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Editorial | Letters

Dying should be a personal matter

Posted December 19, 2016

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In 2002, the state Legislature defeated the Death with Dignity bill. It would have allowed Hawaii's people to decide by and for ourselves when we want to die.

Many people in Hawaii support allowing ourselves the right to decide, with medical advice, when it is the best time to die.

Only after a determination of terminal illness with a short life expectancy, will we be allowed to receive life-ending medication we would take by ourselves — no more unnecessary, painful, undignified prolongation of an undesired life out of the control of the person who is dying.

Dying is a very personal matter. Only one person should have the right to decide on what terms he or she will spend their last days. So many have been denied that right since 2002.

Those who die in the future, which means all of us, should no longer be deprived of that very fundamental, personal right.

Francis M. Nakamoto

Moanalua Valley

—

Money better spent to maintain roads

If your newspaper were to conduct a survey as how the city should spend \$1.18 million for a "maintenance project," I am sure drivers would choose to use the money or half of it to repair the streets ("Thomas Square will close for 6 months of city upkeep," Star-Advertiser, Dec. 10).

Some intersections at the crosswalks are lumpy and difficult to walk over.

Halekauwila Street from Ala Moana Boulevard to Punchbowl Street resembles driving over a continuous line of railroad tracks. It's the same for Halekauwila from Keawe Street to Ward Avenue.

I am sure there are other streets throughout the city in similar disrepair.

Dominick Petillo

Kakaako

—

HMSA pay scheme discourages doctors

Patients beware. Hawaii Medical Service Association and Medicare MSA and Medicare are embarking on an alternative payment scheme for primary care and specialty physicians without really knowing how it will affect patient care.

Although the scheme is supposed to pay for quality rather than volume, it really pays for jumping through bureaucratic hoops. Already patients are complaining that doctors pay more attention to the computer than the patient.

Similar payment schemes were tried in the managed care era of the 1990s and it resulted in patients not receiving care. Doctors were literally getting paid for doing nothing.

Hawaii has a significant shortage of doctors.

This new payment scheme is one more disincentive to physicians.

Rhoads Stevens, M.D.

Hawaii Kai

—

Trump must place assets in blind trust

If by Jan. 20 Donald Trump has not placed all of his assets in a true blind trust, without his children running his businesses, the public should protest at his inauguration.

Trump is not above the law or the Constitution; nor is anyone else. His original plan to have his children run his business violates the law and the Constitution. Trump

promised to reveal his plans to divest, then canceled the announcement. It's the same tactic he used previously when asked to show his tax returns. He said, "I will release my tax returns after the audit is completed by the IRS," which is continuous and never-ending.

The Republicans should put pressure on Trump to place his assets in a true blind trust and not let his children run the business. To not do so would show a lack of courage and empower this soon-to-be authoritarian leader of our great country.

Roland Ho

Waialeale

—

Don't blame war on Japanese-Americans

After all this time, some people still don't get it. I am referring to Mark Slovak's letter ("Don't ignore Japan's imperialist past," Star-Advertiser, Dec. 16).

We are Americans of Japanese ancestry and in no way are we responsible for acts of war and atrocities committed by the nation of Japan. Using Slovak's logic, do we then blame German-Americans for atrocities committed by the nation of Germany during World War II?

Jerald Takesono

Kaneohe

—

AUW housing effort shows good initiative

As a first-time visitor here from New York, I found your story ("More families at risk than expected," Star-Advertiser, Dec. 10), to be both positive and enlightening.

In a country where unemployment benefits have been extended to 99 weeks, we sometimes mollify our desire to be altruistic at the expense of dulling the sense of personal responsibility and initiative that should motivate all in our society.

That 83 percent of households and 88 percent of individuals at risk of homelessness remained housed six months after receiving one-time payments through the efforts of Aloha United Way, is a testament to the character of both the recipients and of those who administer such a beneficial program.

Congratulations and mahalo, as you all say!

Jeffrey Converse

New York

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