

**Statement of Senator Daniel K. Akaka**

**Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee hearing on  
“Transforming Lives Through Diabetes Research”**

**Wednesday, June 22, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.**

Thank you, Senator Collins, mahalo for chairing this important hearing on Type 1 diabetes. I want to join you in welcoming our distinguished panelists who have been so committed to this issue. I also want to send a very special aloha to those Children’s Congress delegates waiting to testify and those in the audience.

These are the courageous young ambassadors who have traveled from all over the country and the world to educate us. They are here to share their stories of their own experiences. They bring a real human dimension to the policy debate. This shows how critical research and support is for diabetes and a hope for a cure.

Diabetes is a significant health problem in my home state of Hawaii, and it is an increasing challenge for the nation. Diabetes is an issue that we will look at in the Indian Affairs Committee, and it will be a part of the minority health legislation that I plan to introduce. It is the subject of the ongoing budget and regulatory policy debate. In this context, I am proud to support the development of the artificial pancreas.

I will continue to support funding for research at the National Institutes for Health, which gives us the chance for better detection, better treatment, and the hope for a cure. All the more reason that I am so pleased to see the children here every two years. They remind my colleagues and me about the struggle of living with Type 1 diabetes, and the importance of supporting diabetes research.

Finally, I would like to extend a special thanks to Aaron Tsuchitori, who travelled from Honolulu with his mom to meet with me today. I look forward to continuing to work with all of you to improve the lives of individuals with diabetes.

Thank you.