

**Testimony on HB1853 HD1 SD1
RELATING TO ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE
Tuesday, March 7, 10:31 AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
State Capitol - 415 South Beretania Street**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee,

My name is Peter Black, and I live in Ninole on the Big Island. I am a retired professor of Anthropology, 83 years old. As someone living with an Alzheimer's diagnosis I would like to very briefly tell you why I strongly support this bill.

Most of my career was at George Mason University, in Virginia. In 2005 I accepted an offer of early retirement from the University because it had become more and more difficult to teach at a level I could accept. As a student I was unfortunate enough to have taken courses from people who were clearly past their peak, and I did not want to subject my students to the same thing. My wife Barbara and I moved to Hawaii in 2011. In 2015, she suggested that since I seemed to be worried that I might be declining mentally, I should probably just see a neurologist. I was 73 years old at that time.

I shall never forget my shock when the neurologist told me that I had Alzheimer's. However, that relatively early diagnosis turned out to be a blessing since it led us to plan for the future, and for me, access to one of the new Alzheimer's drugs.

For many other kūpuna on the Big Island and the other neighbor islands, access to such care is very difficult because it is not available locally. We are fortunate in this respect. This care needs to be available for all kūpuna on their home island. And not to be forgotten is the need for support throughout the course of this disease—for the patient and his or her caregivers.

Finally, I support this bill because the Hanai Memory Network is not only a public health measure but also because it is a matter of equity.

Thank you for listening to me. Peter Black