

**Testimony on HB1976 HD1 SD1
RELATING TO DEMENTIA
Tuesday, April 7, 10:31 AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
State Capitol - 415 South Beretania Street**

Chair Buenaventura, Chair Fukunaga, and members of the committee,

My name is Peter Black and I have Alzheimer's. My home is in Ninole on the Big Island where I live with my wife and caretaker, Barbara. I strongly support HB1976 which would require annual dementia training for first responders across the state to ensure the safety of those of us living with Alzheimer's. And I note that this training is provided by the Alzheimer's Association at no cost to the state.

I have no clear idea of what my future will be, but if I live long enough for my dementia to render me incompetent to be on my own, I really hope any encounter I have with a first responder, be it policeman or fireman, is an encounter with someone who is ready to deal with me appropriately.

Hawai'i's first responders are dealing with increasing medical emergencies, natural disasters, and more frequent wildfires, all of which require rapid action and clear communication. A person with dementia may not respond in expected ways during an evacuation, a traffic stop, or a medical call, placing both the individual and responders at risk.

I respectfully urge you to support this bill so that Hawai'i's first responders have the tools they need to interact safely and effectively with people living with dementia, and so families can feel more confident that their loved ones will be treated with understanding and care during an emergency.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of this very positive initiative to give our first responders the opportunity to add to their skill set the necessary tools to deal with what could be a very fraught situation.

Peter Weston Black