

August 8th, 2008

Dear Director Kawamura,

Kona Hospital is in a crisis. You are in a position to help us get through this difficult period. Without action now from your office and Governor Lingle, our community hospital, and ultimately our patients, will continue to suffer. The quality of West Hawaii's health care is in jeopardy.

On June 22nd, I asked the Governor to convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address the hospital crisis on the neighbor islands, but my request fell on deaf ears. I hand-delivered an invitation to the Governor and Director of Health to come to our community meeting with the Kona Hospital board two weeks ago, but no major official from the executive branch appeared to hear our concerns. I can only conclude that West Hawaii's hospital crisis is not getting enough attention from the Lingle administration, and the pain of our community is not being taken seriously. We demand help with this problem now.

Instead of coming up with excuses, we need the Director of Budget and Finance and other key offices in the administration to join us in taking on this problem head on, and look for ways to help West Hawaii through the health care crisis. The health and safety of our community is at stake.

Please don't allow this to become the usual game of withholding funds for political reasons, as is often done with a road project or a grant-in-aid. **THIS IS OUR HOSPITAL ON THE LINE!** We are asking for your help in a time of crisis. Not political games, stalling tactics, or the same old excuses.

We need to consider using Special Funds related to health care, such as funds from tobacco taxes, to keep Kona Hospital solvent and maintain the quality of patient care that our community depends on. The administration could also use discretionary funds or make a loan to the hospital to prevent cuts that may affect care. In times of crisis leaders seek solutions and that is what I am asking the administration to do - join me in finding an immediate financial solution to our hospital's need.

Kona hospital could avoid any loss of services or jobs for the rest of 2008 with the release of about \$3 million and some help with their accounts receivables. Then in this coming legislative session I will again work to convince everyone at the capitol that we must raise insurance reimbursements to avoid this perpetual cycle of shortfalls and bailouts for the hospital system. I have already posted the reimbursement reform bill on my website.

I urge you to call the Governor's office and ask them to become part of the solution to the crisis at Kona Hospital. And please come to the public hearing on 8/14 at King Kamehameha Hotel from 4-6pm to express your concerns to the finance committee about our current critical needs for Kona Hospital. Your voice will make a difference.

Sincerely,

Josh Green M.D.  
State Representative  
District 6, Kona