



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2023**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**  
H.B. NO. 1301, RELATING TO CANCER.

**BEFORE THE:**  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS

**DATE:** Wednesday, February 15, 2023      **TIME:** 8:30 a.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 329

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Candace J. Park, Deputy Attorney General

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Chair Belatti and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

The purposes of this bill are to (1) require 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; and (2) require the University of Hawaii Cancer Center to seek federal funding, in addition to the funds appropriated by this bill, to complete the multi-cohort study.

Section 6 of article X of the Hawai'i State Constitution gives the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i "exclusive jurisdiction over the internal structure, management, and operation of the university." Section 6 further provides: "This section shall not limit the power of the legislature to enact laws of statewide concern. The legislature shall have the exclusive jurisdiction to identify laws of statewide concern." If the Committee decides to pass this bill, we recommend an amendment that adds a statement identifying this bill as a law of statewide concern.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.



# ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

## Legislative Testimony

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

Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Health and Homelessness  
Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 8:30 a.m.

By

Loïc Le Marchand, MD, PhD

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

And

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

And

Lee Buenconsejo-Lum, MD,  
Acting Dean and Principal Investigator, Pacific Regional Central Cancer Registry  
John A. Burns School of Medicine

And

Michael Bruno, Provost  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

## HB 1301 – RELATING TO CANCER

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, 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, which would appropriate revenues for UHCC to conduct a multi-ethnic cohort (MEC) study focusing on social determinants of health, lifestyles, environmental exposures, and resilience factors of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos.

This funding would provide vital resources to help initiate this long-term 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 have revealed stark cancer disparities across Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian American subgroups. For instance, Native Hawaiians, among other racial/ethnic groups in the US, have ones of the highest rates of lung, breast, colorectal, pancreatic, gastric, liver, endometrial and

cervical cancers. Pacific Islanders have high rates for many cancers that should be addressed through culturally tailored health education and prevention efforts, such as in smoking cessation and screening. This also holds true for Pacific Islanders in their home countries throughout the US Affiliated Pacific Island Jurisdictions, which is part of the UHCC catchment area. Filipino Americans have high incidence rates for lung, colorectal and thyroid cancer in Hawai'i, and rapidly increasing rates of breast and prostate cancers. Unfortunately, UHCC studies to date have shown that known risk factors do not fully explain these risk differences. Furthermore, due to gaps in the available data, such as on social determinants of health and environmental and occupational exposures, the specific reasons that drive these disparities remain unknown. A new study that captures such information would directly address these research gaps.

The proposed two-year project would establish the feasibility of recruiting participants for a long-term prospective study and greatly strengthen a 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 University of Hawai'i supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or impact priorities as indicated in the University's Board of Regents Approved Executive Biennium Budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



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LATE \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

John A. Burns School of Medicine  
Department of Anatomy, Biochemistry and Physiology  
1800 East-West Rd, Office 215  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822  
Email: amaunakea@hawaii.edu

February 14, 2023  
Honolulu, Hawaii

**Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair**  
**Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair**  
**Members of the House Committee on Health and Homelessness**

RE: Strongest Support of HB 1301 – RELATING TO CANCER  
Hearing: Wednesday, February 15, 2023, at 8:30 am, Conference Room 329

Aloha Chair Della Au Belatti, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

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 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.

I am writing to provide my **strongest support** for HB 1301 – RELATING TO CANCER. 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 firsthand, 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.

For these reasons, I ask that you vote in support of and pass HB 1301.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alika'.

Alika K. 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)



**Testimony to the House Committee on Health and Homelessness  
Wednesday, February 15, 2023; 8:30 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 329  
Via Videoconference**

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

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, 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, 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.

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.

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.

**Testimony on House Bill No. 1301**  
**Wednesday, February 15, 2023; 8:30 a.m.**  
**Page 2**

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'uuanu Avenue  
Honolulu, HI 96817  
808.460.6109  
[www.fightcancer.org](http://www.fightcancer.org)

House Committee on Health and Homelessness  
Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2023

**ACS CAN SUPPORTS HB 1301 – 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 – 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. 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.

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. 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>1</sup> Its mission is to reduce the

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<sup>1</sup> University of Hawaii Cancer Center <https://www.uhcancercenter.org/50years>

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 thus cannot be easily conducted anywhere else in the world.

All individuals 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 in the area of 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).



**HB-1301**

Submitted on: 2/14/2023 12:40:53 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/15/2023 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Adam Zarrin	Leukemia & Lymphoma Society	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Good afternoon, Chair and members of the committee.

My name is Adam Zarrin, and I am the Director of State Government Affairs for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Our mission is to cure blood cancers and improve the quality of life of patients and their families.

We are testifying in support of HB1301, relating to cancer and a multi-ethnic cohort study.

The focus of the study would be to 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.

**HB-1301**

Submitted on: 2/13/2023 11:07:52 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/15/2023 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Abigail Esther Bertelsman	ACS CAN	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Abigail Bertelsman and I am submitting my testimony in support of HB1301. A multi-ethnic study conducted by the University of Hawaii Cancer Center is not a "good idea" but rather a necessary change in our community. For many years our islands had access to clean water. Unfortunately, as the years went on and the islands became more commercialized, the water quality has gone downhill. Starting strong in 2014 with the first military water spill, they recorded over 27,000 gallons of jet fuel shot into the water tanks. Going into 2021/2022, we recorded the second military water spill with over 19,000 gallons of jet fuel going into the water tank. While the water line was listed as a "military water line", over 700 civilian households were affected and offered very little support. Not only on Oahu, but Maui struggles on its south shore with contaminated water, and the fight lasts over 10 years for help with that. Looking at water, it is essential to have clean options. We shower with it, cook with it, and drink it. We are ingesting it and absorbing it in so many different ways. When you use poisoned water, how are we to know what that does to the body? How are we do know that it doesn't cause cancer? Especially with long-term contamination on the south shore of Maui. But many individuals talk about how they cannot receive help or support, and that medical labs and tests are too expensive with the already high cost of living here in the islands. A study could help individuals get a better idea of how their lifestyle changes or events have shaped their bodies, and it may be the stepping stone to offering more help during stormwater, or god forbid more jet fuel water. I am in support of this bill as a chance to offer help to those struggling with no answers, or those who could never find a clear answer for their health issues. This may be the final answer and a sense of comfort to many, many families.

Aloha, Malo'lei, Talofa, Bula

My name is Patricia Kalolaine Cornett and I am a Cancer Survivor and I also work for the University of Hawaii Cancer Center as an Outreach Coordinator. How did I come to this employment, because I sat in my Chemo Chair in 2021 and asked my husband that is Tongan and asked "Where are my people and why am I the only one getting treatment?" From this spin off, to today I was hired to literally go out and let my Tongan Community on the Ko'olau side, Waihole, Kahaalu, Punalu, Hauula, Kahuku Laie and beyond, I am a Cancer Survivor and I want to help you get your mammograms.

I personally have an information booth that has University of Hawaii Cancer Center and I try to educate women of all Islander Descendants to "Get A Mammograms or I can Help You get an appointment". I literally sign them up and take them to Queens to be part of a Clinical Trial Called TIMST or I still take them and it's their first mammogram or its been several years since they have had one.

This is my give back to the community here on this Island of Oahu. I speak to women in stores, mall's, churches, even at restaurants, also at Tongan Community Events and I also do this. I introduce myself and I let them know "Hi have you had a mammogram"? Why am I so intrusive, BECAUSE CANCER is and I personally know that just getting a mammogram is the stepping stone to I am Clear or "We need you to come back to Queens"

Either way what Dr Loic Le Marchand is heading in the right direction and if it wasn't for this type of research we wouldn't know where to start. I was on a Clinical Trial and survived my HER2 Breast Cancer when I was diagnosed again in Jan 2021. I am in remission and I work for the University of Hawaii Cancer Center and this is my give back. We need this bill to pass, how are we supposed to help each other or our Ohana if we don't start from within ourselves, I have reached out to my own Kuliana can this administration also look into your own. We can do all we can BUT if we don't help it will be too late. We will not be good for anyone and ourselves.

I hope this bill is passed. This is my testimony that Research is Needed.

Mahalao

Patricia Kalolaine Cornett

Outreach Coordinator

UHCC

To: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair  
Members of House Committee on Health and Homelessness

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

Hearing: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 8:30 am, Conference Room 329

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Chair Della Au Belatti, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Joyce Ann Sacalamitao and I am an advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I thank you for the opportunity to **SUPPORT** HB 1301 – 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.

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.

As of Filipino descent, I have a family history on both my mother's and father's sides with cancer. My grandpa and uncle from my maternal side had passed away from cancer. While my aunty from the paternal side had breast cancer and also passed away; currently, my oldest aunty is receiving chemotherapy because she was also diagnosed with breast cancer. Therefore, allowing UH to continue conducting its cancer research is significant to understand the etiology of cancer while implementing preventions and treatments for families/individuals who have a family history of cancer or are fighting cancer.

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.

Sincerely,  
Joyce Ann Sacalamitao  
Honolulu, 96819

TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2023

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS  
Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair  
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

DATE: Wednesday, February 15, 2023

TIME: 8:30 AM

PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Conference Room 329

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

**Bill No. HB1301**

RELATING TO CANCER

Position: **STRONG SUPPORT**

I stand in strong support for this HB1302 because of both the intent along with the rationale behind this bill as this bill states.

*“The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to the university of Hawaii 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”*

*“Native Hawaiians continue to have the highest cancer incidence and mortality rates among men and women, and also have higher incidences of breast and ovarian cancers. Similarly, Filipino women have the highest incidences of ovarian and thyroid cancer.”*

Oncology care comes at a great emotional and fiscal cost to an individual and their families. Furthermore, the university of Hawaii cancer center is the only center in Hawaii and the Pacific region and a large concentration of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos are unique to Hawaii and thus cannot be easily conducted anywhere else in the world.

The passage of this bill will increase the health standard for many in Hawaii and has the potential to recognize more contributing factors that lead to cancer. I would also like to note that there is no other vehicle in Senate to move such a measure forward with a similar intention. Should this bill not move forward in this legislative session then we would have to wait till next year. I feel the importance of this bill cannot be overstated. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Mahalo,

Ken Farm

**HB-1301**

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 6:50:42 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/15/2023 8:30:00 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 support the passage of HB 1301.



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Department of Economics and UHERO  
Ruben Juarez  
HMSA Distinguished Endowed Professor  
rubenj@hawaii.edu  
Phone: 808-956-7143

**Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair**  
**Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair**  
**Members of the House Committee on Health and Homelessness**

RE: Strongest Support of HB 1301 – RELATING TO CANCER

Hearing: Wednesday, February 15, 2023, at 8:30 am, Conference Room 329

Aloha Chair Della Au Belatti, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

I am Dr. Ruben Juarez, the HMSA Distinguished Endowed Professor in Health Economics at the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization (UHERO) and Economics Department, University of Hawaii.

I am writing to provide my **strongest support** for HB 1301 – RELATING TO CANCER. 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. Cancer costs will continue rising if we don't take immediate and transformative solutions. Equally pressing, cancer incidence is disproportionately affecting minorities in the state of Hawaii, including Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, Filipinos, and those of lower income.

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

For these reasons, I ask that you vote in support of and pass HB 1301.

Sincerely,

**Ruben Juarez, PhD**  
**HMSA Distinguished Endowed Professor in Health Economics**  
University of Hawaii at Manoa

(Honolulu resident of Zip Code 96826)



To: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair  
Members of House Committee on Health and Homelessness

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

Hearing: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 8:30 am, Conference Room 329

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Chair Della Au Belatti, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Randolph Ramos and I am an advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I thank you for the opportunity to **SUPPORT** HB 1301 – 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.

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.

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.

Sincerely,  
Randolf Ramos  
Waipahu, 96797

To: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair  
Members of House Committee on Health and Homelessness

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

Hearing: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 8:30 am, Conference Room 329

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Chair Della Au Belatti, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Cherie Guillermo, and I thank you for the opportunity to **SUPPORT** HB 1301 – RELATING TO CANCER.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii with 2,500 deaths each year, 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. 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 Filipinos.

In my household, my siblings and I grew up avoiding the word “cancer” around our elders because they would get mad. We did not know why; we just knew they did not like hearing it. When I was in high school, I found out that three of my grandpa’s siblings passed away from cancer and speculated that my great-grandmother had died from cancer in her 30s but could not be certain because of poor cancer screening back in the days. Given my familial history, I became interested in preventive-based medicine, early screening, and research but was further dismayed in learning about health disparities.

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.

Sincerely,  
Cherie Guillermo  
Honolulu, HI. 96817

TO: House Committee on Health and Homelessness  
Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair  
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

FROM: Vernalyn Holokai

DATE: 2/14/2023

RE: Testimony in support of HB1301

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee,

My name is Vernalyn Holokai. I am currently working towards earning my master's degree in social work and will graduate in May 2023. I also work as a community health worker on Maui. I am in support of HB1301 because it provides funding to 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 data collected will provide insight to better understand what contributes to the health disparities of these specific ethnic groups which will lead to better health outcomes.

Despite how diverse the Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islanders and Filipino population is, they are normally aggregated together when it comes to health statistics. The lack of disaggregated cancer data creates a loss opportunity to find data that would be specific to each group. This leads to a misrepresentation of health statistics. The data collected will be important to the representation of each of these ethnic groups and will help to provide information to improve health outcomes for the next generation.

As a social work student and current community health worker I utilize the person-in-environment approach because it allows me to assess an individual's presenting problem as well as their strengths. Understanding the lifestyle and how it intersects with the environmental exposures that are experienced helps to give insight to how they view the world. Cultural competence helps in communicating because culture can affect the way a person perceives illness as well as the roles of family members in the decision process of care. Knowledge of this data will help with future health promotion campaigns.

Filipinos, Pacific Islanders and Native Hawaiians normally live in multigenerational households. They live together due to rising housing prices, increased cost of living and employment with lower income. Generational cultural trauma, experienced racism and discrimination can create barriers to access health care, food, transportation, and education. Socioeconomic status can make a difference with the level of stress felt daily. Knowing these factors for each group will educate us on how to better support each group.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB1301.

Mahalo,

Vernalyn Holokai

To: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair  
Members of House Committee on Health and Homelessness

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

Hearing: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 8:30 am, Conference Room 329

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Chair Della Au Belatti, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi, 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 thank you for the opportunity to **SUPPORT** HB 1301 – 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.

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 has touched myself and my own family in its many different forms and across the generations. My family is of Japanese and Okinawan descent, and know the impact this disease has—socially, emotionally and financially. Such a multi-ethnic study is a positive step in the direction of progress in our fight against cancer. Understanding cancer within the context of our multi-ethnic community is vital towards that effort.

Everyone should have equitable access to quality cancer care. Everyone should have an equal opportunity to live a healthy life. Achieving progress against cancer means the inequities that exist in cancer care must be eliminated, and this includes the important research that is needed. Unique to the people of Hawaii, is that we are comprised of minority populations. As such, data collection is a critical and necessary step towards the future research needed to improve health equity access for minority populations.

Please support and pass HB 1301.

Sincerely,  
Cheryl K. Okuma  
Wailuku, Maui 96793

Chair Della Au Belatti, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

My name is McKayla McCullah and I am an advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I thank you for the opportunity to **SUPPORT** HB 1301 – 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.

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Throughout my years of college studies and research on Native Hawaiians health, I believe having this multi-ethnic cohort study could help us learn more about our people. It could possibly lead to more findings about links of cancers and other health problems to these ethnic groups. By having this study it will allow us to focus more on the health of the people in our communities and not just basing our learning studies on people who do not live the same lives that we do. As a Native Hawaiian who has seen her own grandmother wither away due to multiple health problems linked to one another, we need to have this opportunity available to us so that maybe one day we don't have to watch our grandparents or family suffer through this pain. By opening this door to an equal research community involving multi-ethnic groups, we allow ourselves to be open to change and progress.

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.

Sincerely,  
McKayla McCullah  
Waianae, 96792

**HB-1301**

Submitted on: 2/15/2023 2:58:16 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/15/2023 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ruth Love	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill, to truly be multiethnic should include not only pacific islanders, Asians and Filipinos but also Portuguese, Mexicans and Caucasians. Perhaps by being an inclusive study they could determine causes of disparity on access to cancer care, participation in health screenings for cancer, participation in cancer care and also effects of diet, activity, mental on outcomes for patients with cancer.

Thank you,

Mrs Ruth Love