



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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U.S. Senator Mazie Hirono to receive Courage Award for World Cancer Day

HONOLULU – In recognition of World Cancer Day, the Hawaii Comprehensive Cancer Coalition (HCCC) announces U.S. Senator Mazie Hirono as the recipient of the 2018 Courage Award for her bravery and willingness to continue serving in Congress while battling Stage IV cancer. World Cancer Day is a global initiative that takes place this Sunday, Feb. 4 and is aimed at raising awareness about this disease.

Senator Hirono will be publicly honored at the annual HCCC Summit on Feb. 21 at the Hilton Hawaiian Village from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event will be moderated by journalist Yunji de Nies. Sponsored by the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH), the HCCC is comprised of individuals, community partners and organizations dedicated to saving the lives and improving the quality of life for those impacted by cancer in Hawaii.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Hawaii. Over 58,000 Hawaii residents are living with cancer, including those newly diagnosed and those diagnosed with invasive cancer in the past. Each year, more than 6,700 Hawaii residents are diagnosed with an invasive form of cancer and more than 2,200 residents lose their lives from the disease.

“Although cancer is not always detected early, treatment can still be effective. Over the past several years, there has been a renaissance in cancer care, as evidenced by many breakthroughs including the immunotherapy that Senator Hirono has received,” said Dr. Shane Morita, Surgical Oncologist and Chair of the HCCC.

Lung and bronchial cancers are the most common types of cancers in both men and women in Hawaii, followed by breast (women), colorectal, prostate (men), pancreatic, liver, and ovarian (women) cancers.

The Department of Health’s Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Division plays a key role in leading programs and initiatives designed to increase access to cancer prevention, early detection, equitable access to care, and quality of life in survivorship and palliative care, especially among minorities and the medically underserved.

- DOH’s Hawaii Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) partners with health care agencies and community organizations to increase cancer screening among women who may be at greater risk. Visit <http://health.hawaii.gov/cancer/home/bcccp/> for more information.

- Quitting smoking reduces the risk of getting cancer. The Hawaii Tobacco QuitLine offers free tobacco cessation services, including counseling and nicotine replacement therapies for anyone trying to stop using tobacco products, including e-cigarettes. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or go online at HawaiiQuitLine.org.
- DOH's Choose Healthy Now program partners with convenience stores across the state—including 7-Eleven, Aloha Island Mart and KTA Super Stores—to offer healthier snack and drink options. Visit ChooseHealthyNowHawaii.com for a list of participating locations.
- Complete Streets policies and programs across the state improve opportunities for walking, hiking and biking. Check out HealthyHawaii.com/Get-Active for ideas on being physically active.

“Many cancers are curable if detected early and treated promptly, and can be prevented by lifestyle changes such as avoiding tobacco, improving nutrition and physical activity, and maintaining a healthy body weight,” said Health Director Dr. Virginia Pressler.

The Hawaii State Cancer Plan 2016 – 2020, a vision and action document created by the DOH and the HCCC, addresses four top priorities for addressing cancer: prevention, early detection, equitable access to care and quality of life. The plan is designed to serve as a guide for cancer control and prevention efforts, and to enhance collaboration between public and private sector organizations that work towards a collective vision of “No More Cancer.”

To register to attend the HCCC Summit, call 692-7480. Space is limited. To learn more about cancer or to view the Hawaii State Cancer Plan 2016 -2020, visit health.hawaii.gov/cancer/.

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