as this promotes the goals of coverage that were proposed in 2021's Senate Bill (SB) 827. We support this change to coverage because it follows the screening guidelines issued by leading clinical organizations such as the American College of Radiology, the National Comprehensive Cancer Network, and the American Medical Association instead of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF).

The current standards are based national guidelines from the USPSTF. However, doing so fails to acknowledge the evidence showing women of certain ethnic groups suffer a disproportionately higher rate of breast cancer diagnosis before the age of fifty. Hawaii has a large population of Asian American women who have an earlier peak age of breast cancer diagnosis and a Native Hawaiian population which has the highest mortality from breast cancer. Because of the ethnic diversity in Hawai'i, health insurance coverage for screening for certain risk factors as well as lowering the age of for women to undergo baseline mammograms would improve health outcomes for those women whose ethnic backgrounds and other characteristics make them susceptible to an earlier onset of breast cancer.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



ASCO State/Regional
Affiliate Program

HCR-33

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:04:31 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/29/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Shepherd	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a breast cancer researcher and faculty member at the University of Hawaii Cancer Center, I strongly support HCR 33 and SCR 123, the Concurrent Resolution “Requesting the Auditor to Conduct a Social and Financial Assessment of Proposed Mandatory Health Insurance Coverage for Early Access Breast Cancer Screening”.

Importantly, I suggest that the bills be MODIFIED to require a STANDARDIZE BREAST HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE be provided to all women participating in screening or diagnostic mammography at all mammographic imaging facilities in the state.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in Hawaii women. Annually in Hawaii, an average of 1,233 women are diagnosed with invasive breast cancer and another 308 are diagnosed with in situ (non-invasive) tumors. An average of 155 women in Hawaii die of breast cancer each year. The incidence of breast cancer in Hawaii is higher than the U.S. overall and statewide rates continue to increase each year. There are substantial disparities in the burden of breast cancer across Hawaii’s multiethnic populations with the highest mortality in Native Hawaiian women. Nearly ¼ of all breast cancer patients are diagnosed at advanced stages when it is more difficult to treat and survival is poorest. Mammography is an important tool for the early detection of breast cancer.

HOWEVER, we do not fully understand why particular groups of women in our state have a high risk of advanced breast cancer because STANDARDIZE BREAST HEALTH RISK QUESTIONS are not being asked and curated by any state institution.

The Resolution is necessary to determine the impact of expanding health care coverage for baseline mammograms for women between the ages of thirty-five and thirty-nine. LASTLY, it must be MODIFIED to also require STANDARDIZED BREAST HEALTH QUESTIONS so that we can better identify high risk women. I am prepared to provide relevant expertise and data to facilitate the proposed assessment.

HCR-33

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:20:04 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/29/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephen Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Friends,

As a health care provider here in Hawaii, I see on a daily basis the ravages of cancer in our population. As a pathologist, I often make or confirm the initial diagnosis of cancer. Our population is at increased risk for breast cancer, and the earlier we can detect it, the greater likelihood these patients will survive, and go on to live a longer life. This bill will assist us in lowering obstacles to that goal. Please do support this bill. Help us cure as many patients with breast cancer as we can.

Respectfully,

Stephen M. Smith, MD

HCR-33

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:51:46 AM

Testimony for HHH on 3/29/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lambert Leong	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a breast cancer and AI researcher at the University of Hawaii Cancer Center, I strongly support HCR 33 and SCR 123, the Concurrent Resolution “Requesting the Auditor to Conduct a Social and Financial Assessment of Proposed Mandatory Health Insurance Coverage for Early Access Breast Cancer Screening”.

Importantly, I suggest that the bills be **MODIFIED** to require a **STANDARDIZE BREAST HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE** be provided to all women participating in screening or diagnostic mammography at all mammographic imaging facilities in the state.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in Hawaii women. Annually in Hawaii, an average of 1,233 women are diagnosed with invasive breast cancer and another 308 are diagnosed with in situ (non-invasive) tumors. An average of 155 women in Hawaii die of breast cancer each year. The incidence of breast cancer in Hawaii is higher than the U.S. overall and statewide rates continue to increase each year. There are substantial disparities in the burden of breast cancer across Hawaii’s multiethnic populations with the highest mortality in Native Hawaiian women. Nearly ¼ of all breast cancer patients are diagnosed at advanced stages when it is more difficult to treat and survival is poorest. Mammography is an important tool for the early detection of breast cancer.

HOWEVER, we do not fully understand why particular groups of women in our state have a high risk of advanced breast cancer because **STANDARDIZE BREAST HEALTH RISK QUESTIONS** are not being asked and curated by any state institution.

The Resolution is necessary to determine the impact of expanding health care coverage for baseline mammograms for women between the ages of thirty-five and thirty-nine. **LASTLY**, it must be **MODIFIED** to also require **STANDARDIZED BREAST HEALTH QUESTIONS** so that we can better identify high risk women. I am prepared to provide relevant expertise and data to facilitate the proposed assessment.

HCR-33

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 12:12:22 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/29/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Devon Cataldi	University Of Hawaii At Manoa	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to support this testimony for enabling the collection of early breast cancer screening in hawaii to further understand those who are at risk and ultimately learn how this can help those with breast cancer in living in Hawaii. Thank you,

HCR-33

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 7:52:22 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/29/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Camacho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of breast cancer screening our Asian, Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women population at an earlier age given the increase incidence of breast cancer.