



Proclamation

More than nine million people around the world are infected with tuberculosis (TB), leading to more than two million deaths annually. While control of TB has greatly improved in the United States in the past 125 years, more than one-third of the world's population remains infected.

On March 24, 1882, Dr. Robert Koch discovered *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* – the bacterium that causes the disease. Transmitted via bacteria in the air from person to person, TB is most often found in the lungs, but can spread to any part of the body, leading to serious illness or even death. With TB infection, a person is a carrier of the illness-inducing germ, which remains inactive in the body for a period of time. People diagnosed with TB disease become sick from the germs activating throughout their bodies.

It is possible to be cured of TB, if the prescribed course of medication over six months is completed. The Hawai'i TB Control Program uses "Directly Observed Therapy" by having outreach workers visit patients daily to deliver and observe them taking TB medications. In addition, the program has secured a mobile x-ray unit to help with screenings at the Lanakila Health Center and is in the process of updating the Hawai'i Administrative Rules for Tuberculosis to include new blood tests. Researchers continue working on improvements to the current course of diagnostic tools, treatments and vaccines to treat the disease more effectively in a shorter period of time.

Hawai'i consistently has one of the highest rates of TB infection and disease in the nation, due to a high percentage of foreign born residents from countries where the disease is common and from delayed reactivation of the infection. The majority of the cases in the state are pulmonary tuberculosis, affecting the lungs. Honolulu continues to report the highest rates of TB cases in Hawai'i, with 9.5 cases per 100,000 people. The state Department of Health remains vigilant in providing prevention, control and elimination through systems offering earlier public warnings of health threats through education and increased surveillance.

In an effort to raise awareness of their *Global Plan to Stop TB, 2006-2015*, the Stop TB Partnership established an annual **World TB Day** on March 24, in honor of Dr. Koch's discovery. This year, the Hawai'i Department of Health is joining with the Stop TB Partnership with a theme of "*I Am Stopping TB*" as a reminder that everyone can help control the spread of tuberculosis worldwide.

THEREFORE, I, LINDA LINGLE, Governor, and **I, JAMES R. "DUKE" AIONA, JR.**, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim **March 24, 2008**, as

TUBERCULOSIS CONTROL DAY

in Hawai'i, and encourage our citizens to be aware of tuberculosis signs and symptoms, while working to eradicating the disease.

DONE at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this twentieth day of March 2008.

Linda Lingle
Governor, State of Hawai'i

James R. "Duke" Aiona, Jr.
Lieutenant Governor, State of Hawai'i