

October 28, 2013

1:30 P.M. Hearing Conference Room 309



KAUA'I
Chamber
of
Commerce

Hawaii State House of Representatives
Hawaii State Legislature - Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu Hawaii 96813

LATE TESTIMONY

Honorable Representatives Della Au Belatti, Chair, Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair and Members, Committee on Health and
Honorable Representatives Sylvia Luke, Chair, Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair and Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair and Members, Committee on Finance

Dear Members:

RE: HB3: Making an Appropriate to the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation

My name is Randall Francisco, President/CEO, Kauai Chamber of Commerce which represents more than 450 members, 900+ member representatives and over 5,000 employees of the member organizations. I am writing this letter in **SUPPORT OF HB3** for emergency stopgap funding in order to sustain the operations of the Kauai regional health care system. I was born and raised in the Westside of Kauai where the Kauai Veterans Memorial Hospital (KVMH) is located and which I continue to utilize its services, including those of its clinics. A few years ago after becoming President of this organization I needed the services of the KVMH. Today I am here to humbly request for financial support for both of the *Kauai hospitals*, KVMH being one of the two and whom, the hospital staff, were responsible for saving my life. The staff were able to immediately diagnose my medical condition, and, shortly thereafter transfer me from the clinic, to the Emergency Room, and, eventually, to a hospital room where over the next few days I was able to recover and continue to do what I do today: lead, advocate, support and contribute in my community of Kauai. My story is one of thousands from throughout the island which includes both residents, visitors to the island and military personnel.

I would like to use the following metaphor: Is there a doctor in the house? The patient (Kauai Regional Health Care System/HHSC) is ailing and is in need of extreme emergency medical/financial/mental health/physical care. The doctors/nurses/staff/legislators/taxpayers cannot continue to fund/support the patient/HHSC without expecting better care and potentially, a change in its diagnosis-treatment/business model in order to make it sustainable and, therefore a lifelong and contributing member of the communities of Kauai. Both hospitals serve an important and vital role from the North Shore to the Western part of the island. The people of Kauai need these hospitals in order to keep our island and business community moving forward.

This summer, the Kauai Veterans Memorial Hospital Foundation (KVMH Foundation) hosted a Business After Hours/Networking event which had an attendance by nearly 100 chamber members. What was special for this event unlike our normal hosted events were that businesses and non-profit groups co-hosted the event with the Foundation and was a great example of the town-gown relationship which the community has for this facility. Equally special were there back-of-the-house tours which many of us participated in and learned a great deal about the important and critical everyday services which the staff proudly shared about. The doctor who co-led a tour I was on spoke about some of the many life- and new-life events that occurred in the hospital. I am also pleased to inform you that some members of the Chamber's Board of Directors and Government Affairs Committee proudly serve on the hospital's advisory board.

Please approve this emergency request and with it the caveat for an eventual plan to look at a long term and strategic review as to the economic and sustainable model that will work for **ALL** of the state's public hospitals, especially, those in rural communities. Of concern for the business community is that while the law requires that employees of the hospital system must be paid, I wonder, at what point will the **Vendors/Accounts Payable** be paid for their goods and services and who continue to provide the Kauai hospital systems the needed goods and services. Businesses by law must pay their employees as well as their Cost of Goods Sold, other expenses, and, when they can, contribute/donate to the community such as the KVMH Foundation Annual Golf Tournament Fundraiser in November in order to raise funds for much needed hospital equipment and other line items even including training/support for the staff. Like the recent sequestration and federal government shutdown which our economy and nation experienced and wherein Hawaii was the number 2 state affected by this economic slowdown, not funding this request will have an even greater and adverse socio-economic domino effect.

Mahalo Nui Loa for the opportunity to provide testimony, and, especially, for your consideration, and, the health and well-being of the people of Kauai our visitors, taxpayers, and, patients.

Aloha.

Sincerely yours,

Randall Francisco
President/CEO

P.O. Box 1969, Lihu'e, HI 96766 • Ph: (808) 245-7363 • Fax: (808) 245-8815
email: info@kauaichamber.org • www.kauaichamber.org