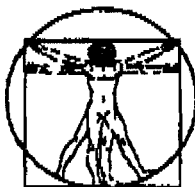


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TO: Sen. David Ige, Chair
Sen. Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs
Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Health

RE: SB ~~2694~~ Relating to Excise Tax on Healthcare

DATE: February 9, 2006, 2:45 pm, Room 225

My name is Paul Morris, MD. I am the past President of the Hawaii Society of Clinical Oncology, as well as past board member of the American Cancer Society, current Cancer Committee Chair at Queens, and I currently serve on the National Committee on Cancer for the American College of Surgeons. I am here today to offer a personal perspective on behalf of my patients.

As a thoracic surgical oncologist, I have treated thousands of residents in our State, many from the neighbor islands. Not a day goes by where I don't see someone struggle to pay their health care expenses, especially those with catastrophic illnesses from the neighbor islands. In addition to the usual expenses, these patients are burdened with travel costs and time off from work.

If they need a big cancer operation, they travel to Oahu. They must get up early to get to the airport when they are not feeling well, usually with the help of a family member or friend. They might come to my office, perhaps get a CAT scan at Queens, or visit their oncologist before returning home. Tired and worried, these patients are doing their best to make their appointments and comply with treatment plans.

I believe all patients, whether they are from the neighbor islands or Oahu residents, should be exempt from an increase in GET on medical services. Therefore, I strongly urge you to consider supporting ~~SB 2694~~ because I do not believe that these patients can withstand yet another burden as they fight for their lives.

Thank you very much for considering my opinion on this matter. I appreciate the opportunity to present my thoughts to you.

Sincerely yours,

Paul T. Morris, MD, FACS