

Kate Brown
Governor



**Oregon Commission on
Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs**
"Advocating Equality and Diversity"
1819 SW 5th Ave., Portland, OR 97201
O 503.302.9725/F 503.473.8519
Email: oaco.mail@oregon.gov
www.oregon.gov/ocapia/

OCAPIA Testimony in Support of SB 147 COFA Oral Health Care
May 1st, 2017, Hearing Room E, 3:00pm
House Health Care Committee

Chair Rep. Greenlick, Vice Chairs Rep. Nosse, and Rep. Hayden, and Reps
Alonso Leon, Buehler, Hack, Kennemer, Keny-Guyer, and Malstrom:

The Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs supports
SB 147, which directs Department of Consumer and Business Services
(DCBS) to develop and report with recommendations to Legislative
Assembly, for a program to reimburse costs of oral health care for low-
income individuals residing in Oregon under Compact of Free Association
(COFA) treaty. This law builds on HB 2522, the COFA Health bill in 2015
that set the ground work for COFA citizens to get covered by the Oregon
Health Plan.

The U.S. has conducted nuclear testing in the COFA countries for decades,
which has negatively impacted the COFA economies. In the past decade
COFA citizens have left their home nations at a high rate due to their poor
economies. Many COFA citizens are now living in the United States,
where although they are legally allowed to work, they are not U.S. citizens.

Poverty is a driver of health disparities in Oral Health. The correlation
between poverty and oral health disparities is documented in the Center for
Disease Control and Prevention's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance
System (BRFSS). Nearly 18% of all Micronesians in the U.S. live in
poverty compared to the U.S. average of 12%.

The goal of SB 147 to study the oral health care for low-income COFA Oregonians can be done at a
minimal fiscal impact to Oregon. OCAPIA commissioners have participated in the previous policy
development process and will continue to contribute in the policy development that will reduce
health disparities in Oregon.

Thank you for your positive consideration of SB 147.

Mari Watanabe, Chair,

Sources: <http://sboh.wa.gov/Portals/7/Doc/HealthImpactReviews/HIR-2017-12-SB5683.pdf?ver=2017-02-13-163642-177>

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/list/asian-americans-initiative/what-you-should-know.pdf>

**OR Commission on Asian and
Pacific Islander Affairs**

Chair:

Mari Watanabe

Vice Chair:

David Yuen Tam

Commissioners:

Hussein Al-Baiaty
Susan Soonkeum Cox
Ping Khaw
Bennie Moses-Mesubed
Chanpone Sinlapasai-Okamura
Stephen Ying

Legislative Liaisons:

Rep. Carla Piluso
Sen. Michael Dembrow

Staff:

Lucy Baker, Administrator
Nancy Kramer, Executive Asst.
Ty Schwoeffermann, Policy Analyst