



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

**Please join us for lunch
MONDAY, February 25, 2008**

11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Miyama Main Hall, Harris United Methodist Church
Nuuanu Ave. and South Vineyard Blvd.
Ample parking - driveway off Nuuanu Ave.

AGENDA:

11:30 Luncheon: Various Pizzas, Salad, Dessert by Eloise \$5.00 Donation

11:45 Welcome, Introductions and remarks, Larry Geller, President

12:00 Program: Marilyn Seely: Using the Leahi hospital campus to develop a long-term care master plan. What is the plan, how will it impact the delivery of LTC services.

Marilyn Seely is a former director of the Executive Office On Aging and represents Kokua Council on the task force charged with developing the plan.

1:00 Adjourn

Lunch Host: Tony Lenzer

BOARD MEETING: 10:00 a.m. Preceding Lunch

NOTES FROM JANUARY LUNCHEON MEETING

George Fox: The counties RX program giving a 20% discount requires only getting a card at Honolulu Hale or any satellite city hall. No forms to fill out. Card honored at practically all pharmacies.

Senator Les Ihara: Reporting on the work of Kupuna Caucus and the Joint Legislative Committee on Family Caregiving(JLCFC): The years 2006-7 concentrated on research to provide support for caregiving

and senior issues. e.g., 1 in 4 of those surveyed were caregivers. Of these 1/4 were employed taking care of a parent or child. Respite care was the most reported need here and nationally.

The committees' focus on care **now** are reflected in bills supporting more funds for Kupuna Care, creating a directory of available respite services, providing funds to plan for "cash and counseling" and using University of Hawaii to coordinate research, expanding the scope of the JLCFC by changing its name to Joint Committee on Aging in Place. *The inventory of statewide respite services is now available. Call Executive Office on Aging, Wes Lum.*

Cash and Counseling definition: recipients of home and community based services and Medicaid personal care services receive a flexible monthly allowance and the ability to decide on services they need and who to hire. They also receive guidance as needed, to make these decisions.

HOW TO FIND, TRACK AND SEND TESTIMONY FOR 2008 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Go to the legislature's website at www.capitol.hawaii.gov and click on the link to "Bill Status and Documents." The first box on that page will give you a resource for doing text searches to find bill numbers, if you don't already know them. Once you have bill numbers, you can put them into the blank space there in the first box and then choose what you want to see – 'status' (which is to say, the measure history), 'text' (which will give you all versions of the bill/s you've chosen), and 'committee reports' (which are the reports generated when a measure moves from one committee to the next).

To send in electronic testimony, follow the instructions on the bottom portion of the hearing notice. There on the "Bill Status and Docs" page, go down to the second box ("2007 interim/2008 regular session hearing notices") and choose the hearing notice you want. Instructions on providing testimony in various ways will be found in the section below the list of actual measures, beneath the line that says either "Decision Making to Follow" or "Decision Making to Follow if Time Allows." *Suzanne, Public Access Room*

LOSS OF INDEPENDENCE IS SENIORS' WORST FEAR

Eighty-nine percent of America's seniors want to age-in-place and are willing to use adaptive technology allowing them to maintain their independence, according to a recent survey reported in the online publication Senior Spectrum. Seniors rated loss of independence (26 percent) and moving out of their home into a nursing home (13 percent) as their greatest fears. Death was listed as a fear by only 3 percent of the respondents questioned for the research study, entitled Aging in Place in America. Seniors cited three main threats to their independence: health problems were the main consideration, followed closely by memory problems and the inability to drive. Most seniors surveyed viewed themselves as extremely independent due to the fact that they receive no assistance from their children. Despite the boomers' parents' belief that they receive no support from their children, 63 percent of the boomers surveyed stated that they are providing some kind of assistance to allow their parents to age-in-place. Much of the assistance reportedly provided by boomers was with household maintenance, transportation, medical issues, help with financial decisions and financial support.

PRIVATE INSURANCE COMPANIES DRIVE NATIONAL HEALTH SPENDING TO RECORD HIGH

Last month the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services reported a 6.7% increase in national health care spending in 2006, pushing the total past \$2 trillion for the first time. Total health care spending has almost doubled over the last decade, now averaging \$7,000 per person. A major contributor to the growth was the high payments to private insurance companies participating in Medicare Advantage and the Part D prescription plans. The Medicare Part D drug benefit led the program's administrative costs to rise by 8.8% last year, and its total spending to increase at its most rapid pace since 1981. Yet, **Richard S. Foster**, Medicare's chief actuary, admitted, "the overall cost of prescription drugs in the U.S. has changed very little as a result of Part D." Additionally, out-of-pocket consumer health spending went up 3.8% for the year.

BIG DRUG COMPANIES SAY FIGHT AGAINST THEM HAS "DIED DOWN"

Big drug companies remain cheerful about their election-year fate. Last week, Schering-Plough CEO **Fred Hassan** claimed that more than 50% of Americans have a favorable opinion of the pharmaceutical

industry, and that efforts to let Medicare negotiate drug prices have "died down" because seniors are so satisfied with the Part D prescription drug benefit. However, a Harris Interactive poll conducted in October found that oil and drug companies tied at 53% as the industries most needing additional regulation. Only 11% of respondents believed the pharmaceutical industry to be "generally honest and trustworthy."

"The 2008 Family Caregiver Awareness Day and Resource Fair will be held on March 14, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the State Capitol. Not-for-profit organizations and community agencies that provide caregiver resources, as well as businesses that service caregivers and recipients, and our sponsors, are encouraged to have an exhibit at the fair. The event is free and open to the public. Contact Lyn Moku @ 532-0806 for info. Sponsored by the Hawaii Family Caregiver Coalition."

HAWAII ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS 2008 CONVENTION

Over 120 delegates and guests from all islands representing 1,700 members met in January to set the course of HARA for the next two years. The delegates passed two resolutions; support for creating a state cabinet level Department of Aging and pursuing a solution to financing long term care. The Alliance is composed of AFT Hawaii Retirees, HGEA Retiree's, HSTA – Retired, ILWU Retirees, Kokua Council, Machinists Union Retirees, UPW Retirees, ADA, and individual members. Below is the resolution for the Department Of Aging.

WHEREAS, the population of persons age sixty-five years of age and over will increase by 86% between the years 2007 and 2030; and one in five persons in the Hawaii will be over 65 by the year 2020; and
WHEREAS, HARA has already 17,000 members of retirement age; and

WHEREAS, services for the elderly provided by the government and nonprofit agencies are under-funded and under-staffed and with waiting lists for all services; and

WHEREAS, many of the agencies are licensed and monitored by the State and receive federal and state funding; services and funds are scattered among many state government departments making it difficult to focus resources and coordinate services resulting in confusion and delays; and

WHEREAS, the scope and magnitude of issues facing the elderly requires department level attention; now,
BE IT RESOLVED that the Hawaii Alliance of Retired Americans support the establishment of a cabinet level Department of Aging, and that HARA will actively advocate for such establishment by supporting legislation, educating their members and the community of the necessity for such a department

THE HAWAII STATE PLAN ON AGING: 2004-2007

This plan identifies a number of key strategies and unmet needs, which clearly fits with an aging at home agenda:

- **Information to make informed decisions**
- **Programs and Services to Live at Home**
- **Information on Elder rights and benefits**
- **Partnerships to address emerging and existing issues**

The State Plan also identified estimated unmet needs by senior programs in all four counties. In the City and County of Honolulu, for example, it was estimated that over 20,333 seniors continue to need transportation, 17,844 cannot find case management, 20,661 need chore services, and 19,630 housekeeping. Needs unmet by Hawaii public or private programs also include personal care (20,710), home repairs/maintenance (24,898), interpretation/translation (26,332), letter writing/reading (16,289), money management (22,384), and meals delivered at home (23,355)

HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION NAMES OUR REV. SAM COX LIVING TREASURE

Cox, 74, is the visitation pastor for Kailua United Methodist Church. He also founded the Hawai'i Youth Services Network and serves on the board of the Kokua Council for Senior Citizens, one of the oldest advocacy groups for elders.

After serving as executive director of Hale Kipa for 23 years, Cox has since turned his attention to spearheading the Open Table, an informational gathering for people interested in interfaith dialogue, which eventually grew into Hawaii's branch of the national Interfaith Alliance.

The local Interfaith Alliance has advocated for many local issues, including the effort to keep Kukui Gardens, an affordable rental complex in Downtown Honolulu, as affordable housing.

He earned a lifetime achievement award from the National Network for Youth and the 1999 Hawai'i social worker of the year award. *Congratulations Sam, we know you are wonderful.*

Did You Know. A surprising 85% of those without health insurance are currently employed, and nearly all have worked in the past year (*Wall Street Journal*).



Kokua Council for Senior Citizens

Education Fund, Inc.

20 South Vineyard Blvd.

Honolulu, HI 96813

<http://www.kokuacouncil.org>

Return Service requested

WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

Who Are We?

The **Kokua Council** is one of Hawaii's oldest advocacy groups. There is a \$5 annual membership to defer printing and postage costs. At each meeting, topical issues are presented for discussion and possible action. We embrace diversity and extend a special invitation to any senior or intergenerational minded individual interested in advocating for these important issues in Hawaii." All are welcome. **WHEN** 4th Monday of every month, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. **WHERE** Harris United Methodist Church @ Nuuanu and Vineyard Blvd., Ample parking and a light lunch are provided for \$5. **REACH US** c/o Harris United Methodist Church, 20 South Vineyard, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Mission: "Kokua Council advocates and seeks to empower seniors and other concerned citizens to be effective advocates in shaping the future and well-being of our community, with particular attention to those needing help in advocating for themselves. "

President Larry Geller, 540-1928, lgeller@igc.org

Vice President Tony Lenzer, 261-2095, tlenzer@hawaii.rr.com

Vice President Laura Manis, 597-8838, manis@lava.net

Secretary Betty Sugarman, 261-8936<betty333@hawaiiintel.net

Website: www.kokuacouncil.org

Treasurer Ed. Fund T.J. Davies tjdavies@juno.com

Treasurer Advocacy Evelyn Shepard 595-4025

General Info Eloise Monsarrat, 839-1545

Newsletter Jeanne Y. Ohta, 373-3186, jyohta@hawaii.rr.com

JOIN KOKUA COUNCIL!

Yes! I want to join Kokua Council. Here are my annual dues and my contact information. I understand that my phone number will be added to the Kokua Phone Tree and I will receive the monthly newsletter and occasional e-mails. Our fiscal year starts in January. Please make checks payable to Kokua Council.