

STATEMENT OF TAUFETE'E JOHN P. FAUMUINA  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO)  
LYNDON B. JOHNSON TROPICAL MEDICAL CENTER  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INDIAN, INSULAR AND ALASKA NATIVE AFFAIRS  
"ASSESSING CURRENT CONDITIONS AND CHALLENGES AT THE LYNDON B.  
JOHNSON TROPICAL MEDICAL CENTER IN AMERICAN SAMOA"  
July 25, 2017

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs, Talofa lava ma fa'afetai lava. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on, "*Assessing Current Conditions and Challenges at the Lyndon B. Johnson Tropical Medical Center in American Samoa.*"

I am Taufete'e John Faumuina. I am the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the American Samoa Medical Center Authority doing business as Lyndon B. Johnson Tropical Medical Center (LBJTMC) in the U.S. Territory of American Samoa.

I would like to thank the Congress Delegates (CODEL) who visited American Samoa earlier this year and had the chance to tour our hospital facility. They dialogued with our staff about the limitations, woes and tribulations we face in providing quality and safe patient care to the people of our islands.

In 1968, LBJ opened its doors to provide patient focused, comprehensive, high quality, and cost effective health care and related services that address the health needs of the people. LBJ is the sole hospital providing tertiary services to all of American Samoa with a population over 60,000. In order for LBJ to keep its doors open we need to retain Medicare certification through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), we must comply with the Conditions of Participations.

My testimony will focus on four main areas of the challenges and needs of our hospital.

## CHALLENGES

- COMPLIANCE WITH CMS STANDARDS
  - LBJ needs to adopt a suitable budget to address all noncompliance issues pertaining to medical staffing, nursing staffing, ancillary services and supporting services across the board to meet the standard of care. The need to comply comes with substantial financial commitment, offer better compensations to recruit qualified Doctors, Nurses, Certified Technicians and supporting staff. Assign appropriate budget to properly provide maintenance for the aging facility and scheduled preventative maintenance and repairs for all equipment. For the record,

LBJ is currently operating under a \$50 Million budget to sustain and provide the best healthcare for the people of American Samoa.

- **STAFFING INEQUITIES AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**
  - With LBJ's 147 beds, we require 95 physicians, we only have 57. We are required to have 110 RNs, we only have 73. We are required to have 11 pharmacists, but we only have 3.
  - With the radiology department, we must contract off-island services to read our diagnostics. We do not have a permanent radiologist.
  - We also contract a nephrologist who visits American Samoa quarterly to treat the 167 patients with 36 staff to handle a workload of 1,900 treatments per month.
- **HEALTH CARE FACILITIES**
  - Struggle to upkeep aging facility and acquire new equipment and to provide continuous preventative maintenance and repairs.
  - We are grateful for the CIP funding from DOI that has allowed LBJ, to conduct minor and major renovations, to address CMS infrastructure citations. The laboratory was expanded and renovated to provide proper space for new diagnostic lab equipment to accommodate the increase types of testing for patient care. The Diagnostic Imaging - Radiology Department was expanded and renovated to house more modern equipment such as the radiographic x-ray machines, CT scans, C-arm X-rays, portable x-rays and etc.,.
  - Presently, 41% of the facility has been renovated to meet CMS standards. Upon completion of the current Labor/Delivery Nursery expansion and renovation project, our facility will be 65% renovated.
  - With the completed expansion and extensions of existing infrastructure, we are still struggling to cut down on patient waiting time in ER and Clinical Services because of the overwhelming number of patient visits, with ER seeing an average of over 2500 visits per month. Patient admission process is also delayed due to overflow and non-availability of beds in the wards because of constant high census.
  - One of the solutions that we are presently exploring is a new 200-bed hospital to accommodate increase in population, as well as inpatient and outpatient visits. Space in the present location is severely limited, and we are unable to expand the existing building which in turn limits services.
- **FINANCIALS**
  - Annual Budget - Inadequate appropriation
    - Increased Federal appropriation
    - Explore other revenue sources
  - Lifting the cap on Medicaid
  - Restructure FMAP percentage favorable to American Samoa
  - Extend the expiration of ACA funds

## CONCLUSION

- We want to thank you for this rare opportunity given to us. We are humbled and extremely grateful to be able to share our challenges and needs with this honorable subcommittee, and we hope for your favorable consideration to our plea to fund a new hospital that will meet all quality of care.

- Faafetai ma le faaaloalo lava. SOIFUA!