



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
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By

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And

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HB 531 HD1 – RELATING TO SPECIAL NUMBER PLATES

Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB 531 HD1, which authorizes the issuance of special license plates recognizing the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center (UH Cancer Center), with a portion of the proceeds from these plates supporting cancer research, patient care, and community outreach in Hawai'i. The UH Cancer Center is the only National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated cancer center in the Pacific. It is dedicated to saving lives through groundbreaking research and state-of-the-art cancer care. As an NCI-designated center, we play a critical role in advancing cancer treatments tailored to the unique needs of our diverse population in Hawai'i and the broader Pacific region.

Investment in the UH Cancer Center is an Investment in the Health and Well-being of Our Community

Cancer remains the second leading cause of death in Hawai'i, affecting thousands of local families each year. More than 70,000 people in our state are living with cancer, and annually, 2,300 Hawai'i residents lose their lives to this devastating disease. The UH Cancer Center, in collaboration with major healthcare and community partners—including The Queen's Health Systems, Hawai'i Pacific Health, Adventist Health Castle, Kuakini Medical Center, and John A. Burns School of Medicine—continues to make significant strides in cancer prevention, early detection, and treatment.

Funding from special license plate sales will directly support vital initiatives such as:

- Expanding access to cutting-edge clinical trials for Hawai'i residents, particularly for cancers that disproportionately affect our communities.
- Conducting groundbreaking research on cancers that impact Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, Filipinos, and other at-risk populations.
- Strengthening our community outreach and education programs to promote cancer prevention and early detection efforts.

Investment in the UH Cancer Center is an Investment in Economic Growth

Beyond improving health outcomes, investing in the UH Cancer Center contributes to Hawai'i's economy by attracting federal research grants, forging partnerships with leading pharmaceutical companies, and drawing world-class researchers and oncologists to our state. Our work positions Hawai'i as a global leader in cancer research and care, ensuring that residents have access to the best possible treatments without having to leave the state for specialized care.

Funds raised through the special license plate program will help sustain and expand the Center's ability to provide state-of-the-art research and patient care, bringing direct benefits to our local workforce, healthcare industry, and economy.

A Commitment to a Future Free from Cancer

The introduction of a UH Cancer Center special license plate provides the public with a meaningful way to show their support for cancer research and treatment in Hawai'i. By purchasing these plates, residents can contribute to life-saving initiatives that will improve health outcomes for generations to come.

We strongly urge the committee to pass HB 531 HD1, establishing this innovative funding mechanism and further strengthening Hawai'i's fight against cancer.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.