



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

#### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

By

Loïc Le Marchand, MD, PhD

Associate Director for Community Outreach & Engagement, and Population Sciences  
Lani Park. PhD and Alike Maunakea, PhD, Principal Investigators

And

Naoto T. Ueno, MD, PhD, Director  
University of Hawai'i Cancer Center

And

Lee Buenconsejo-Lum, Interim Dean and Principal Investigator, Pacific Regional Central  
Cancer Registry (USAPI)

John A. Burns School of Medicine

And

Michael Bruno, PhD, Provost  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

#### HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Cancer Center (UHCC) and John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) strongly supports HB 1301 HD1 SD1, provided that its passage does not impact priorities as indicated in the University's Board of Regents Approved Executive Biennium Budget. This measure would appropriate revenues for UHCC to conduct a two-year preliminary study with the goal of establishing a long-term multi-ethnic cohort (MEC) study focusing on social determinants of health, lifestyles, environmental and occupational exposures, and resilience factors of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos in the State of Hawai'i.

This funding would provide vital resources to help initiate a long-term follow-up study, which would provide critical data to improve the cancer disparities and promote health equity in populations that experience high rates for many common cancers and continue to be understudied and underserved.

National data typically aggregate health information for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI) and, thereby, ignore the rich cultural and lifestyle diversity of these populations and mask their marked differences in cancer incidence and outcomes. UHCC has decades of research experience studying cancer disparities in AANHPI. Disaggregated data from the Hawai'i Tumor Registry (the State central cancer registry,

operated by UHCC) show disparities in how early certain cancers are diagnosed (i.e., stage at diagnosis), in the number of new cancers detected each year (i.e., incidence), and in the proportion of deaths caused by certain cancers in Native Hawaiians, Filipinos, and Pacific Islanders residing in Hawai'i. Similarly, the Pacific Regional Central Cancer Registry [the US Affiliated Pacific Islands (USAPI) central cancer registry, operated by JABSOM], shows significant cancer health disparities in late stage at diagnosis and extremely poor survival rates in cervical, oropharyngeal, uterine, and liver cancer among several of the populations indigenous to the USAPI. Many of the US Pacific Islander populations move to Hawai'i for educational and economic opportunities, as well as for health care.

Information by cancer site shows that Native Hawaiians have one of the highest rates of lung, breast, colorectal, pancreatic, gastric, liver, endometrial, and cervical cancers among other racial/ethnic groups in the US. Pacific Islanders also have high rates for many cancers that should be addressed through culturally-tailored health education and prevention efforts, such as smoking cessation and screening. Filipino Americans have high incidence rates for lung, colorectal, and thyroid cancer in Hawai'i, and rapidly increasing rates of breast and prostate cancers. It is well-studied that certain types of cancer are heavily influenced by tobacco, dietary composition, and overweight/obesity. Additionally, there is a high correlation between poverty and food insecurity, tobacco use, obesity, and obesity-related chronic disease, including cancer. Studies conducted in the US, USAPI, and globally also indicate other socio-cultural impacts on cancer aside from poverty. Detailed epidemiological studies conducted by UHCC to date have shown that known lifestyle risk factors do not fully account for these risk differences. However, due to gaps in the available data, such as on social determinants of health and environmental and occupational exposures, the additional risk/resilience factors that drive these disparities remain unknown. A new cohort study that captures such information would directly address these research gaps.

The proposed two-year, state-funded project would establish the feasibility of recruiting participants for a long-term prospective study and greatly strengthen a federal grant application to NIH to fund the full-scale research. It will also build a strong partnership with these communities so as to define common priority research areas and assist with study recruitment and future dissemination of study findings. The budget needed to perform the two-year feasibility study is expected to be \$500,000 for Year 1 and \$500,000 for Year 2.

This new MEC study is highly needed, and the results will inform UHCC, JABSOM, and UH researchers' current and future work with Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and Filipino populations to address and to improve lifestyle, social, cultural, and economic determinants of cancer prevention, cancer screening, and early detection, treatment and survivorship.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

[CommunityVoice](#)

# More Data Needed To Help Reduce Cancer Disparities

House Bill 1301 would fund a study that focuses on Native Hawaiians, other Pacific Islanders and Asian communities in Hawaii.

By [Patricia Kalolaine Cornett](#)

March 17, 2023 · 3 min read



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Cancer disparities are a significant public health issue in Hawaii, and our state legislators have the chance, and kuleana, to take a vital step toward helping everyone have a fair and just opportunity to prevent, detect, treat and survive cancer.



Cancer affects everyone but it does not affect everyone equally. Breast cancer incidence and mortality are highest among Native Hawaiian women compared to any other racial or ethnic group in Hawaii. American Samoan men are **eight times more likely** to develop liver cancer.

The most recent Hawaii Cancer at a Glance report (2014-2018) indicates that lung and bronchus cancer incidence among males is highest among Native Hawaiian and Filipinos. And Filipinos have the highest proportions of late-stage prostate cancers.

I am a breast cancer survivor, so I know screenings can help detect cancer at an earlier stage and save lives. As part of my journey and my work as a health-care worker, I'm committed to helping women get their mammograms and will drive them to their appointment and then back home.

In 2021, I was sitting on my chemo chair when I noticed that among the people who were receiving treatment, I was the only Tongan.

#### Top Cancer Sites for Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders (1998-2002)

Cancer Incidence Rates per 100,000 - Men (1998-2002) *							
Cancer	Native Hawaiian	Samoaan	Tongan	Non-Hispanic White (NHW)	Native Hawaiian/NHW Ratio	Samoaan/NHW Ratio	Tongan/NHW Ratio
All Sites	531.6	566.7	428.8	587.0	0.9	1.0	0.7
Colorectal	65.7	43.1	--	65.6	1.0	0.7	--
Liver & IBD	16.3	54.5	--	6.7	2.4	8.1	--
Lung	109.8	111.9	107.0	89.2	1.2	1.3	1.2
Prostate	119.7	144.1	85.0	170.0	0.7	0.8	0.1
Stomach	18.8	53.0	--	9.9	1.9	5.4	--

Cancer Incidence Rates per 100,000 - Women (1998-2002) *							
Cancer	Native Hawaiian	Samoaan	Tongan	Non-Hispanic White (NHW)	Native Hawaiian/NHW Ratio	Samoaan/NHW Ratio	Tongan/NHW Ratio
All Sites	488.5	472.0	504.7	448.5	1.1	1.1	1.1
Breast	175.8	102.5	118.0	145.2	1.2	0.7	0.8
Cervical	12.3	18.1	--	8.1	1.5	2.2	--
Colorectal	44.0	38.6	--	47.6	0.9	0.8	--
Lung	69.7	56.9	--	59.0	1.2	1.0	--
Stomach	14.5	--	--	4.3	3.4	--	--

\*IBD = Intrahepatic Bile Duct

Source: NCI 2008. Cancer Incidence and Mortality Patterns among Specific Asian and Pacific Islander Populations in the U.S.  
<http://seer.cancer.gov/publications/apicancer/index.html>

A screenshot from a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services report.

“Where are my people and why am I the only one getting treatment?” I asked my husband.

So, I decided to look for them and was hired to reach out to my Tongan Community on the Koolau side, Waiahole, Kahaluu, Punaluu, Hauula, Kahuku, Laie and beyond, to share my story and the importance of mammograms with them.

I currently have an information booth that provides information to mostly Pacific Islander women about the University of Hawaii Cancer Center and how to get a mammogram. For many of them, this is the first time they have signed up to get screened for the first time in several years.

Cancer research also saves lives. It is thanks to a clinical trial that I am now in remission after being diagnosed with cancer for a second time. In addition to helping women get their mammograms, I talk to my community about how crucial cancer research and clinical trials are to help improve cancer outcomes.



## Cancer research also saves lives.

As an American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network volunteer, I understand that besides doctors and researchers, our elected officials also play a pivotal role in improving the lives of people with cancer and their families.

[House Bill 1301](#) aims to provide funds that will allow the University of Hawaii Cancer Center to conduct a multiethnic cohort study that will focus on the different factors that contribute to higher incidence and higher mortality rates in certain cancers among Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and Asian communities including Filipinos in Hawaii.

These are communities that face cultural, language and structural barriers to cancer care — including lack of transportation — and are largely understudied.

The collected data will help better understand cancer disparities and identify gaps in cancer prevention and care delivery that contribute to these disparities as well as how to address them.

In Hawaii, we believe in living pono. I urge our state lawmakers to honor this concept and approve the funding for the multiethnic study that can help end cancer as we know it, for everyone.

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By Jonathan Y. Okamura · March 19, 2023 · 7 min read

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### **About the Author**

#### **Patricia Kalolaine Cornett**



Patricia Kalolaine Cornett is an outreach coordinator for the University of Hawaii Cancer Center. She is also a cancer survivor and a volunteer for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, the American Cancer Society's nonprofit and nonpartisan advocacy affiliate. Cornett serves on several community boards, including the Lauhi Foundation and the Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander R3 outreach collaborative group.



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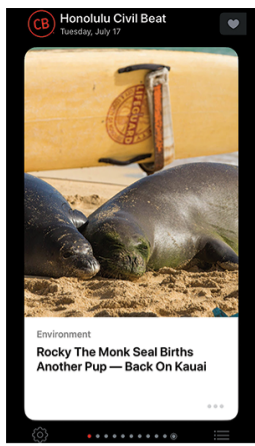
– **Kahua** 2 weeks ago

It is worth remembering in 2022 Chaminade University published a study in *Ethnopharmacology* 294 (2022) showing compounds in kava ('awa) have anticancer activity. A study (University of Florida) entitled "Kava as a Clinical Nutrient" combined with sea hibiscus, displayed anticancer activity against breast and prostate cancer. More recent studies at UC, Irvine are showing similar properties in kava as well. University of Florida has published kava anti-inflammatory studies. Most all are discussed in depth in the Nutrients paper.

\*Nutrients 2020, 12, 3044

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**HB1301 HD1**  
**RELATING TO CANCER**  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

April 5, 2023

10:00 AM

Room CR 211

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The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HB1301 HD1 SD1, which would appropriate funds to the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center for a multi-ethnic cohort study focusing on the social determinants of health, lifestyles, environmental exposures, and resilience factors of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos.

As the principal public agency in the State responsible for the performance, development, and coordination of programs and activities relating to Native Hawaiians<sup>1</sup> and with the constitutional and statutory obligations to ever-seek the betterment of conditions of Native Hawaiians,<sup>2</sup> **OHA takes care to note that Native Hawaiians face disturbingly greater health inequities and disparities with a higher rate of chronic diseases;<sup>3</sup> Native Hawaiians face a 1.96 times higher rate of cancer;<sup>4</sup> cancer is one of the leading causes of death for Native Hawaiians;<sup>5</sup> more Native Hawaiians die of specific cancer than any other racial or ethnic group in the State;<sup>6</sup> Hawai 'i's breast cancer death rate for Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander women was 2.90 times higher than the overall population with Native Hawaiian women having the lowest five-year cancer survivorship than the overall population.<sup>7</sup>** The Department of Native Hawaiian Health of the John A. Burns School of Medicine noted that these disparities stem, in part, from lack of culturally appropriate interventions, late detection, diagnoses at more advanced stages, genetic markers of tumor aggressiveness, and a higher prevalence of tobacco use<sup>8</sup> - all of which are factors being to be addressed by the multi-ethnic cohort to be assembled through this measure's proposal.

OHA appreciates the opportunity to support this measure and **respectfully asks the Legislature to PASS HB1301 HD1 SD1**, for the betterment of the health of the people of Hawai'i. Lo'a ke ola i Hālaulaola. Mahalo nui loa.

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<sup>1</sup> HRS §10-3(3).

<sup>2</sup> Haw. Stat. Con. Art. XII, Sections 4-6 (1978); Haw. Stat. Rev. §10-3(1) and (2).

<sup>3</sup> Department of Native Hawaiian Health, John A. Burns School of Medicine, *Assessment and Priorities for the Health and Well-Being in Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders*, 2020, p.9.

<sup>4</sup> Id.

<sup>5</sup> Id. at 10.

<sup>6</sup> Id.

<sup>7</sup> Id.

<sup>8</sup> Id.



**RE: SUPPORT - HB1301, Relating to Cancer and University of Hawai'i; Cancer Center; Multiethnic Cohort Study**

Chair and members of the committee.

I am Adam Zarrin, the Director of State Government Affairs for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society® (LLS) is a global leader in the fight against cancer. The LLS mission: Cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, and improve the quality of life of patients and their families. LLS funds lifesaving blood cancer research around the world, provides free information and support services, and is the voice for all blood cancer patients seeking access to quality, affordable, coordinated care.

**We support HB1301, relating to cancer, and a multi-ethnic cohort study.**

The study would identify reasons for the disproportionately high risk of chronic diseases among Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders. The study will also suggest new ways to address these long-standing disparities.

These first steps will help develop new therapies for patients with cancer and other serious illnesses. These conditions require extensive research and innovation and depend on foundational research like this.

History has shown us that not all patients have had the same opportunity or consideration in clinical research. For example, those from historically marginalized groups are often under-represented in clinical trials.

Such a lack of diversity among people participating is problematic on multiple levels. It impacts our understanding of how effective new drugs might be across populations and how to reduce disparities in access to treatment.

We are excited that Hawaii can be a leader in addressing health equity in underrepresented communities, and we hope you will support HB1301.

Thank you.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Wednesday, April 5, 2023; 10:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1301, HOUSE DRAFT 1, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO CANCER.**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** House Bill No. 1301, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1, RELATING TO CANCER.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

This bill, as received by your Committee, would appropriate an unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal years 2023-2024, and 2024-2025, for a multi-ethnic cohort study focusing on the social determinants of health, lifestyles, environmental exposures, and resilience factors of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos. The funds would be expended by the University of Hawaii, and require the University to seek additional funds to complete the multi-cohort study.

This bill also clarifies that cancer research focusing on Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos is a matter of statewide concern, and would take effect on June 30, 3000.

The goal of medical research is to develop safe and effective methods to prevent, detect, diagnose, treat and ultimately cure the collection of diseases known as cancer. The better we understand these diseases, the more progress we will make toward diminishing the tremendous human and economic toll disease inflicts upon our citizenry.

**Testimony on House Bill No. 1301, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1**  
**Wednesday, April 5, 2023; 10:00 a.m.**  
**Page 2**

Nearly 10 years ago, the HPCA testified in support of House Bill No. 1616, Regular Session of 2014, a measure that would add to the Hawaii State Planning Act's objectives and policies for health, the identification of social determinants of health and prioritization of programs, services, interventions, and activities that address identified social determinants of health to improve Native Hawaiian health in accordance with federal law and reduce health disparities of disproportionately affected demographics.

We noted in our testimony that House Bill No. 1616, seeks to:

*" . . . identify those specific social determinants that adversely affect Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos. As these populations make a sizeable percentage of patients seen by community health centers, the HPCA strongly supports this measure."*

This bill was enacted as Act 155, Session Laws of Hawaii 2014.

Ten years later, we continue to recognize the importance of social determinants of health on the health care outcomes and quality of life of Hawaii's most vulnerable, marginalized, and isolated constituencies. The more we learn the better we are able to act.

**The HPCA strongly supports this important measure and commends the introducer for offering this proposal. We urge your favorable consideration.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.



American Cancer Society  
Cancer Action Network  
2370 Nu'uau Avenue  
Honolulu, HI 96817  
808.460.6109  
[www.fightcancer.org](http://www.fightcancer.org)

Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: Wednesday, April 5, 2023

**ACS CAN SUPPORTS HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER.**

Cynthia Au, Government Relations Director – Hawaii Guam  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

Thank you for the opportunity to **SUPPORT** HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii Cancer Center to conduct a multi-ethnic cohort study focusing on the social determinants of health, lifestyles, environmental exposures, and resilience factors of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), the nonprofit, non-partisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society advocates for public policies that reduce death and suffering from cancer. ACS CAN works with federal, state, and local government bodies to support evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii with 2,500 deaths each year. This year approximately 8,460 residents of Hawaii will be diagnosed with the disease. Cancer incidence and mortality rates have decreased in Hawaii over the last decade, but despite this overall reduction, the disparities between ethnic populations continue to be of concern. Cancer is the leading cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause (after heart disease) among Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander individuals. Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders have one of the highest incidence rates of breast, lung, colorectal, cervical, pancreatic, gastric and liver cancers among all U.S. racial/ethnic populations.

Research is critical to understanding and reducing cancer disparities, as well as examining gaps in cancer prevention and care delivery that contribute to these disparities. The cancer death rate is 20% higher for individuals from the US counties with the lowest average of incomes compared to counties with a higher average of incomes. To aid in research, collecting data to include Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian groups including Filipinos will help to provide information on the contributing factors to cancer disparities that currently exist. According to the US Census, there are currently over 200,000 Filipinos in

the state. Data collection will aid in future research to improve health outcomes for these minority populations.

The University of Hawaii Cancer Center is one of 71 research organizations in the U.S. designated by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the only one in the Hawaii Pacific region.<sup>i</sup> Its mission is to reduce the burden of cancer through research, education, patient care and community outreach with an emphasis on the unique ethnic, cultural and environmental characteristics of Hawaii and the Pacific. Cancer research focusing on Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos is unique to Hawaii and the University of Hawaii Cancer Center and cannot be easily conducted anywhere else in the world. Findings will further help with receiving future research grants from National Cancer Institute specific to these minority populations.

ACS CAN supports the legislature to fund \$1 million over two years for the University of Hawaii Cancer Center to conduct a multi-ethnic cohort study for minority populations unique to the state. All individuals should have equitable access to quality cancer care and an equal opportunity to live a healthy life. However, cancer does not affect everyone equally. Our ability to continue to make progress against cancer relies heavily on eliminating the inequities that exist in cancer care, including in research.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT on this important matter. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Government Relations Director Cynthia Au at 808.460.6109, or [Cynthia.Au@Cancer.org](mailto:Cynthia.Au@Cancer.org).

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<sup>i</sup> University of Hawaii Cancer Center <https://www.uhcancercenter.org/50years>

# Multiethnic study to reduce cancer disparities, promote equity

By Drs. Alika Maunakea,  
Loïc Le Marchand  
and S. Lani Park

Cancer is a complex disease that affects different ethnic groups in various ways, and studying these disparities can help develop effective prevention, early detection and treatment strategies to promote healthy lifestyles and health equity.

In Hawaii, cancer incidence and mortality rates have declined over the past decade, but cancer disparities remain a concerning issue. Native Hawaiians continue to have the highest cancer incidence and mortality rates among men and women and have higher incidences of breast and ovarian cancers. Similarly, Filipino Americans have high incidence rates for lung, colorectal and thyroid cancer and rapidly increasing rates of breast and prostate cancers.

National data typically aggregate health information for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, ignoring the cultural and lifestyle diversity of these groups and masking their

marked differences in cancer incidence and outcomes. Studies primarily conducted in Hawaii, using disaggregated data, have shown that known risk factors, such as tobacco use and obesity, do not fully account for cancer disparities alone.

Additional factors, such as social determinants of health — including income and social stress — and environmental and occupational exposures, may contribute to differences in cancer occurrence and survival rates. However, due to gaps in the available data, additional risk and protective factors that may drive cancer disparities remain unknown. Likewise, little is known regarding the biological mechanisms that explain these disparities.

To address these critical gaps, a new multiethnic study in Hawaii that includes representation from affected communities is urgently

## ISLAND VOICES



*Dr. Alika Maunakea, left, is a professor of epigenetics and health disparities at John A. Burns School of Medicine, and director of the Consortium of Research Advancement Facilities and Training; Dr. Loïc Le Marchand, center, is a researcher focusing on the role of biological and environmental factors of cancer; Dr. Lani Park's research focuses on genetic, health behavioral and environmental factors that contribute to the racial/ethnic differences in cancer risk.*

needed. The University of Hawaii Cancer Center is one of 71 National Cancer Institute-designated cancer centers in the country and is uniquely positioned to conduct research on cancer disparities among Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Filipinos that cannot be easily conducted anywhere else in the world.

The Hawaii Legislature can support and help fund such a study, via House Bill 1301, which would help fill gaps in the available data

and provide a more comprehensive understanding of cancer risk and outcomes among different ethnic groups in the Islands. The multiethnic cohort study would focus on social determinants of health, lifestyles, environmental and occupational exposures, as well as resilience factors among Native Hawaiians, other Pacific Island-

ers and Filipinos. If funded, this preliminary study would bolster chances of securing a National Institutes of Health grant and foster new valuable partnerships with communities to identify shared research priorities and support recruitment efforts. Findings from this multiethnic cohort study could lead to the development of culturally appropriate prevention and treatment strategies to reduce the risk of cancer-related health behaviors

and the occurrence of cancers. These strategies may be more effective as they are tailored to meet the specific needs of these communities, ultimately promoting health equity in Hawaii.

As researchers and advocates with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), we know that investing in the study of cancer disparities could ultimately reduce the burden of cancer in populations that have been underserved and underrepresented by bringing new insights into the social, environmental and biological factors that lead to these disparities. Thus, this study will ultimately provide Hawaii public health practitioners and the community with the necessary data to advance health equity for Filipinos, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.

We urge Hawaii legislators to support and fund the feasibility study by the UH Cancer Center, a critical step in building a future where all communities in Hawaii have an equal opportunity to prevent, detect and survive cancer.



## Hawaii Medical Association

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Date: April 5, 2022  
From: Hawaii Medical Association  
Bernard Robinson MD, HMA Public Policy Committee

**Re: HB 1301 HD 1 SD1 – Relating to Cancer - UH; Cancer Center; Multi-Ethnic Cohort Study; Appropriation**

**Position: Support**

This measure would appropriate funds to the University of Hawai'i cancer center to conduct a multi-ethnic cohort study focusing on the social determinants of health, lifestyles, environmental exposures, and resilience factors of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii. Overall cancer mortality (death) is highest for native Hawaiian males and females, and cancer incidence of mortality varies substantially across our racial/ethnic groups. Disparities in risk and outcomes may be caused by genetic variations, differences in diet, tobacco and alcohol use, obesity, and other lifestyle exposures. Additionally, these factors must be considered within the context of social and community conditions. Advanced longitudinal epidemiological studies are essential to understanding cancer prevention, detection and treatment for the diverse population of Hawaii.

HMA strongly supports the appropriation of funds towards multi-ethnic cohort study including Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos. As complex cancer diagnoses and therapies advance, it is important that Hawaii research focuses on social determinants in cancer care, particularly for our underrepresented minority communities.

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

References and Quick Links:

University of Hawai'i Cancer Center. [Hawai'i Cancer At A Glance 2014-2018. Hawai'i Tumor Registry 2022](#). Accessed 3/19/2023.

University of Hawai'i Cancer Center. Hernandez B. [Hawai'i Tumor Registry – Tracking the Burden of Cancer Statewide](#). Accessed 3/19/2023.

University of Hawai'i Cancer Center. [The Multi Ethnic Cohort Study. Main Scientific Contributions](#). Accessed 3/19/2023.

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**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 10:05:19 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ryan Kawailani Ozawa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We know a lot about cancer and its myriad determinants thanks to a 20+ year cohort study focused on Japanese Americans in Hawaii and California. But we know almost nothing about how cancer emerges among Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos. We can change this.

Cancer is the leading cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause among Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander individuals. Please fund a new multi-ethnic cohort study by the University of Hawaii Cancer Center focused on these groups, which are well-represented among Hawaii's population.

The facts:

- 8,460 Hawaii residents will be diagnosed with cancer this year.
- Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii with an estimated 2,620 deaths this year.
- Breast cancer incidence and mortality were highest among Native Hawaiian women compared to any other racial or ethnic group in Hawaii.
- Lung cancer incidence is higher among Native Hawaiians as well as Filipinos.
- There are over 200,000 Filipinos in Hawaii. For every 4 people, one has Filipino ancestry.
- Initial funding of the study will increase research opportunities for additional funding as a National Cancer Institute research program.

Thank you for your consideration!

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 10:43:05 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lynn Murakami Akatsuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support the passage of HB 1301, HD 1, SD 1. It will provide the first steps of identifying risk factors to help these ethnic populations.

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 12:38:24 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alika Maunakea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am Dr. Alika Maunakea, Professor in the Department of Anatomy, Biochemistry and Physiology at the University of Hawaii Manoa, John A. Burns School of Medicine and the University of Hawai‘i Cancer Center, and Principal Investigator of the NIH-funded Hawaii Social Epigenomics of Early Diabetes (HI-SEED) cohort study and a proposed Hawai‘i Multicultural Asian and Native Ancestry (HI-MANA) cohort study for cancer research relevant to HB 1301.

As you know, Cancer is the second largest cause of cancer death in the state and has cost residents of the state billions of dollars until now. Equally pressing, cancer incidence is disproportionately affecting minorities in the state of Hawai‘i, including Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, Filipinos, and those of lower income. As a Native Hawaiian born and raised in Wai‘anae, O‘ahu, I have personally witnessed this disparity first-hand, with multiple family members having died of cancer. As a professional researcher in the field of cancer research and member of the University of Hawaii Cancer Center, it is clear that the etiology of the disparities we observe in these communities remain largely unknown. HB 1301 will provide support for gathering critical data needed to understand this etiology, which is urgently needed to design better approaches that would reduce and ultimately eliminate cancer disparities in our communities via enabling early detection and prevention.

Urgent solutions are needed to better understand and address cancer in Hawai‘i, and this can start by establishing a new multi-ethnic cohort that will help understand social determinants of health, lifestyles, environmental exposures, and resilience factors of Hawai‘i’s populations focused on prevention rather than treatment. HB 1301 shows Hawai‘i’s commitment to addressing cancer and is a stepping stone to further national funding.

I humbly ask for your SUPPORT and pass HB 1301 HD1 SD1 for state funding of \$1 million over two years on a multi-ethnic cohort study by the University of Hawaii Cancer Center of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian groups including Filipinos.

Mahalo nui,

Alika Maunakea, PhD

Associate Professor – Epigenomics Research Program

Co-Director – Pacific Alliance Against COVID-19 (PAAC)

Director – Consortium of Research Advancement Facilities & Training (CRAFT)

University of Hawai'i, Manoa

(Honolulu resident of zip code 96826)

To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Members of Senate Committee on Ways & Means

RE: Strong Support of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER.

Hearing: Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 10:00 am, Conference Room 211

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Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

My name is Michelle Hashimoto, a Puunui resident and long time cancer fighter in my community. I am also advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network and the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center. As a *caregiver for my father who battled cancer, a concerned parent, and an active community member*, I am submitting testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 1301 HD1 – RELATING TO CANCER.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii with 2,500 deaths each year and the leading cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause (after heart disease) among Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander individuals.

My 86-year old father was diagnosed with esophageal cancer a few months before his passing. Although he didn't pass from cancer, please know that through studies like the Multiethnic Cohort (MEC) study, lifesaving findings help folks like my father get diagnosed earlier as well as have more treatment options and **better health outcomes**. Our families and friends need your support for today and ... for our future.

Research is critical to understanding and reducing cancer disparities, as well as examining gaps in cancer prevention and care delivery that contribute to these disparities.

I ask that you support funding for the University of Hawaii Cancer Center to conduct a Multiethnic Cohort (MEC) study focusing on the social determinants of health, lifestyles, environmental exposures, and resilience factors of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Asians including Filipinos.

Everyone should have equitable access to quality cancer care and an equal opportunity to live a healthy life. Our ability to continue to make progress against cancer relies heavily on eliminating the inequities that exist in cancer care, including research. Data collection will aid future research to improve health equity for minority populations unique to the people of Hawaii.

Please support and pass HB 1301 HD1.

Sincerely,  
Michelle Hashimoto  
2533 Stream Drive  
Honolulu, HI 96817  
(808) 741-5854

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 1:09:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Naomi Manuel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz and Vice Chair Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran:

I humbly urge your SUPPORT of House Bill 1301, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1 – Relating to Cancer.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii with 2,500 deaths each year. Cancer is the leading cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause (after heart disease) among Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander individuals. As a Native Hawaiian Filipino Pacific Islander raised in Hawaii, I have personally witnessed many family members and members of my community die of cancer at a disproportionate rate when compared to other ethnic groups. I am highly vested in the intent of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 to gather and analyze critical data, not only to understand the social determinants of health and environmental elements of cancer disparities but also that House Bill 1301 HD1 SD1 puts a focus on prevention strategies rather than just treatment. This collection of data will support future research to improve health equity, health outcomes, and quality of life for minority populations unique to the people of Hawaii.

I ask that you support funding for the University of Hawaii Cancer Center to conduct a multi-ethnic cohort study focusing on the social determinants of health, lifestyles, environmental exposures, and resilience factors of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Asians including Filipinos.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify and strongly urge your support of HB 1301 HD1 SD1.

Naomi Manuel, Kahalu'u, O'ahu

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 1:21:18 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cards Pintor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Filipino and my family has a history of cancer and diabetes. Understanding how future generations or how my current family can prevent getting cancer will help everyone

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 2:04:44 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kyle loui	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kyle Loui and I am an advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER. Cancer affects everyone, but it does not affect everyone equally.

In Particular I have known several Asiatic foreign Nationals who have a higher chance of Liver Cancer. My mother is a survivor of breast cancer. My Grandfather on my mother side died of Lung cancer. Which does affect a lot of Asians since particularly in the asian pacific smoking is more commonplace than in Hawaii. Additionally I have be involved in previous research in Liver Flukes and their conection to Liver Cancer.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii and the [leading](#) cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause (after heart disease) among Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander individuals.

Research is critical to understanding and reducing cancer disparities, as well as examining gaps in cancer prevention and care delivery that contribute to these disparities for minority populations unique to Hawaii.

I humbly ask for your SUPPORT and pass HB 1301 HD1 SD1 for state funding of \$1 million over two years on a multi-ethnic cohort study by the University of Hawaii Cancer Center of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian groups including Filipinos.

Sincerely,

Kyle Loui

Honolulu , 96814



**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:11:25 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jennifer Hausler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hon. Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jennifer Hausler and I am an advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER. Cancer affects everyone, but it does not affect everyone equally.

I have been a part of the original Multi Ethnic Cohort Study for 28 years and it has helped to lower cancer rates for the first ethnic group, Japanese in Hawaii.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii and the [leading](#) cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause (after heart disease) among Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander individuals.

Research is critical to understanding and reducing cancer disparities, as well as examining gaps in cancer prevention and care delivery that contribute to these disparities for minority populations unique to Hawaii.

I humbly ask for your SUPPORT and pass HB 1301 HD1 SD1 for state funding of \$1 million over two years on a multi-ethnic cohort study by the University of Hawaii Cancer Center of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian groups including Filipinos.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Hausler

Pearl City 96782

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 6:34:24 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Uri Lyne Martos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

My name is Uri Martos and I am an advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER. Cancer affects everyone, but it does not affect everyone equally.

As a two time cancer survivor, I know that research is the reason I am still alive today. If there is any chance to help save others from having to go through the hardship of cancer I would like to have your support and the support of our elected officials to make this happen. Research is our door to finding the cure.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii and the leading cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause (after heart disease) among Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander individuals.

Research is critical to understanding and reducing cancer disparities, as well as examining gaps in cancer prevention and care delivery that contribute to these disparities for minority populations unique to Hawaii.

I humbly ask for your **SUPPORT** and pass HB 1301 HD1 SD1 for state funding of \$1 million over two years on a multi-ethnic cohort study by the University of Hawaii Cancer Center of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian groups including Filipinos.

Sincerely,

Uri Lyne Martos

Līhu‘e, 96766

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 7:20:37 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tony Head	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Tony Head and I am an advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER.

I watched my mother pass away while undergoing treatment for cancer at Queen's Hospital, Honolulu. She died a few short years before drugs were available to treat her condition. I don't know if a bill like this would have helped her, but we should all be well aware of the health disparities affecting Native Hawaiians, Asians, and Pacific Islanders. Now is the time to act - every moment we waste is a potential life unsaved. Without critical knowledge gained through research to drive treatment innovations, we deprive many of our citizens of the healthcare support system that they need and deserve.

Please support and pass HB 1301 HD1 SD1.

Sincerely,

Tony Head  
Waipahu, 96797

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 7:35:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ron Shimabuku	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of HB 1301 HD1 SD1: Relating to Cancer. There is a need for the UH Cancer Center to continue working on research involving the disparate and minority populations in Hawai'i. This is an important effort to fund as cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawai'i with 2,500 deaths each year and the leading cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause among Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders.

Please consider passing this measure.

Mahalo!

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 7:36:04 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alison Kaneshiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB1301: Cancer research funds for University of Hawaii Cancer Center to research cancer with environmental, ethnic, and cultural characteristics.

Aloha Senator Dela Cruz, Chair and Senator Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair and the other Senators of the Committee on Ways and Means.

It is no secret there are many factors that contribute to our health and well-being and there are disparities in health care. According to Coughlin (2021) the social determinants of health have an effect on cancer survivorship. Starting with income factors. It is well known that the lower the income the more adverse the outcomes with respect to all types of health issues. Poverty, race, access to health insurance, access to medical care, education, and socioeconomic status all impact cancer survival. Cancer patients and survivors may also have out of pocket medical expenses that can lead to housing insecurities due to lack of ability to pay for housing. People who have food insecurity often have poor diets with lower nutrient value. Malnutrition can lead to weakened immune system, increase in fatigue and restricted activities. These things are already a problem for cancer patients and food insecurity can further exacerbate this issues. Social support and the social network are also critical for maintaining health and life quality. Social isolation can lead to poor outcomes for cancer patients.

The multi-ethnic cohort study with focus on “social determinants so health, lifestyles, environmental exposures, and resilience factors of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Filipinos” (House of Representatives Thirty Second Legislature State of Hawaii, 2023, p.2) can help us to better understand how to support our diverse population here at home. Through better understanding, we can move toward better care with improved outcomes.

I have been a nurse for over 30 years and worked in Oncology many years ago. Most of my career was in the Midwestern United States. The places I lived before coming to Hawaii, were not so diverse. The populations of Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos were nowhere near large enough to study, especially within a large educational institution and cancer center. When you look at what Coughlin (2021) is saying about all the factors that limit survival of cancer based on these social determinants of health, Hawaii is the perfect place to do these types of studies. I fully support this bill and believe that it can improve the care we give to Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos with cancer here in Hawaii and throughout the United States. It is studies such as these that can have broader implications in the coming years to help reshape the way health care is given to improve outcomes.

Much Mahalo for your time.

### **Resources**

Coughlin, S. (2021). Social determinants of health and cancer survivorship . *Journal of Environment and Health Sciences*, 7(1), 11–15.

House of Representative Thirty Second Legislature State of Hawaii. (2023). HB1301HD1SD1. [https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2023/Bills/HB1301\\_SD1\\_.pdf](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2023/Bills/HB1301_SD1_.pdf)

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 7:39:42 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marion Poirier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair and Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee:

IN SUPPORT

My name is Marion Poirier, and I am an R.N who has wide experiences in the field of cancer. I strongly support cancer research, and welcome more of it right here in Hawaii. Our population mix makes us especially well prepared to make important contribution to research. I'm sure that you understand the gravity of a cancer diagnosis. Let us make our special contribution to research.

Thank you for the opportunity to support Hawaii cancer research.

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:33:37 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
tia pearson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian Americans including Filipinos are disproportionately impacted by cancer and it is critical we understand the root causes of these disparities. To create more equitable outcomes, we are asking you to support cancer research through House Bill 1301



Written Testimony Presented Before the

Committee on Ways and Means

HEARING:

Date: Wednesday, April 5, 2023

Time: 10:00am

Place: Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

From: Ms. BJ Bartleson, RN, MS, NEA-BC, FAONL  
562 Kai Hele Ku Street, Lahaina, Hawaii 96761  
[bartlesonbj@gmail.com](mailto:bartlesonbj@gmail.com)

HB1301, HD1, SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER

Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Aragan and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony in strong support of HB 1301.

I am an RN and an advocate for advancing health equity. A nation cannot fully thrive until everyone-no matter who they are, where they live, or how much money they make- can live their healthiest possible life, and helping people live their healthiest life is and has always been the essential role of nurses.

Vigorous research from a National Cancer Institute, designated cancer center, such as the university of Hawaii cancer center, is critical to understanding and reducing cancer disparities, as well as examining gaps in cancer prevention and care delivery that contribute to these disparities for minority populations unique to Hawaii. Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii and the leading cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause (after heart disease) among Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander individuals.

I humbly ask for your SUPPORT and pass HB 1301 HD1 SD1 for state funding of \$1 million over two years on a multi-ethnic cohort study by the University of Hawaii Cancer Center of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian groups including Filipinos.

Thank you.

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 10:54:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rainier Fernandez	Testifying for American Cancer Society, Cancer Action Network	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert Keith- Aragan and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rainier Fernandez and I am an advocate for the American Cancer Society Network. I am in strong support of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 - Relating to Cancer. Cancer affects everyone but it does not affect everyone the same and equally. This research is very important to me because funding these types of cancer allows reseachers to understand how to battle cancer and try to find a way to figure out if there will be a cure for cancer. Until today, we still haven't found the root that causes these problems for people nor a cure. Cancer is the second leading death among asians, pacific islanders individuals. Research is important in many ways. Research provides a critical understanding and reducing cancer disparities as well as looking into gaps in cancer prevention.

I kindly as for your support and pass HB 1301 HD1 SD1 for state funding of 1 million over two years on multi ethnic cohort study by the University of Hawaii Cancer Center of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian groups including Filipinos

Sincerely,

Rainier Fernandez

Kauai 96747

To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Members of Senate Committee on Ways and Means

RE: Strong Support of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER.

Hrg: Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 10:00 am, Conference Room 211

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Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

My name is Cheryl K. Okuma and I am an advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am in STRONG **SUPPORT** of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER. Cancer affects everyone, but it does not affect everyone equally.

Cancer has touched myself, family members across generations, as well as friends in its many different forms. A multi-ethnic research is a positive step towards understanding challenges of cancer impacts in our ethnically diverse population. Research is a step towards progress in achieving equity in our fight against cancer.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii and the leading cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause (after heart disease) among Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander individuals.

Research is critical to understanding and reducing cancer disparities, as well as examining gaps in cancer prevention and care delivery that contribute to these disparities for minority populations unique to Hawaii.

I humbly ask for your SUPPORT and pass HB 1301 HD1 SD1 for state funding of \$1 million over two years on a multi-ethnic cohort study by the University of Hawaii Cancer Center of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian groups including Filipinos.

Sincerely,  
Cheryl K. Okuma  
Wailuku, 96793

To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Members of Senate Committee on Ways and Means

RE: Strong Support of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER.

Hrg: Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 10:00 am, Conference Room 211

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Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

Aloha! My name is Natalie Nimmer and I am an advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am in STRONG **SUPPORT** of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER. Cancer affects everyone, but it does not affect everyone equally.

I am an 8-year survivor of an aggressive form of breast cancer. I am only alive today because of a then-recently-FDA-approved drug. I am grateful to the researchers and the brave people who engaged in the clinical trial that enabled me to live beyond my mid-30s. **I want my Pacific Islander and Asian sisters and brothers to have the same chance at ground-breaking, life-saving treatments.**

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawai'i and the leading cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause (after heart disease) among Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders.

Research is critical to understanding and reducing cancer disparities, as well as examining gaps in cancer prevention and care delivery that contribute to these disparities.

I humbly and desperately ask for your SUPPORT by passing HB 1301 HD1 SD1 for state funding of \$1 million over two years on a multi-ethnic cohort study by the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian groups including Filipinos.

Sincerely,  
Natalie Nimmer  
Honolulu, HI 96814

Rebecca "Becki" Ward  
Honolulu, 96816

To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Members of Senate Committee on Ways and Means

RE: Strong Support of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER.

Hrg: Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 10:00 am, Conference Room 211

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Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rebecca "Becki" Ward and I am an advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network and the University of Hawaii Cancer Center. I thank you for the opportunity to **SUPPORT** HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER, as fighting cancer is an issue I strongly support, based on personal experience.

I lost my husband to prostate cancer in 2006, and this experience has motivated me to get involved so that declining numbers of families ever have to deal with this illness and loss. I was in volunteer leadership with the American Cancer Society for 10 years, served on a national ACS Research Grant Peer Review Committee, and now serve on the Community Advisory Board of the UH Cancer Center. I know firsthand that research is critical to understanding and reducing cancer disparities, as well as examining gaps in cancer prevention and care delivery that contribute to these disparities.

I ask that you support funding for the University of Hawaii Cancer Center to conduct a multi-ethnic cohort study focusing on the social determinants of health, lifestyles, environmental exposures, and resilience factors of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Asians including Filipinos.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii, with 2,500 deaths each year. It is the leading cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause (after heart disease) among Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander individuals.

Everyone should have equitable access to quality cancer care and an equal opportunity to live a healthy life. Our ability to continue to make progress against cancer relies heavily on eliminating the inequities that exist in cancer care, including research. Data collection will aid future research to improve health equity for minority populations unique to the people of Hawaii. Please support and pass HB 1301 HD1 SD1.

Sincerely,  
Rebecca "Becki" Ward  
Honolulu, 96816

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:16:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lee Lord	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Cancer is the leading cause of death among Asian Americans and the second leading cause among Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander individuals. All individuals should have equitable access to quality cancer care and an equal opportunity to live a healthy life. To aid in future research to improve health outcomes and decrease cancer disparities, I am asking the legislature support this bill and fund a multi-ethnic cohort study, by the University of Hawaii Cancer Center, of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian groups including Filipinos to provide data on the contributing factors to health disparities that currently exist.

Mahalo for your support

LEE LORD

**McKayla McCullah**  
[mckaylamccullah20@gmail.com](mailto:mckaylamccullah20@gmail.com)

To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Members of Senate Committee on Ways and Means

RE: Strong Support of HB 1301 HD1 SD 1- RELATING TO CANCER

Hrg: Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 10:00 am, Conference Room 211

Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

My name is McKayla McCullah and I am an advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am in STRONG **SUPPORT** of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER. Cancer affects everyone, but it does not affect everyone equally.

As a young Native Hawaiian woman, a member of the Wai'anae community, and a first generation student, to see the negative impact of health disparities in my Hawaiian communities isn't uncommon to me. As I recently testified for this bill, I listed the names of people I knew that had cancer, two being my great grandmothers. As I've told my family and friends about my experience at the capital and testifying for the first time about this important bill, they began to open up to me about their experiences with cancer. I've learned over the past two weeks that 7 of my 8 great-grandparents have passed away from cancer and all of them had cancer at one point in time. Half of them passed from breast cancer and three from lung cancer. This research will help me and my family, as well as many other Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander families to understand these unequal cancer disparities amongst us. By researching these findings specific to our communities, we can begin to find solutions for our people. To have research focus on being done for multi-ethnic communities, means that someone sees us; thanks to the UH Cancer Research Center we have experts who want to focus more on the people of their land. By understanding these disparities amongst our culture, we can continue to fight against cancer and grow stronger together. Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii and the **leading** cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause (after heart disease) among Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander individuals. Research is critical to understanding and reducing cancer disparities, as well as examining gaps in cancer prevention and care delivery that contribute to these disparities for minority populations unique to Hawaii.

I humbly ask for your SUPPORT and pass HB 1301 HD1 SD1 for state funding of \$1 million over two years on a multi-ethnic cohort study by the University of Hawaii Cancer Center of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian groups including Filipinos.

Sincerely,  
McKayla McCullah  
Waianae, 96792





**LATE**

**HB-1301-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 2:08:30 PM  
Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chelsea Gonzales	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Chelsea Gonzales and I am an advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 1301 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CANCER.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii with 2,500 deaths each year and the [leading](#) cause of death among Asian Americans and the second-leading cause (after heart disease) among Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander individuals.

Research is critical to understanding and reducing cancer disparities, as well as examining gaps in cancer prevention and care delivery that contribute to these disparities including the identification of new cancer risk factors which can lead to new intervention approaches to reduce cancer disparities and promote health equity.

Everyone should have equitable access to quality cancer care and an equal opportunity to live a healthy life. Our ability to continue to make progress against cancer relies heavily on eliminating the inequities that exist in cancer care, including research. Data collection will aid future research to improve health equity for minority populations unique to the people of Hawaii.

Please support and pass HB 1301 HD1 SD1.

Sincerely,

Chelsea Gonzales

Honolulu, 96813