

MAR 14 2007

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII TO EXAMINE THE
PROBLEM OF PATIENTS IN ACUTE CARE HOSPITALS WAITLISTED FOR
LONG TERM CARE AND TO PROPOSE SOLUTIONS.

1 WHEREAS, many patients in acute care hospitals whose
2 conditions have improved so that they may be transferred to long
3 term care will stay and receive treatment at hospitals because
4 beds are not available for them at skilled nursing facilities;
5 and

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7 WHEREAS, according to Hawaii Pacific Health, approximately
8 one fourth of their waitlisted long term care patients are from
9 Oahu, another fourth are from the Pacific Islands, and up to
10 one-half are neighbor island patients who are transferred to one
11 of Hawaii Pacific Health's hospitals on Oahu or Kauai for care;
12 and

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14 WHEREAS, patients who should be receiving long term care
15 can spend several months occupying an acute care bed at a
16 hospital while waiting for an available bed at a skilled nursing
17 facility; and

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19 WHEREAS, hospitals bear the additional costs for caring for
20 waitlisted patients and are forced to offer their already scarce
21 acute care beds while patients wait for an available space at a
22 skilled nursing facility; and

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24 WHEREAS, most skilled nursing facilities are unable to
25 accommodate patients who are on dialysis, have a tracheotomy, or
26 have mental health issues; thus, these patients are unable to be
27 discharged from the hospital and must stay for an extended
28 period of time; and

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30 WHEREAS, skilled nursing facilities on the neighbor islands
31 are frequently at maximum capacity, which makes it difficult for
32 patients receiving care on Oahu to transfer back to their home
33 island for long term care; and

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1 WHEREAS, the lack of beds available at skilled nursing
2 facilities in Hawaii has caused patients, particularly those
3 with mental health issues, to transfer to mainland facilities,
4 which takes these patients away from their families and a
5 familiar environment; and

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7 WHEREAS, hospitals are forced to incur the expenses for
8 transferring a long term care patient to the mainland, including
9 travel expenses, nurse care costs, and any additional fees to
10 assist a patient's family member with making the necessary
11 guardianship arrangements for the transfer; and

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13 WHEREAS, skilled nursing facilities will not accept
14 patients until they have a source of payment; thus, hospitals
15 must also bear their patients' health care costs while their
16 applications for Medicaid or QUEST is being considered; and

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18 WHEREAS, hospitals do not receive a full payment, and
19 sometimes no payment at all, from commercial payers for the
20 patient's waitlisted days that are spent in the hospital,
21 creating a growing unsustainable financial burden on acute care
22 hospitals throughout the State; now, therefore,

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24 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fourth
25 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2007,
26 that the Healthcare Association of Hawaii is requested to
27 conduct a study of patients in acute care hospitals who are
28 waitlisted for long term care, and to propose solutions to the
29 problem; and

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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human
32 Services and the Department of Health cooperate with the
33 Healthcare Association of Hawaii in the study; and

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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Healthcare Association of
36 Hawaii is requested to submit a report of findings and
37 recommendations to the Legislature no later than twenty days
38 prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2008; and

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40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
41 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health, the
42 Director of Human Services, the Chief Executive Officer of the
43 Healthcare Association of Hawaii, the Chief Executive Officer of
44 Hawaii Health Systems Corporation, the Chief Executive Officer



1 of Hawaii Pacific Health, the Chief Executive Officer of the
2 Queen's Medical Center, the Chief Executive Officer of Kaiser
3 Permanente Hawaii, and the Director of the Hawaii Long Term Care
4 Association.
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