



LATE TESTIMONY: Written only

January 29, 2015

To: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Representative Richard P. Creagan, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Health

From: Hawaii Public Health Association

Subject: HB0586 Relating to Use of Tobacco Products and E-cigarettes on Hawaii Health Systems corporation Premises

Dear Chair Au Belatti and Members of the Committee,

HPHA is an association 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.

The Hawaii Public Health Association (HPHA) is respectfully submitting testimony in support of HB0586 which would prohibit tobacco or e-cigarette use on Hawaii Health System Corporations (HHSC) premises by amending §323-F, Hawaii Revised Statutes. This bill also provides smoking cessation programs for public employees.

The ongoing battle to alleviate the community of the undue burden of tobacco use on Hawaii's healthcare system requires a multi-pronged approach. Smoke-free policies, especially at our state's facilities dedicated to wellness and healing do best to demonstrate commitment to this fight against the detrimental effects of tobacco use.

Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death in the United States and Hawaii, having claimed more than 20 million lives prematurely since the first Surgeon General's report in 1964. Emerging tobacco products such as electronic smoking devices or ESD's are gaining in popularity and threaten any progress made over the last 50 years to decrease smoking rates and increase the number of people who quit smoking. Meanwhile the marketing, manufacturing, and usage of ESD's are highly unregulated. Furthermore, secondhand smoke seriously harms health. The U.S. Surgeon General declares that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Even small amounts can cause serious damage to the body, especially cardiovascular and respiratory systems.

The HPHA supports this policy which empowers the HHSC to protect individuals from secondhand smoke and enables its employees to participate in cessation programs. At the same time, this measure contributes to public health in all of Hawaii by decreasing the social acceptability of tobacco use. The HPHA commends these efforts to strengthen HHSC's commitment to health for the people of Hawaii and future generations.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Holly Kessler, Executive Director
Hawaii Public Health Association