



March 18, 2018

To: COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH  
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair  
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair

Re: **Strong Support for HB1916 HD2**

Hrg: March 20, 2018 at 9:00am at Conference Room 229

The Hawaii Public Health Association is a group of over 600 community members, public health professionals and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. HPHA also serves as a voice for public health professionals and as a repository for information about public health in the Pacific.

HPHA strongly supports HB1916 HD2, which requires the Executive Office on Aging to update the State Plan on Alzheimer's Disease and related dementias with a necessary appropriation for its implementation and update.

Alzheimer's disease is a growing public health epidemic and is now the nation's sixth leading cause of death. Here in Hawaii, more than 27,000 individuals live with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia and 1 in 3 kupuna will die from the disease. In addition, there are over 66,000 unpaid family caregivers within our state, and the numbers will grow exponentially as our population ages.

We must intervene before it's too late; The State Plan on Alzheimer's Disease was released by the Department of Health in 2014 and has essentially been sitting on the back burner. Despite the array of dementia services available in the community, there are still numerous gaps in services. Many of these gaps and resolutions have already been identified in the ADRD State Plan. Implementation of the plan and the activities to fill those gaps in services require coordination and resources. HB1916 offers a next step in terms of implementing the recommendations identified by more than 40 key stakeholders and carrying out actions that would make Hawaii more dementia capable. The act would allow EOA to enact legislation, develop regulations and execute much-needed programs.

We strongly urge you to pass this bill. Although we currently have many worthy and important issues to address in the state, we can not continue to neglect the needs of families affected by Alzheimer's disease or related dementias. The current number of individuals affected will only continue to rise as the baby boomers continue to age. The increase in individuals affected will continue to take a toll on our families and on our community as we are left to pay hefty costs for the care of individuals with dementia.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on important health issues affecting people in Hawaii.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Holly Kessler'.

Holly Kessler, Executive Director  
Hawaii Public Health Association