



MUFI HANNEMANN | LES CHANG

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Hannemann declares “Hawaii’s Health Care System Is Not Healthy”

Honolulu, HI (September 24, 2014) During yesterday’s Chamber of Commerce Hawaii gubernatorial candidate forum, Independent Party candidate, Mufi Hannemann declared that “Hawaii’s public health care system is not healthy.” Hannemann went on to boldly set two health related goals that he would achieve as Governor.

- **Increase the Number of New Doctors**
- **Save the Public Hospitals**

“First and foremost, the focus of any discussion related to the doctors and the public hospitals is all about providing quality patient care. Every person, regardless of where they reside should have access to affordable and quality health care,” said Hannemann.

(see platformvotemufi.com for details)

Increase The Number Of New Doctors

“We have an acute doctor shortage that threatens to undermine our ability to serve the medical needs of our community,” said Hannemann. He continued by saying, “As a matter of urgency, we will increase the number of new doctors graduating from the JABSOM (J. A. Burns School of Medicine) and take other measures to increase doctor retention.” Currently JABSOM graduates 66 doctors a year, with each going through at least seven years of medical training.

Hannemann also stated, “To make this happen, I will personally work with the UH Board of Regents, Dean of the medical school, Legislature and hospitals to ensure there is adequate funding and rotations for residencies as well as work towards greater autonomy for JABSOM.”

Hannemann went on to note that while increasing the number of new doctors is a start, by itself, it won't solve the problem. It is estimated that Hawaii has a statewide shortage of 700 doctors and that the number is expected to double by 2020. This shortage is not only caused by the limited number of doctors able to graduate from medical school but also because of early retirements or departures from the profession. "The issue goes beyond graduation rates, we also have to look at how we recruit, train, and retain our doctors," said Hannemann. He went on to say, "The State needs to do more for our doctors. We need to maximize funds from State Loan Repayment Program, administered by HRSA as well as look at ways to help not only newly graduated doctors but also our experienced doctors."

SAVE THE PUBLIC HOSPITALS

Hawaii Health Systems Corporation (HHSC) was established in 1966 and is responsible for our public hospitals. It operates 12 facilities that provide essential services to local communities, particularly in Hawaii, Maui and Kauai. However, there is a growing public concern about the operational and financial viability of HSSC.

Hannemann said, "If HHSC were a privately owned company it would be bankrupt." According to its own financial statements, HSSC had an operating loss last year of \$164 million. Its unfunded liabilities to retirees are \$267 million. It has long-term debts and other long-term liabilities of \$125 million, of which \$36 million is owed to the State of Hawaii. Moreover, expenses are rising faster than revenues. Losses are getting bigger year by year.

Hannemann continued by saying, "I believe the time is right to support the idea of the HHSC entering into public-private partnerships that will lead to greater operating efficiencies and financial stability as well as ensuring a more stable and quality work environment for the medical staff who shoulder the responsibility of providing health care services to the patients."

Hannemann believes the best way the quality of care of public hospitals can be preserved and enhanced on a sustainable basis is if they join forces with larger, well-managed, financially secure non-profit or other medical systems. He noted that Hawaii's leading non-profit medical systems like Hawaii Pacific and Queen's Health have a long history of community-based care and a mission to serve all. Kaiser Permanente is another well-regarded system that serves a large community in Oahu, Maui and the Big Island. All will be invited to participate in the revitalization of our public hospitals. Local Hospital Boards will be established to reinforce local identity and accountability and offer high quality employment opportunities for a wide range of medical staff.

Optimistic About The Future

In closing, Hannemann noted that "While I am concerned about the current state of health care, I am optimistic about the future if we can move forward on these two initiatives." He pointed out that Hawaii has almost universal health due to the visionary Hawaii Prepaid Health Care Act of 1974, leading medical centers that stand alongside the best in the nation, and has a medical school that we can be proud of. He believes these are great foundations on which to build on.