

Carol Marx  
Kailua, Hi 96734

RE: Strong Support of HB 1970 SD1: Relating to University of Hawaii Cancer Center  
Wednesday, April 1, 2026; TIME: 10:03AM  
Committee on Ways and Means

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki and committee members:

My name is Carol Marx and I am on the board of ACS Hawaii and Guam and an advocate with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1970 SD1 which would fund Hawaii's tumor registry, the cancer surveillance program in the state.

I have a niece whom I lost to colon cancer at age 21 who graduated as the Castle High School student body president in 2016. We lost her in 2021. I also lost my sister-in-law to ovarian cancer who fought for nine years being successful to survive while using clinical trial drugs. In 2022, due to some changes in medical coverage since she lost her job, she passed away at age 61.

We need a well funded state tumor registry to:

- Know in whom cancer is occurring—and to ensure all patients benefit from early detection and treatment.
- Ensure reporting of all invasive cancer diagnoses statewide, providing data that inform prevention, screening, treatment access, and research.

Sincerely,

Carol Marx  
Kailua, Hi 96734



**STATE HEALTH PLANNING  
AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

**JOSH GREEN, MD**  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII  
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

**KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH**  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH  
KALUNA HO'ŌKELE

**JOHN C. (JACK) LEWIN, MD**  
ADMINISTRATOR

1177 Alakea Street, #402, Honolulu, HI 96813

Phone: 587-0788 Fax: 587-0783 [www.shpda.org](http://www.shpda.org)

March 31, 2026

**LATE**

**TO:** SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair  
Honorable Members

**FROM:** John C. (Jack) Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA, and Sr. Advisor to Governor  
Josh Green, MD on Healthcare Innovation

**RE: HB 1970-HD2-SD1 -- RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII  
CANCER CENTER**

**HEARING:** Wednesday, April 1, 2026 @ 10:03 am; Conference Room 211

**POSITION:** SUPPORT with COMMENTS

Testimony:

SHPDA strongly supports HB 1970-HD2-SD1, with comments.

SHPDA supports HB 1970-HD2-SD1, which appropriates approximately \$1.5 Million in general funds for the Hawai'i Tumor Registry (HTR) at the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center (HTR) for fiscal year 2026-2027, as a critical part of Hawaii's longstanding commitment to public health surveillance and cancer control. HTR is our state's official cancer surveillance system, providing the capacity for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data on cancer incidence, survival, and mortality for all residents of Hawai'i.

Recent federal funding cuts are adversely affecting HTR's ability to continue to provide the essential services of the Registry in these regards. We defer to the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center on funding and other background specifics, but also fully support their recommendations to include in this funding the following:

1. Ongoing support for statewide electronic pathology reporting is essential to timely case ascertainment and complete coverage;
2. A long-term funding strategy would help stabilize operations and minimize future disruptions;
3. A reporting provision could ensure transparency and allow the Legislature to monitor implementation outcomes, including impact on data quality, staffing, and reporting restoration.

Thank you for hearing HB 1970-HD2-SD1 and mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

■ -- Jack Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA



## Hawaii Medical Association

1360 South Beretania Street, Suite 200 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814  
Phone: 808.536.7702 • Fax: 808.528.2376 • hawaiimedicalassociation.org

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Date: April 1, 2026

From: Hawaii Medical Association (HMA)

Elizabeth Ann Ignacio MD - Chair, HMA Public Policy Committee

Christina Marzo MD and Robert Carlisle MD, Vice Chairs, HMA Public Policy Committee

**RE HB 1970 HD 1 SD1** RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII CANCER CENTER. University of Hawaii Cancer Center; Hawai'i Tumor Registry; Appropriation.

**Position: Strong Support with comments**

This measure would appropriate funds for the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center's Hawai'i Tumor Registry. Effective 7/31/2055. (SD1)

Maintaining robust cancer surveillance through the UH Cancer Center Tumor Registry is critical to tracking trends over time, identifying disparities across Hawaii's population, and evaluating the impact of public health interventions — all of which are essential to reducing cancer burden statewide and improving health equity for our diverse communities.

Data shared in early 2025 based on updated state surveillance indicates that over 9,000 Hawaii residents would be diagnosed with cancer in 2025, with more than 2,000 expected to die from the disease, representing an uptick in cases. This is a trend that the UHCC Tumor Registry's longitudinal surveillance made visible and actionable for prevention, early detection, and treatment planning across the islands.

The Hawai'i Tumor Registry serves as a foundational public health resource that benefits the entire community—informing prevention, guiding clinical care, and shaping statewide policy to reduce cancer burden across all populations. As such, its support should reflect a shared public investment, and funding through the general fund—rather than the University of Hawai'i Tuition and Fees Special Fund—more appropriately aligns with its broad, statewide impact.

The registry projections and trend data are vital to quantify the ongoing burden of cancer in Hawaii and guide resource allocation. HMA strongly supports sustained registry funding, informing healthcare strategies for increases in cases and careful evaluation of statewide prevention efforts.

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

#### 2026 Hawaii Medical Association Public Policy Coordination Team

Elizabeth A Ignacio, MD, Chair • Robert Carlisle, MD, Vice Chair • Christina Marzo, MD, Vice Chair  
Linda Rosehill, JD, Government Relations • Marc Alexander, Executive Director

#### 2026 Hawaii Medical Association Officers

Nadine Tenn-Salle, MD, President • Jerald Garcia, MD, President Elect • Elizabeth Ann Ignacio, MD, • Immediate Past President  
Laeton Pang, MD, Treasurer • Thomas Kosasa, MD, Secretary • Marc Alexander, Executive Director

## REFERENCES AND QUICK LINKS

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. *“New Study Shows Cancer Rates Rising in Women; Advocates Urge Hawaii State Lawmakers to Support Cancer Fight in 2025.”* American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, 17 Jan. 2025, [www.fightcancer.org/releases/new-study-shows-cancer-rates-rising-women-advocates-urge-hawaii-state-lawmakers-support](http://www.fightcancer.org/releases/new-study-shows-cancer-rates-rising-women-advocates-urge-hawaii-state-lawmakers-support)

University of Hawai'i Cancer Center. *“UH Cancer Center’s Hawai’i Tumor Registry Releases Updated Cancer Statistics.”* University of Hawai’i Cancer Center, 19 May 2022, <https://www.uhcancercenter.org/about-us/2022-news-articles/887-uh-cancer-center-s-hawai-i-tumor-registry-releases-updated-cancer-statistics>



Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: Wednesday, April 1, 2026

**ACS CAN STRONG SUPPORT HB 1970 SD1: RELATING TO UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII CANCER CENTER.**

Cynthia Au, Government Relations Director – Hawai‘i Guam  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 1970 SD1: RELATING TO UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII CANCER CENTER, which provides critical state funding to sustain the Hawai‘i Tumor Registry (HTR)—the backbone of cancer surveillance in our state. We work to ensure that cancer patients and survivors in Hawaii and across the country have a fair and just opportunity to find, treat and survive cancer.

Cancer remains the second leading cause of death in Hawai‘i, with over 9,400 new diagnoses and over 2,700 deaths in 2026<sup>i</sup>. Continuous, high-quality cancer surveillance is essential to understanding how, where, and in whom cancer occurs. These data guide prevention strategies, ensure timely treatment, and help all patients—regardless of geography or background—benefit from early detection.

Tumor registries provide a road map in the fight against cancer. They allow public health leaders and clinicians:

- Monitor cancer incidence and mortality trends over time;
- Evaluate cancer patterns within populations and identify high-risk groups;
- Guide the planning and evaluation of cancer control programs;
- Prioritize the allocation of limited resources; and
- Support research into cancer causes and prevention strategies to determine which interventions improve health outcomes.

The Hawai'i Tumor Registry (HTR) is the state's only comprehensive cancer surveillance program. It ensures reporting of *all invasive cancer diagnoses statewide* and provides the high-quality data that drive:

- Targeted cancer screening programs in underserved communities;
- Evaluation of treatment access and disparities across ethnic and geographic groups;
- Rapid response to cancer clusters, emerging trends, and other urgent public health concerns; and
- Research that informs prevention, early detection, and clinical care, strengthening Hawai'i's ability to fight cancer effectively and equitably.

Without HTR, Hawai'i would lose the ability to measure cancer burden accurately and respond effectively.

An example of why the Hawai'i Tumor Registry is so critical is the alarming trend it has identified in colorectal cancer among younger adults. **From 2013 to 2022, data show that for males and females under age 50 in Hawai'i, the incidence of colon and rectal cancer increased by an average of 3.4% per year.**<sup>ii</sup> This type of trend would not be visible without high-quality, statewide cancer surveillance. Because the Registry provides timely and reliable data, policymakers and public health partners can recognize emerging patterns, understand which communities are being affected, and take action — such as strengthening early detection strategies, improving screening access, and developing targeted prevention initiatives. In this case, the Registry's data directly supports policy efforts to address the growing burden of early-onset colorectal cancer in Hawai'i.

Policies such as the federal STAR Act, the National Firefighter Registry, and national efforts to address childhood, young adult, and rare cancers all rely on state-level cancer registry data. Without strong, local data from HTR, Hawai'i risks being excluded from lifesaving national initiatives and research opportunities.

Recent federal cuts to the National Cancer Institute's SEER program have reduced HTR's funding by over 20%. Without state support, HTR may soon be unable to maintain current staffing levels; delay or suspend case reporting; reduce data quality; scale back or eliminate critical registry functions.

HTR's data have been vital in identifying disparities affecting Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and rural communities. Hawai'i is one of the most diverse states in the country; maintaining a strong, culturally representative cancer registry is essential to ensuring that cancer control policies are equitable and grounded in evidence.

ACS CAN urges the Legislature to pass HB 1970 SD1 to protect public health, strengthen cancer equity, and support data-driven solutions that save lives. In the fight against cancer, we cannot manage what we cannot measure. Reliable cancer surveillance is not optional—it is a core public health responsibility.

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

---

<sup>i</sup> American Cancer Society [Cancer Facts & Figures 2026](#)

<sup>ii</sup> Hawaii Cancer At A Glance 2018-2022

**HB-1970-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 2:10:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mark Willingham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki and committee members,

My name is Mark Willingham and I am a community health educator with the University of Hawaii Cancer Center and advocate with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (submitting as an individual citizen). I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB1970 SD1 which would fund Hawaii's tumor registry, the cancer surveillance program in the state. The tumor registry has continuously benefitted the communities of Hawaii by providing comprehensive data regarding the incidence and mortality of cancer within the islands. This data provides a true scope and understanding of the role of cancer on the different communities here, while also providing insight into how cancer is distributed based on sex, age, ethnicity, location, etc. We are able to utilize this for the work that we do and inform the public about cancer and risk factors. I urge your committee to pass HB1970 SD1 to protect public health data.

Sincerely,

Mark Willingham, 96813

**HB-1970-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 2:52:17 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Daryl Kurozawa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

RE: Strong Support of HB 1970 SD1: Relating to the University of Hawaii Cancer Center

Wednesday, April 1, 2026; TIME: 10:03AM

Committee on Ways and Means

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki and committee members,

My name is Daryl Kurozawa and I am an advocate for UH Cancer Center's Community Advisory Board. I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB1970 HD2 which would fund Hawai'i's tumor registry, the cancer surveillance program in the state.

As a surgeon based on Hawai'i Island I have experienced first hand the importance of the Hawai'i Tumor Registry. Information from the registry allows providers to offer consistent and improved cancer care. The tumor registry tracks cancer treatments and short term and long term outcomes. This information is vital to care and survival for cancer patients in Hawai'i.

Due to the federal cuts to the National Cancer Institute's SEER program, funding for the Hawai'i Tumor Registry will decrease by over 20%. This change is significant and will result in the loss many expert staff. Services such as cancer case reporting and vital functions such as the state's tumor biorepository and the rebuild of electronic pathology reporting will be at risk. Please join us in supporting funding for the Hawai'i Tumor Registry.

I urge your committee to pass HB1970 SD1 to protect public health data.

Sincerely,

Daryl Kurozawa, MD

Kealakekua, Hawaii. 96750

**HB-1970-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 2:59:52 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cheryl K. Okuma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

RE: Strong Support of HB 1970 SD1: Relating to the University of Hawaii Cancer Center

Wednesday, April 1, 2026; TIME: 10:03AM

Committee on Ways and Means

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki and committee members,

My name is Cheryl K. Okuma and I am an advocate with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1970 SD1 which would fund Hawaii's tumor registry, the cancer surveillance program in the state.

As a cancer survivor, with family members and friends who have battled or are battling cancer—we know that having a screening program is critical to our fight against this disease.

Federal cuts to the National Cancer Institute's program reduced Hawaii Tumor Registry funding by over 20%. Lack of state support, will adversely impact this Registry's functions and delay cancer case reporting.

The Hawai'i Tumor Registry is the state's only comprehensive cancer surveillance program.

It ensures all invasive cancer diagnoses is reported statewide. This database is valuable as it is informative in terms of prevention, screening, treatment access, and research.

I urge your committee to pass HB1970 SD1 to protect public health data.

Sincerely,

Cheryl K. Okuma

Wailuku, 96793

**HB-1970-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 3:37:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jeannette Kojane	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki and committee members,

My name is Jeannette Kojane, and I am an advocate with the UH Cancer Center Community Advisory Board. I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB1970 SD1 which would fund Hawaii's tumor registry, the cancer surveillance program in the state.

Cancer continues to be a serious illness throughout our communities, and the tumor registry is an important tool in fighting cancer as it helps with early detection and treatment. This is the only comprehensive cancer surveillance in Hawaii, and it is crucial, despite reductions in federal funding to keep this program going to support our local people.

I urge your committee to pass HB1970 SD1 to protect public health data.

Mahalo, Jeannette Kojane, Honolulu, 96822

**HB-1970-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 6:53:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Hausler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

RE: Strong Support of HB 1970 SD1: Relating to the University of Hawaii Cancer Center

Wednesday, April 1, 2026; TIME: 10:03AM

Committee on Ways and Means

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki and committee members,

My name is Jennifer Hausler and I am a former caretaker and volunteer advocate with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB1970SD1** which would fund Hawaii's tumor registry, the cancer surveillance program in the state.

My late husband was placed on the tumor registry when he was first diagnosed at age 27 with colon cancer. I believe it enabled him to live an additional 6 years due to the the knowledge and research of the users of the registry.

I urge your committee to pass HB1970 SD1 to protect public health data.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Hausler

Pearl City, 96782

**HB-1970-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 11:29:04 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Josh Fowler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**STRONG SUPPORT**

HB1970 HD2 SD1 sustains Hawai‘i’s cancer surveillance system, which is essential for tracking disease trends and informing prevention, treatment, and policy decisions.

**Bill Identification**

HB1970 HD2 SD1 – Relating to the University of Hawai‘i Cancer Center  
Committee on Ways and Means  
April 1, 2026, 10:03 AM

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

My name is Josh Fowler, a resident of Kapolei. I am writing in **strong support** of HB1970 HD2 SD1.

- **Cancer remains a leading cause of death in Hawai‘i.**  
Thousands of residents are diagnosed each year, and effective response depends on accurate and consistent statewide data.
- **The Hawai‘i Tumor Registry is the State’s core cancer surveillance program.**  
It is the only comprehensive system that collects and tracks all invasive cancer diagnoses across Hawai‘i, supporting prevention efforts, screening strategies, treatment planning, and research.
- **High-quality data is necessary for equitable policy.**  
Hawai‘i’s population is uniquely diverse. Without reliable and continuous data collection, disparities in cancer incidence and outcomes may not be fully identified or addressed.
- **Federal funding reductions have created a material gap.**  
Cuts to the National Cancer Institute’s Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) program have reduced funding for the Hawai‘i Tumor Registry by more than twenty percent. Without state support, the program’s stability is at risk.
- **Loss or degradation of the registry would have statewide impact.**  
Public health agencies, providers, and researchers rely on this data to guide decisions. Interruptions would reduce the State’s ability to track trends, allocate resources, and evaluate outcomes.

**Conclusion**

HB1970 HD2 SD1 supports a foundational public health function that enables effective cancer prevention and treatment across Hawai'i. I respectfully urge the Committee to pass this measure.

Sincerely,

**Josh Fowler**

Kapolei, Hawai'i 96707

To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

RE: Strong Support of HB 1970 HD2: Relating to the University of Hawaii Cancer Center

Hearing: Monday, March 23, 2026; TIME: 1:11PM  
Committee on Ways and Means

---

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki, and Committee Members:

My name is Michelle Hashimoto, a current Pu'unui resident, 1988 graduate of Moanalua High School, 1992 graduate of University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, current staff of the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center ... and long-time cancer fighter in my community. My two young adult kids went to Ma'ema'e Elementary School, Kawanakoa Middle School, Roosevelt High School / McKinley High School, and Honolulu Community College, Kapiolani Community College, and the University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu. I am also an advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network and the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center. I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of **HB 1970 HD2 SD1**: Relating to the University of Hawaii Cancer Center which would fund the **Hawai'i Tumor Registry** (HTR), the cancer surveillance program in the state.

*As a caregiver for my father who battled cancer, a concerned parent of two young adults, and an active community member, I am in STRONG SUPPORT of **HB 1970 HD2 SD1**: Relating to University of Hawaii Cancer Center.*

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawai'i, with over 9,700 new cases and over 2,400 deaths each year. Sustained cancer surveillance is essential to understanding how, where, and in whom cancer is occurring—and to ensure all patients benefit from early detection and treatment.

#### **Why HB 1970 is Urgently Needed**

- Federal cuts to the National Cancer Institute's SEER program reduced HTR's funding by over 20%.
- Without state support, HTR may be forced to lay off expert staff, delay cancer case reporting, and curtail vital functions. I can speak firsthand that each and every staff is essential.
- The bill will restore essential capacity by offsetting federal funding losses; meeting federal cost-sharing requirements; sustaining the state's tumor biorepository; and rebuilding electronic pathology reporting infrastructure across hospitals and labs.

My 86-year old father was diagnosed with esophageal cancer a few months before his passing. My father went into cancer remission before passing from health issues including Parkinson's Disease. Please know that through research studies, 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 today and ... for our future. We cannot lose the **Hawai'i Tumor Registry**, our state's vital resource. No one can dispute good local data.

I humbly ask for your **STRONG SUPPORT** of **HB 1970 HD2 SD1**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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

**HB-1970-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 3:00:30 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michelle Emura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support a tumor registry in Hawaii to further our understanding of all cancers our community faces to better target our success in treating for life saving outcomes. Mahalo for your support as a Stage 4 cancer survivor and friend and family to those deaing with this horrific diagnosis. All these efforts lead to only wins.

Lynda Asato  
Honolulu, HI 96817

RE: Strong Support of HB 1969 SD1: Relating to Colorectal Cancer  
Wednesday, April 1, 2026; TIME: 10:03AM  
Committee on Ways and Means

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki and committee members:

My name is Lynda Asato and I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1970 SD1 which would fund Hawaii's tumor registry, the cancer surveillance program in the state and for the Pacific Islanders too. We cover a lot of territory. I am a patient/caretaker/survivor advocate with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network and a University of Hawaii Cancer Center Patient Advocacy Council member.

The University of Hawaii Cancer Center has been the victim of federal funding cuts of 20%. This affects the Tumor Registry maintenance under the Cancer Center which provides the staffing and houses specimens for the Tumor Registry. The Cancer Center is unable to use the cigarette tax revenues for this purpose because of the restrictions imposed last year on the cigarette tax usage. The Cancer Center needs both additional funding for the Tumor Registry and lifting of the restrictions on use of the cigarette taxes.

I urge your committee to pass HB1970 SD1 to protect public health data and specimens, which we are dependent on to continue to be the primary Cancer Center for clinical trials for patients like me who depend on clinical trials to continue to survive.

I am a survivor of three breast cancer recurrences, and I rely on the UH Cancer Center to continue the life-saving programs, research, and community resources that have supported me and so many others. Cancer has also deeply affected my family, with multiple relatives being impacted by this disease. The cancer that runs in my family are all different, from colorectal cancer to breast cancer and more. These different cancers should continue to be tracked and documented to understand the various cancer occurrences in Hawaii and what clinical trials to figure out why there may be more cancer prevalence in one type of cancer than others.

This work is not abstract to us—it's personal.

I currently serve on the UH Cancer Center's Patient Advisory Council and multi-cancer survivor, where I see firsthand how vital the Center's data, research, and patient-focused programs are for Hawai'i's diverse communities. Continued funding is essential to ensure that local patients receive care informed by accurate data and research that reflects the people of Hawai'i.

Why HB 1970 SD1 is Urgently Needed:

- Federal cuts to the National Cancer Institute's SEER program reduced Hawaii's Tumor Registry (HTR) funding by over 20%.
- Researchers depend on the HTR database to track progress in reducing cancer deaths and incidence.

I urge the Legislature to pass HB1970 SD1 to retain and make visible the gains made by our public health system and to demonstrate how this state's UH Cancer Center advances cancer research. We will overcome cancer someday.

Sincerely,  
Lynda Asato  
Honolulu, 96817

Beverly Wong  
Honolulu, HI 96818

RE: Strong Support of HB 1970 SD1: Relating to University of Hawaii Cancer Center  
Wednesday, April 1, 2026; TIME: 10:03AM  
Committee on Ways and Means

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki and committee members:

My name is Beverly Wong and I am a caretaker and advocate with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1970 SD1 which would fund Hawaii's tumor registry, the cancer surveillance program in the state.

Through your efforts and the advancement of cancer research, my son is currently battling acute Leukemia/Lymphomia and is now in the fight of his life. The tumor registry helps us to track cancer incidence in the state and what to focus efforts like clinical trials and research.

I beg you to pass this very important bill which will save many lives in the future and bring happiness to so many more families.

Sincerely,  
Beverly Wong  
Honolulu, 96818

**Christel Mailani Pope  
Makaweli, Hawaii 96769**

RE: Strong Support of HB 1970 SD1: Relating to University of Hawaii Cancer Center  
Wednesday, April 1, 2026; TIME: 10:03AM  
Committee on Ways and Means

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki and committee members:

My name is Christel Pope and I am a cancer survivor and advocate for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1970 SD1 which would fund Hawaii's tumor registry, the cancer surveillance program in the state.

In 2024, during a routine checkup with my health care provider I had a wonderful nurse who recommended that I do my colorectal screening test by providing a stool sample. She was so informative and explained the entire process in detail. I felt so comfortable after talking to her that I went home with my test kit. A few days later I collected my stool sample and turned it into the lab. My primary care physician called me and said he had some news about my test results. I told him - "Doc the last time you called me directly with my test results you told me I had cancer." He said that my stool sample tested positive for blood and that I needed more testing done.

The colonoscopy itself went fine, but afterwards the doctor told me they had found a large polyp. It was so big that they had to remove it in two pieces. Thankfully, the biopsy showed it was not cancerous, and I know firsthand that early detection saved my life.

The tumor registry in Hawaii shows the rise in colorectal cancers in the state. It is now the second cause of cancer death in men and women combined. The tumor registry tracks the need for providers to talk to patients about getting screened.

I respectfully urge you to pass this important bill—it will save lives.

Sincerely,

Christel Mailani Pope  
Makaweli, Hawaii 96769

**LATE**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and committee members:

My name is Becki Ward, and I am writing in strong support of HB1970 SD1: Relating to the University of Hawaii Cancer Center. My husband died from cancer 20 years ago and, since that time, I have advocated for cancer research and for equity in cancer screening and treatment. Toward this end, I am a volunteer with the American Cancer Society and the UH Cancer Research Center.

The Hawaii Tumor Registry is the only comprehensive cancer surveillance program in the state. Data from the Registry is crucial to the planning for cancer prevention, screening, and treatment. This is true for the general population, as well as for key groups with greater cancer risk and barriers to access.

As you know, funding cuts by the National Cancer Institute have reduced funding to our Registry. It is crucial that the Registry continue uninterrupted, for tracking trends in cancer among our diverse population. This data will support the planning and execution of a Colorectal cancer generally is very treatable when detected early. As the second leading cause of cancer mortality among all groups, and with the rise of colorectal cancer mortality which we have seen in the <50 age group in recent years, access to colorectal cancer screening is crucial. As you know, consistent with Federal requirements, Hawaii currently requires coverage of colorectal cancer by health insurance plans. However, cost is a significant barrier for those who are uninsured or underinsured. As a result, the screening rate among these groups falls far below the rate among the insured population.

In addition to codifying the requirement for coverage by insurance plans, HB1969 SD1 will provide dedicated funding for a colorectal cancer screening program for the uninsured and underinsured, a strong step toward closing this equity gap.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support HB1969 SD1. Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Rebecca "Becki" Ward  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

**LATE**

**HB-1970-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 4:47:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Laeton J Pang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing as a concerned oncologist to support HB1970 to appropriate funds to the University of Hawaii Cancer Center to support the ongoing work of the Hawaii tumor registry due to restrictions in federal funding jeopardizing the ability of the Hawaii tumor registry to continue to provide robust cancer surveillance that is critical to the health of the State's residents.

Due to an overall reduction in National Institutes of Health funding, the Hawaii tumor registry faces a twenty-one per cent reduction in federal funding. This reduction in funding will be exacerbated by University of Hawaii Cancer Center funding restrictions, which will negatively impact its ability to meet the twenty per cent cost sharing requirement.

The legislature additionally finds that the Hawaii tumor registry has consistently been recognized as a top-performing cancer registry in the United States and across North America. The impact of the Hawaii tumor registry on the health of Hawaii's residents has been far ranging, and includes working with the department of health to investigate suspected cancer clusters associated with a wide range of exposures, evaluating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on cancer care in the State, and direct contributions to national cancer research, early detection efforts, and lifesaving legislative initiatives such as the Childhood Cancer STAR Act of 2018 and the National Firefighter Registry for Cancer.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Laeton J Pang, MD, MPH, FACR, FACRO, FASTRO, FACCC